

Farrell Brickhouse- Artist Statement

When I was around 8 years old I had a dream I was in a garden. I climbed this wall and realized that if I jumped over I would no longer have the protection and order of the garden and would be in the wilds. I jumped. It seems a life's choice. Making Art is a way to share the totality of what I've seen, touched and what has touched me. I believe the making of a painting needs that moment of epiphany and a trace of how the imagery conveyed thru paint was discovered and experienced by the artist. Not a graphic notation of the language of experience but the mystery of it.

For me art is a personal odyssey. A vehicle to carry me forward and find some deeper unity in what is happening in and around me. Art is a slow burn, working its gift on individuals. It is based on a life lived worked into a liquid space. I want my paintings to be a haunted living presence that reveals to the viewer passion, intellect, mystery and that changes with each day's new light. My work is experiential, non-formulaic. Painting is a belief system that asks as Borges stated, " a momentary act of faith that reality is inferred from events not reasonings. That theories are nothing but stimuli: that the finished work frequently ignores and even contradicts them." One of arts chief functions is to resist the

denaturing forces that are always present; those things that would take away our transcendent possibilities and turn us into stereotyped beings. For me Art is not the production of meaning but the providing of a genuine experience of what it is to be alive and in the world. Octavio Paz said that art turns the viewer into an artist. Great art is a freedom giver, offering one a sense of the breadth of one's own possibilities, what may yet be accomplished.

As a mature artist now 74 years old, I find I have this large vocabulary to draw from. Imagery that has woven its way thru my entire career is available and malleable. I have access to this personal history with a renewed understanding of it's original intent and a deepening understanding of how these "forms" can continue to speak for me in paint. I also seek to explore the range of subject matter my paintings can encompass as I look to everyday experiences, tell stories and paint about current events in a expanding as well as deepening vocabulary. There is in Art History an excitement as I see my concerns expressed in new artists and old 'friends' offer continued gifts. At its best making art is a revelatory experience, a conduit to the beauty and mystery in the miracle of simply being here. Painting is the wish and the prayer and the offering all in one. It is an act of faith just to pick up the brush.

On Depicting Violence in my work.

I work on Series of paintings that are informed both by Headlines in the News and my own experiences and observations with what our species deals with and inflicts, how we treat The Other and the world around us. I title them- Struggle Series, HIG Series- How It Goes and Dance Of The Bombed as well as other Series. I respond to the News and my own experience with violence. I have always sought to see what my art can encompass and document, both on a personal as well as societal level. I made a painting from a News photo of the LA riots- Dance Of The Bombed, the senseless shooting of an Iranian girl- For Nada and another Series- How It Goes. Struggle # 5- Dancing Bear 2009 portrayed those at the end of the wip. How It Goes II- 2010 and HIG Lesson On Skrillex- 2012 were based on my girlfriend's experience as an adult entertainer and others I knew in that field in my younger days. My work is about our treatment of each other and the other and our fellow creatures but too the joy of just being Here. I want to paint the terror and the wonder of life. Also: