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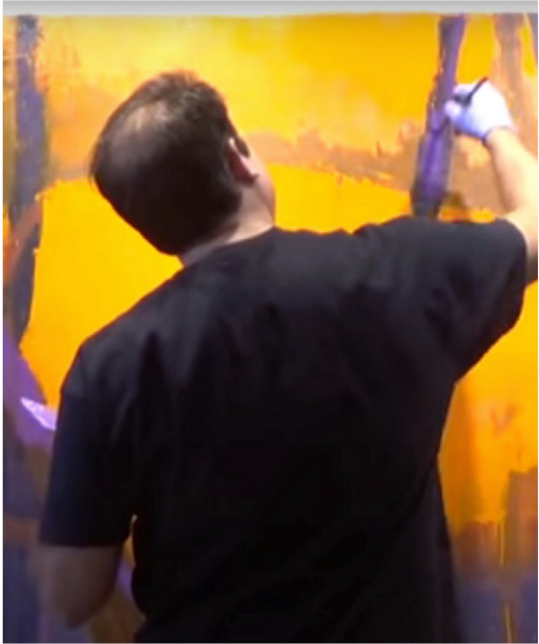
“Ash Can to... Soup Can”

contemporary
artists featured

Barbara Steinberg
Brian Rutenberg
Shahin De Heart
Amanda Oliphant
Cherie Grist

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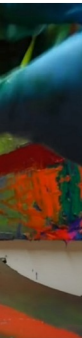
in the studio with
Brian Rutenberg



intelligent, authentic and one of a kind... written by Denis Taylor

Every now and then you meet someone who is so understandable and admirable that your description of their work, as a writer, is impossible. Fortunately, as a painter, perhaps I am indeed best positioned to talk about Brian's work, from purely an insiders viewpoint.





Brian is a great painter and one look at his history and past work is all the reference you need to quantify that statement. But more than a painter, and it's not often I would say that there is a greater compliment to recognise pure talent than say 'great painter' Brian is an Artist in the absolute sense of the word.

An artist that through a natural born talent, an innocence of thought, humility and sincerity, has reached a point of creating work that becomes something beautiful, a demonstration, if you wish, of the absolute sublime. And paintings important of themselves as an object of living feelings. Almost as if Brian transfers all ownership of what his hands and tools puts on the surface to allow the painting to exist as a newly born singularity in the Universe.

There have been painters of the past that have all reached that pinnacle, but to be honest, not that many. And Brian is not and cannot be compared to anyone else, but himself. That's what makes this artist great, in fact that's what makes any artist memorable.

Today we have the intellectualized frauds of art in numbers, many populate our contemporary museums, but the real Art is in the feelings imbued in it – not the thinking behind it.

Many people fail to understand that great Artists tend not to think – but they are the catalyst for a creative universal force. They take part in the art and not get someone else to make it for them. That's not Art, that is transferring an idea into an object, which generally is created for commercial reasons and has only monetary value and has very little use to humanity other than its ability to convert one currency into another currency.

When you watch Brian work on a painting, you can actually see the Creative force take control of him and the power of action that generates. It's an amazing sight to witness how the paint is applied and smeared and scratched scrubbed for no apparent reason, that is until the work is finished and then you view the amazing result. If that description sounds familiar, especially to those that study the history of Art, then you will recognise a certain J.M.W Turner and an eye witness description of how he painted especially noted on the notorious 'glazing day' at the Royal Academy before an opening.

This frenzy of creation is not a Show or an Act, it's something that a painter is unaware of at the time of creation. This 'state-of-creation' last a variable and undetermined time – it's as if an invisible force takes over until the Artist who is creating the work becomes aware of the surface and stops working, for no apparent reason. This is the mystery of Art and this is why artists choose pigments to communicate. It's a painting experience of the highest feelings of delight and incredible personal sensations, it's what Picasso once described as...

... "as if being touched by the hand of God."

'the full quote goes on to say....

