

Vaughn Gillson

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Artist Statement

I was born and grew up on the north shore of Lake Superior in Port Arthur, Ontario, now Thunder Bay, and currently live in a village inland from Lake Huron. Between these points in my life bordering the Canadian Great Lakes, I studied and worked in Montreal, Toronto and New York focusing on theatre design (Montreal) and fine art (Toronto and New York). The influences of those with whom I studied and worked continue to mold my perceptions and sensibilities. Costume designer Francois Barbeau instilled a sense of value found in limited colour enhanced through texture. Technical direction and use of visual language were presented by artists John Michael Angel, Frank Mason and Robert Beverley Hale. Their artistic knowledge and masterly craft provided me with structured training in areas of classical discipline that laid the groundwork for carrying out creative ideas. The imprint of these early mentors, along with my own endeavours in studio practice and art instruction (teaching, print and video) make up the environment of critical thought and visual expression in which I now work.

Oil painting has become my medium of choice with its flexibility and versatility. I enjoy mulling over a subject as it reveals an aspect in its momentary space, courting my perceptions to glide over its surface. The painting space invites interaction among so many design concepts - describing space, rendering form, leaving traces of work activity, making associations, emphasizing, focusing, concentrating. Depending on the line of my observation, some may be chosen for frameworks that suggest a meaning, determination or point of view. My response to a theme or topic weaves among inner experiences, objective expressions and methods of craft as I develop these relationships, but ultimately I want the viewer to form an individual interpretation.