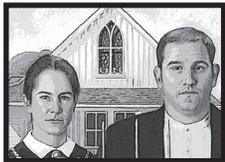


Realistic artist focuses on painting what he knows



SAM DALKILIC-MIESTOWSKI

Art adventure

Last month, the Steeple Gallery hosted an artist's open house which introduced a handful of new artists to northwest Indiana. Realistic painter Brian Busch was one of the artists who made a great impression.

Born in Winfield, Ill. in 1970, Brian Busch's earliest artistic inspiration came from trying to outdraw his two older brothers. Encouraged by his parents, Brian's initial studies began in high school, taking classes at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and the Rhode Island School of Design, then continuing his studies at the American Academy of Art in Chicago.

Working solely from the live model at the Academy, Brian fell in love with the emotion and the drama that can be expressed with the human form.

Brian finds inspiration in the ordinary things around us whether it be still life, landscape or farm animals. He makes no attempt to glorify his subjects, but to treat them with honesty and respect.

Brian shares his journey of art.

At what age were you when you started developing an attraction to fine art? "When I was around 6 I saw Peter Paul Reuben's painting 'The Lion Hunt' in the encyclopedia. The powerful image has stuck with me to this day and I credit that painting as the spark that got me interested in painting."

Can you give me a description of what kinds of things you were creating when you started developing a passion for art? "When I was young, I really wanted to be a fantasy illustrator, so there were lots of dragons, barbarians with swords and monsters."

While you were in high school you took classes at The Art Institute. Did this increase your desire to become an artist? "Yes, however, I didn't much care for the teaching methods there,



"Close Shave," Brian Busch, oil on linen, 2012 (12" x 16").



"Corvidae," Brian Busch, oil on linen (12" x 24").

as I was looking to become a better draftsman and their method of teaching was all about 'expressing oneself.' So, I didn't stay there long."

What did you learn from attending the Rhode Island School of Design?

"I took a summer program at RISDI. As much fun as I had that summer, the teaching method there was similar to The School of the Art Institute, so I left there unfulfilled."

You continued on to the American Academy of art in Chicago. Out of the three art schools which school did you feel you responded to the most?

"Absolutely the American Academy of Art in Chicago. I finally found the structure I was looking for; this was the place that gave me the skill sets of drawing, composition, color, etc. These tools are essential to produce any sort of representational work of art."

You shared with me that you were in the restaurant industry for a number of years. How did that experience inspire you or help you with your subject matter? "I paint what I know...if it's a still life it is usually something that has some sort of personal meaning to me, if it's figurative, it is usually somebody or some situation that is familiar to me. I know and love the restaurant

business. Watching cooks behind the line on a Saturday night is like watching a ballet to me."

Your artworks was featured in the new documentary "The Everglades of the North," which was broadcast on Lakeshore Public Television. "I was commissioned to create two pieces for the historical documentary. One was a portrait of a young Indian girl, the other was a depiction of runaway slaves escaping during the night. You can visit the Facebook page 'Everglades of the North' to find out further information on the documentary."

Are you a full time artist? "Yes."
You work mostly by commission, can you describe some of the subject matter you have painted for your clients. "I am usually commissioned to do portraits. I have also been doing some murals lately, usually landscape motifs. I have created paintings with antique tools, skulls, figurative, race tracks, horse racing, restaurant industry, antique cooking utensils, and coffee pots. I am particularly drawn to things that have a nostalgic feeling about them. My color palette is that of the 'old masters.'"

Why do you paint? "I discovered early on that I was really terrible at singing and dancing. :)"

Do you have any upcoming plans with regard to artwork? "I do have plans on a new series of work, I will keep that secret but will say that they will me more ambitious than anything I have done up to this point."

Why should people acquire art and put it in their homes? "I think the purchase of artwork is a personal matter. I personally like to purchase original works for my home for multiple reasons. First, I am attracted to beautiful craftsmanship. Second, I have spent a lot of time effort and money on my home, why would I want to decorate it with the same posters everybody else picks up?"

A select body of work is currently on display at the Steeple Gallery in St. John. To arrange a time to visit in person, please call 365-1014, or email samowner@sbcglobal.net. To view more of Brian Bush's work visit www.brian-buschstudio.com.

WEEKLY PLANNER

St. Elijah Orthodox Church Serbian Sisters Christmas bake sale: 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 21, and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 22, 8700 Taft St., Merrillville, homemade strudels, nut rolls and pastries, advance orders accepted at 769-4375 call 769-4375 to place an advance order

Grande Finale New Year's Eve pizza party: 2 to 5 p.m. Monday, Dec. 31, First United Methodist Church, 352 S. East St., Crown Point, pizza, dancing, magician Steve Belliveau, visit from The Cat in the Hat, \$5 per person, free for ages 2 and younger ages 2 and younger free; for registration or more information, call 661-2271

Visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus: noon to 4 p.m. Saturdays through Dec. 22, lower level of the the Old Lake County Courthouse, Crown Point, also, free gift-wrapping provided by Crown Point Special Events

Department volunteers, 662-3290

Gingerbread fun: 4:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 21, at Bellaboo's Play and Discovery Center at Three Rivers County Park, 2800 Colorado St., kids can build and decorate a gingerbread house to keep, Bellaboo's admission applies, participants dressed in holiday pajamas receive free hot cocoa, call 963-2070 or visit www.MyBellaboos.com

Sledding hills: when snow permits, sledding hills are open through March at Oak Ridge Prairie and Lemon Lake County parks, gate fee when the gatekeeper is on duty from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., no metal or wood sleds with runners or ski boards allowed, call to see if the hills are open, Lemon Lake is at 6322 W. 133rd Ave., Crown Point, 663-7627. Oak Ridge Prairie is at 301 S. Colfax St., Griffith, 884-7238

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