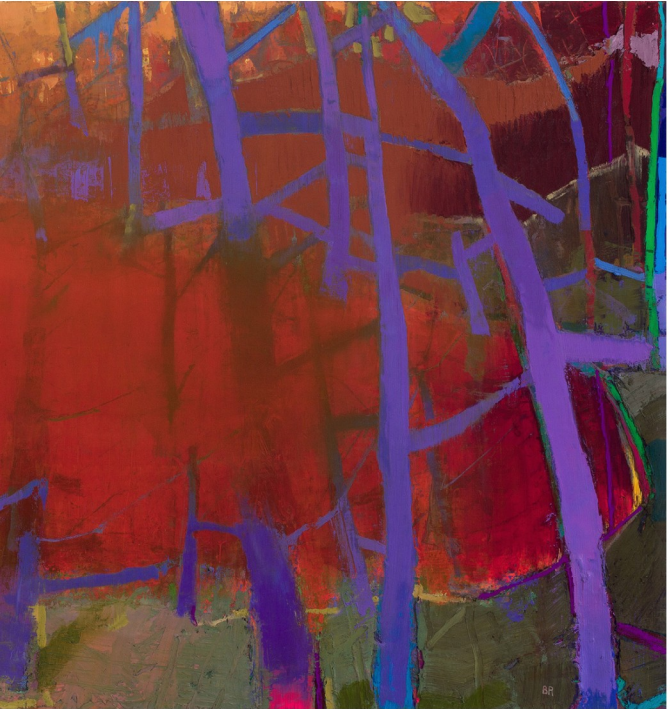
"but you cannot say that because they will call you a fraud..."



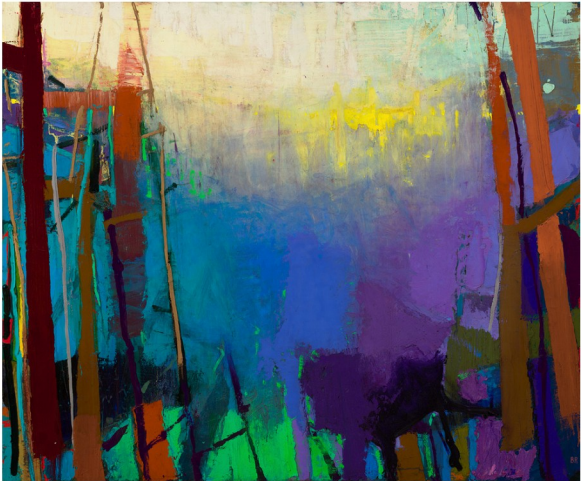


Brian's Studio space is spacious enough to accommodate very large canvases as well as standard and smaller works. He says that he cannot explain how the work will look when completed, no matter what size he works on and he has no idea at all how the work even gets into being, as such, it just does.

He says that he simply turns up every day to the studio, prepares his space and various colour and starts to put colour onto the empty white space and continues until he stops working and then cleans up and goes home. It's like a normal job in that sense. But as artists know, it is not recognised as such.



Brian also records and publishes on You Tube video a regular " studio visit." This started a few years ago as more and more people became enthralled with his work and wanted to know more he began recording directly from the studio. The videos range from talking about colour, and his feeling for those colour., His feelings around family and life in general. Brian has a softly spoken delivery and this masks a keen sense of humour. He also gives 'talks' to a growing audience who enjoy his unique presentations which inevitably embodies the the history of art.



With reference to the Picasso quotation, indeed many critical voices have called painters fraudulent, many times in the past. This may have been a strategy to remove the 'mysterious' element out of Art to replace it with intellectualism or if you prefer a Nihilistic Theoretical Art. Which to my mind is OK as a small starter, unfortunately it became the main meal in the twentieth century, metaphorically speaking.

Brian Rutenberg loves nature, which is not unique or uncommon among artists.

However, feeling part of nature is not the same as thinking that you are outside of it, or simply enjoying it as if it was a place to visit now and again.

Humans are an integral element in the whole universal environment. It seems that message is finally getting through to those that allow certain elements of our world to plunder or destroy our planets ego system, whilst we stand idly by and permit them to do it.

Art reflects the essence of nature in all our senses, if we only allow it to. Today it seems we have forgotten how to look or afford Art time to communicate with us on a deep level. We have all become accustomed to quick swipes as we view Art on instagram or Facebook on our phones. Painting with nature is not copying it. There is no point take Nature as a subject , then transfer it verbatim, even by hand onto a flat surface using pigments.

That may well bring a round of applause on Social Media in appreciation of the skill involved to copy that which is seen, but repeating the seen' object or scene is pointless. You may well as take a photograph with your iPhone and post it on social media and offer prints to turn a buck.

