

Christopher Mathie

A word about this collection: *My goal is to capture the essence of living on and near the water. There are a lot of incredible painters who depict the ocean in a realistic way, my intention is to stylize the seascape into something more like poetry... to use the intertidal zone, where land meets water, as a metaphor for how the water makes me feel... to portray how light pours down from the sky and the crashing waves spray into the air... how the sky, water and land are connected as one and how we as temporary inhabitants are merely a spec in time borrowing from the Earth. Some have noticed an edge to my style of painting. And it's true that life can be bitter-sweet and that may come through in some of my works. But my greatest hope is that one can sense my true delight in being creatively alive. The energy I hope to portray is that of love, light and life. Enjoy!*

Process:

I tend to work in many layers using opaque washes in some areas to cover and simplify and transparent glazes in some areas to reveal. I begin with a full composition in the gesso (or primer) layer creating heavy textures with palette knives and brushes. A second layer is usually random color flows and shapes. I work incredibly fast, bouncing from one canvas to the next adding and subtracting with little need to control my marks. I know these early layers will evolve, which gives me great freedom to express...

After drying over night I look at the paintings with fresh eyes and evaluate them for color dominance, structure, visual path, focal point, and value patterns (light and dark). I look for strong continuity between the pieces and see if a link is present that could form a series. I then begin to paint again — now with a little more thought but still shifting from canvas to canvas so that each piece evolves at the same time. I look at individual sections of the canvas for areas that work and do not work separately from the whole. Several more sittings occur, allowing the pieces to dry before the next layer is added.

Sometimes ideas pop into my head while painting, titles and phrases... I jot them down so that I can look at the pieces when they are finished and see if the titles still fit. Having some vague idea in mind what the pieces are about helps me to explore emotions and feelings while I paint. I do not worry about having any concrete meanings though because I intend the meanings to be as abstract as the paintings themselves. This also allows the viewer to bring their own experiences and interpretations to the work. I don't like to spoon feed my viewers.

Now in his mid thirties, Mathie has exhibited in over eighty galleries and has a long list of collectors and achievements. Both Mathie's ceramics and paintings are currently represented by major U.S. galleries in California, Arizona, Oregon and Washington State.

Mathie--Gumpert: Working Together

Our shared love of art was instantly apparent. Admiration of each others work and exploration of the art world created an intense and powerful bond that we've enjoyed for more than five years. "Date nights" then — and still — are spent painting with the assistance of energetic music and a glass of red wine.

Exploring both man made and natural forms we find our vision and vocabulary have merged. Our art styles, although different and individual, are similar. Comparing our paintings, one may get the impression that two artists went on a journey together, experiencing the same things they then painted. Although the results were two different interpretations, one could literally take a section from each person's painting, merge them together, and still have a unified statement.

As we continue to grow as artists we support and encourage one another to take risks in our work. To be free and bold in our expressions and to not doubt or edit when something new emerges.

Presently our studio and home are situated on a one-acre farm overlooking the Puget Sound and Bainbridge Island — just a 30 minute ferry ride from Seattle, Washington. We are kept company by our two faithful dogs, Lily and Diva, eight chickens and two fish. An abundance of flowers fill our landscape and gentle Chopin Nocturnes fill the air when Christopher plays piano.