

FORM+CONTENT

GALLERY

ARTIST STATEMENT

The brush stroke at the moment of contact carries inevitably the exact state of being of the artist at that exact moment into the work. There it is, to be seen and read by those who can read such signs, and to be read later by the artist, perhaps with some surprise, as a revelation of oneself.

The American Realist painter Robert Henri shared those words and that idea with his students in the early twentieth century. Reading those words inspired me as an art student, and years later they still inspire me. That handful of words sums up for me the mystery of art and the mystery of painting. It is the dialogue of the artist engaged in a process of communication and exploration that is both simple and complicated. When the process works it speaks very plainly to the artist and to others “who can read such signs.”

I believe now that there is wisdom to be found in painting, in the endless ocean of possibilities, and in the time that passes while the painting changes in the studio. I am currently working with a few of the basic elements of painting language: color, light and gesture. My concern is to hold in balance the seemingly oppositional aspects of these basic elements, which I think can open the possibilities for creative tension and expression.

I love dry-brush paint handling, in which the color relationships across the layers of paint are reconfigured in the viewer’s mind. I want this physicality of color -- not sitting on the picture plane, but rather floating toward it. Color is perceived in context and I am finding that the layering of color can lead to a reordering of perception. For example, layered tints of yellow and blue can produce a “warm” blue that seems to advance instead of recede. I am also finding that separating the colors into layers is helping the painting resist color mixing in the brain and I think that keeps the abstraction intact. I am after a loose and gestural paint handling, which is simultaneously contained, thoughtful, atmospheric, and physical.

I am looking for a balance of imagery that appears unfinished but evokes meaning without depiction; a balance of composition and pictorial space that

lets the viewer in, but not too far; a balance of gesture that is improvisational but also intentional; a balance of color that is unified but also unexpected. As Robert Henri observed, I am looking for an experience of painting that will be a surprise and a revelation to myself and to others who can read such signs.