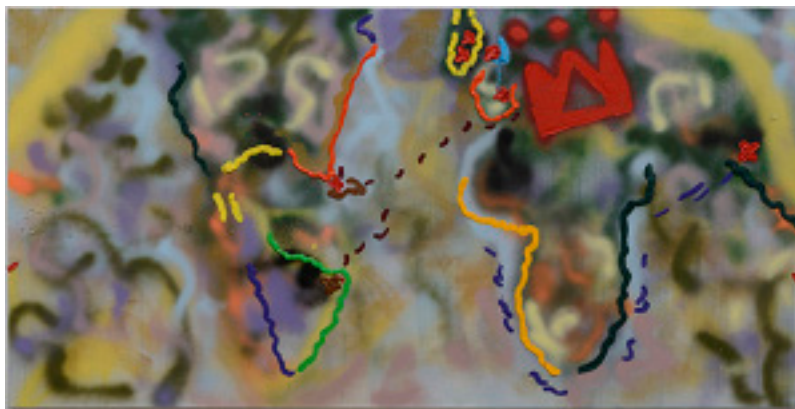


Susan Lizotte – Los Angeles, California

Posted on August 2, 2015 by 365Artists/365Days

Briefly describe the work you do.

I am a painter currently working on a series entitled Mercury. The paintings trace the history and misuse of the element mercury as well as the abuse of power that has continued for the last five centuries. The paintings are in spray paint and oil paint. I especially love when a charcoal under drawing shows through the layers of paint. Some of the paint layers are very sheer and some of the paint is very thick and opaque. I'm having fun teasing what's "not being seen" in both reality and the paintings.



"King And Country", oil and spray paint on canvas, 24" x 48"

Tell us about your background and how that has had an influence on your work and on you as an artist.

I have always loved art and especially painting. Art was discouraged in my family, you were supposed to get a "real" job. I finally just had to pursue my love of painting and see what happened. So I feel that my freedom now to paint is very special. I also think that it is even more important to paint what I have to say, to take full advantage of the medium and try and convey a message, not just paint something pretty.

The concept of the artist studio has a broad range of meanings in contemporary practice. Artists may spend much of their time in the actual studio, or they may spend very little time in it. Tell us about your individual studio practice and how it differs from or is the same as traditional notions of "being in the studio."

I've been lucky enough to have a studio and I'm in it three or four days a week, more if possible. Studio time allows the freedom to play with new ideas, in both thought and practice. I am able to make mistakes, which often lead to new ideas. The studio also allows me the freedom to work without any distractions which I think is part of the traditional "studio" time. If I have a painting which is going particularly well I can stay and keep working on it. Sometimes I just get inspired and just work through the painting till it's too dark to see the colors properly anymore!!



"Three Primaries", oil on canvas, 30" x 48"

What roles do you find yourself playing that you may not have envisioned yourself in when you first started making art?

I never imagined that I would curate! Yet I have and it is tremendously rewarding! Also I really never thought I would be part of a big group and trying to get a consensus with a large group is quite challenging!

When do you find is the best time to make art? Do you set aside a specific time everyday or do you have to work whenever time allows?

The best time to make art for me is when I have time, which normally is during the day. The hardest part of making art is letting go, mentally, of all of the day-to-day distractions, or least it is when I begin a painting. Once I've started a painting I've played around with the composition quite a bit so I'm pretty committed which makes the process easier. I have a small routine, which helps me make my art. I get into the studio, set up my palette, check my brushes, crank the music and get ready to go!



How has your work changed in the past five years? How is it the same?

My work has changed so much in the last five years. I used to be more concerned with rendering, now I am concerned with the paint. What has not changed is a very specific color palette for each painting, sometimes breaking the "rules" of color on purpose for specific effect. I am also always so impressed by painters who know color and use it exquisitely, like John Currin or Rebecca Campbell.

How have people such as family, friends, writers, philosophers, other artists or even pop icons had an impact on the work you do?

I have been very impacted by Rebecca Campbell's paintings. In addition, my painting series was inspired by the writer Mark Blaxill. Mark's book "The Age of Autism: Mercury, Medicine and a Man-Made Epidemic" is a powerful tale of the last five centuries and the abuses which continue to this day. My paintings were inspired by his words.

Have you ever been pulled in the direction of a pursuit other than being an artist? What are your other interests?

Yes, making a living interfered with my artistic pursuits a bit! I was a bespoke shirt and suit designer for fifteen years, running my own business for five of the fifteen years! Now I'm a mother of four children and I balance my art with having fun with them!

About

Susan Lizotte was born in Los Angeles, California. She attended Marlborough School and received her Bachelor of Arts from UCLA. Susan Lizotte's paintings utilize both figurative and abstract elements to explore issues of abuse of power and control, often within a mythological setting as metaphor. With a range of stylistic approaches and methodologies she also examines the nature of investigation, via painting, in relation to art history, as a reflection of the myriad journeys of the Mind. She lives and works in Los Angeles.

