

Artist Statement

If art is simultaneously a process of creating and exploring, I lean towards exploration. Painting is an act of discovery for me, less about self-expression, and more about my floundering efforts to understand the world around me.

I'm interested in visual discordance, and the way our mind's eye naturally reconciles this. We each have an inner filter, grown by experience over the years, that projects sameness onto the outside world. Our human brain loves shortcuts. So, we simplify our environment, mentally, to make it easier and more predictable. Landscape = land + water + horizon + sky = beautiful.

The sudden ubiquity of instantaneous photography and digital media sharing have reinforced this tendency, and allowed for a collective shift in our visual understanding that has surely never before been possible. The average person now has a much more sophisticated understanding of 2D composition, and vastly broader exposure to fine art than even 20 years ago. The pleasure of beauty and the genius of artistic creation is available for display in nearly every home and purse and pocket in this country.

I will not mourn the things art has lost with the advent of this technology. Accessibility outweighs it all. The vast majority of humanity, myself included, will never get to view Vermeer's "The Milkmaid" in person, but I can study a digital reproduction of it for free in full, thrilling detail, each brushstroke defined, the glowing warmth of the colors and

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the cracking finish palpable in a way far superior to the printed reproductions I've seen in books.

My exploration of landscape painting has been guided by these questions: What happens to art when our experience of the world becomes shaped by the gluttony of images we consume – from fine art to travel blogs, to senior photos and selfies, and Instagram posts? What happens when artists (and we are all artists now) increasingly use digital tools to make creative decisions? And what happens when we begin to experience the world as if it's already been processed through a filter on our phone?

I strive to challenge the experience of iphone-filtered sameness by creating images that utilize the 2D space in a way that a photograph cannot – by bending, or breaking and reassembling, the perspective and composition, and by widely varying my paint applications and textures to accentuate the visual contrasts and conflicts that are diminished or erased by standard digital photography.

I hope my viewer will be drawn into, and experience, each piece as they might a truly new place, one that has never been visited, or photographed, or posted on the internet.

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