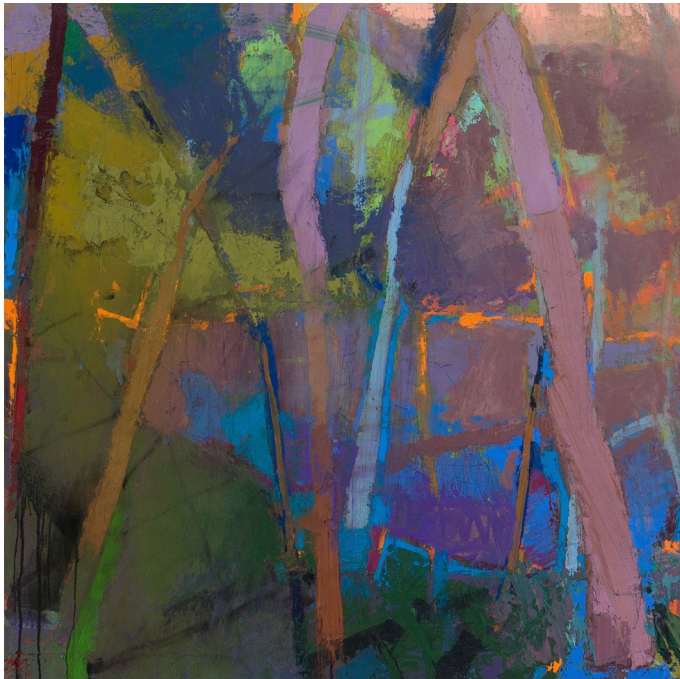
Its capturing the invisible, that's real Art.

One which lifts back the curtain and lets the light shine through. This is what Brian's work does. It glows with natural elegant, drama, and that other worldliness, but it is nature, one that we can relate too. It is in fact absolute nature, that's for sure, but not as we normally see it and it is the marrying of abstract and the appearance of reality that gives each work it's visual power. Brian's work is what I continue to term, abstract-realism.

Abstract painting has had a turbulent history as an Art Form. In the early twentieth century it was vehemently attacked by artists lining up against it, insisting that realism was the only litmus test for the proof of a real artist. Later in the century abstract became revered and then much later, it was ignored and labelled as 'anyone can do that.' a critical incorrect statement.

Eventually abstract-realism emerged and is becoming part of a sort of underground movement, one which is rapidly spreading over-ground to all continents. So what is abstract-realism? It's a painting that is abstract, but the viewer of it knows exactly what it is. That's the simplest explanation, which I hope makes you think about painting a little deeper. However, this time around the emphasis of abstraction is not experimental mark making, or mixing clever non-objective ideas with apparent immediacy of paint application. This time abstraction and reality is working in harmony together in a new partnership.

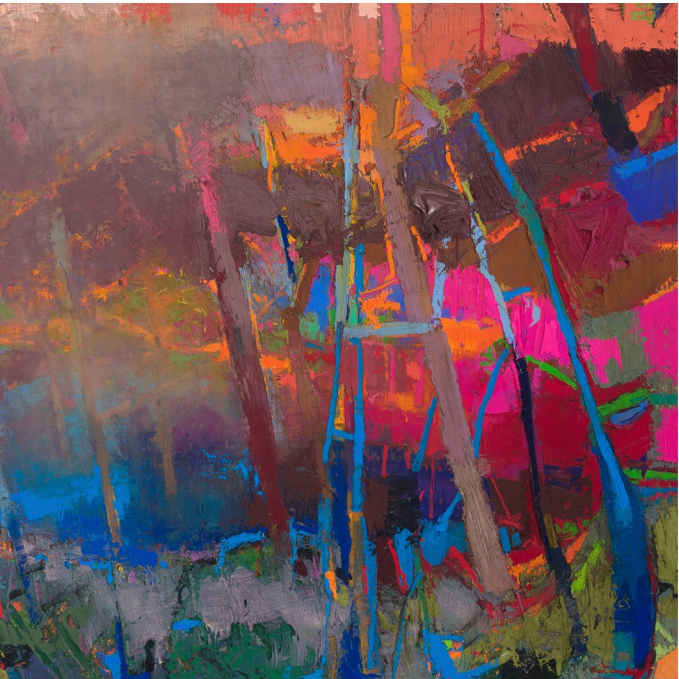




Little is spoken of about abstract-realism in contemporary art galleries, because galleries are generally not run by painters and the two words together are not logical. And therefore it's difficult for them to recognise the emergence of the abstract-realism smorgasbord that painting as an Art Form has now transcended into.

I believe this is what Brian's Art is a fantastic example as a relatively new Art Form, or an actual unforced movement forward in painting, if you will. It is not a new 'ism or anything closely remote to twentieth century ism's. It is pure Painting with a capital P... And that's what makes it a Twentieth Century new wave.

I spoke with Brian via Zoom in his studio, that an opportunity everyone can enjoy today technological facilities that we sometimes take for granted.



Brian has been recording 'Studio-Visits' for some time, all of which can be seen on YouTube. Here you can find Brian talking about life to you directly, telling you about his own history, what propels him to work and in general witness his desire to entertain, a personality trait that most artists have. As an artist myself it was an absolute privilege to share some thoughts with Brian and for me provided encouragement to continue my own life's quest of creating art that has the possibility to influence and give visual pleasure to strangers. So, thank you Brian for affording me your time and I look forward to visiting you in NYC as soon as we become Free to venture out into the big wide world once more. *On the following pages are some more of Brian's paintings and a word written by him about a latest series of work soon to be exhibited.*



Point of Pine

new paintings

Coolness—the sound of the bell as it leaves the bell.

Yosa Buson (1716–1783)

"Humidity made me a painter. All of the paintings in this new series called Point of Pine are meditations on imaginary trees as seen through veils of South Carolina Low country heat. The solitary tree has been a primary image in my work for forty-five years; my first paintings were watercolors of a loblolly pine near my childhood home in Myrtle Beach, where I spent a lot of time because I had buck teeth and was horrible at sports. Little did I know, the directness and simplicity of those studies would provide me with a lifetime of imagery. I do one thing

All of my paintings begin and end with the same image, a tree trunk and its shadow. That immovable point of contact: a trunk and a shadow moving away from it. The sound of the bell as it leaves the bell. A trunk and its shadow say, "This is here." By paying attention and drawing them in detail with pencil on paper, I can respond, "I am here."

Whenever I walk in the woods, I carry a stick with which to poke and point (a practice gleaned from reading about Walt Whitman). I pretend that my eyes are on the tip of the stick as it tracks across bumpy surfaces, creating a material correspondence between the thing and its relation to me

A tree doesn't follow the laws of perspective but is a complex bundle of overlapping and converging lines which make sense from every viewpoint. Our eyes can't view a tree in a single snapshot, but in hierarchies of information, we notice one thing, then another, and another. I compose my landscape paintings with these hierarchies in mind; one thing may appear more important than another but, like a tree, the image must work as a cohesive whole, no matter where you focus. The Western eye is trained to read from left to right.

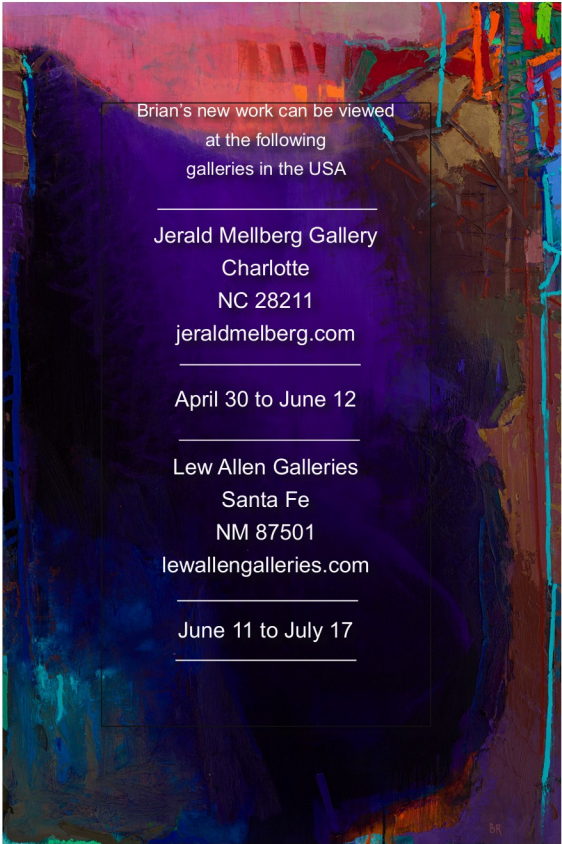
Therefore I compose with this lateral span in mind. My landscape paintings don't rely on linear perspective to establish pictorial depth, but are more akin to Egyptian friezes, in which a wide entablature is decorated with reliefs rhythmically arranged across shallow space. However, rather than a panoramic view from a static vantage point, I want your gaze to travel across the terrain like a tracking shot in a film, as if you're wandering in the woods, not talking, just walking.

As I move around to the other side of the tree, that which was hidden becomes visible. Likewise, a painting doesn't reveal itself all at once, but in flecks of partial recognition. I love parades and processions for this reason. A procession abandons its starting point. Travel eliminates its origins. We are where we go. I paint because I can never see enough places. So, I return to one.

My movement becomes a tree, the tree becomes a thought, and the thought returns me to the wealth of humidity."

Brian Rutenberg



An abstract painting with a rich, textured surface. The color palette is dominated by deep purples, blues, and blacks, with vibrant streaks of red, orange, and green. The brushwork is expressive and layered, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall composition is vertical and somewhat somber, with the bright colors providing focal points of energy.

Brian's new work can be viewed
at the following
galleries in the USA

Jerald Mellberg Gallery
Charlotte
NC 28211
jeraldmelberg.com

April 30 to June 12

Lew Allen Galleries
Santa Fe
NM 87501
lewallengalleries.com

June 11 to July 17



MANCHESTER

VISION EXHIBITION 2021

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David will be exhibiting at Manchester 2020 Vision Show

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