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A Few Recent Paintings—Standing Figures

More Magnificent Monotypes



Viet Nam Air, Oil on Canvas, 14"x18." Click on image for larger view.

Standing. It just may be how we spend a third of our lives—the other being lying and sitting. Who knows? Except that it likely varies widely between individuals. We can say that of all the animals, we're the standers. Homo erectus, they call us, "they" being all the rest of the animals, the ones that speak Latin.

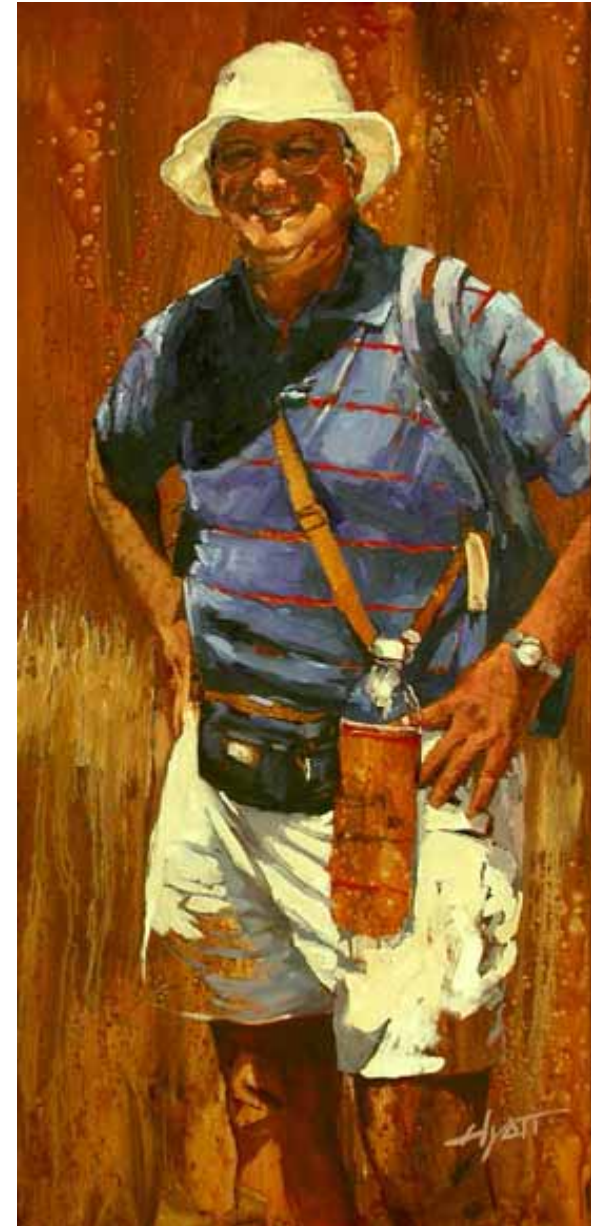
But I don't think about any of this as I paint (in a standing position, I might add). I paint what's interesting, and as often as not what's interesting is people standing. The one at left is from a photo a friend took about to board Viet Nam Airways, departing with her veteran husband to revisit less friendly days. I see something serene, something other-worldly about them, as if preparing for space travel. Likely we'd be the only beings who stand on two legs out there, too.



One of the genres I've explored is what I call the "standing portrait." At five foot, they are virtually life size. In all, most of the detail is in the face and upper body with the rest trailing off and weaving into experimental background.



"Father Joe" (left) hung for years at Diedrich's Coffee, appropriately across from the Mission in San Juan--until an old friend of his came by and bought it. The real Father Joe often laughed with friends below the painting, until he moved on too.



In the center is intelligent gardner Dave Williams, in a piece I call "Son of Adam," as he's doing the same work. Then there's lawyer Joe Busch, commissioned by the Mrs., capturing how he'd walk the mountains every summer with family.



Color can be as much the statement as the person in the painting, that and clothing to establish the identity, not to mention attitude, action, and demeanor. Above is a young woman of the Chinantec tribe in Oaxaca, Mexico looking



as demure and pretense-less as they come in her hand-made raiment of red. In the center is another Mexican, this one a Californian, participating in a high school mariachi tournament at the San Juan Mission, momentarily distracted.



Finally, "Flamenco Fire," another in a series of about 20 dance paintings made over the last year. They're about the movement, the color, the posture, and of course, the music. A painting may not record the latter, but it can do a lot with the mood.



Anne and I were in Santiago, across Lake Atitlan in Guatemala when I saw this group, dressed for a funeral and about to rejoin the procession. My pocket camera did the first work, then it was all brushes and paint. It's about the repetition of shape, the design we make, just standing around, not even knowing, or that someone is watching, and seeing beauty in it all. This one is "Santiago Six 2," (oil, 16"x20"), meaning it's the second one painted of the same image. The first, with different background was painted during the trip, in Guatemala, and left at the gallery in Antigua there. That one has since sold.



Matter of Opinion, monotype, 18"x24"

More Magnificent Monotypes

These fine prints, often on exotic papers, are building Anne's reputation among peers and collectors as an artist to watch. Keep in mind that while they're called "prints," they are not reproductions of something else. They are prints because of the way they are made, by hand, with inks and rollers, and a press designed for the purpose. And, being "mono," there is only one of each. Thus "print" can be misleading. Each is an original piece of art.



Mixed Metaphor, monotype, 16"x22"

While each is different, there's a theme. *Mixed Metaphor* is more dramatic in contrast than some and is produced from a more limited palette (if "palette" is the word, when it's really ink rolled out on a plate). Often the objects she uses to print from are of her own creation, carved "linocuts," sometimes left from earlier creations, sometime cut specifically for the new purpose. As often as not, it's a process of discovery as well as planning.



Parallel Passages, monotype, 7"x21.5"

Did I say it was a process of “discovery?” This one was originally created as one large square but it didn’t look right so Anne cut into quarters. That’s always a big risk, but in this process everything is. When she placed the pieces side by side it made a new sense, so there it is. Note the “writing systems,” another of Anne’s themes. These are made up, symbols of symbols as it were, influenced by Chinese and Arabic letter forms. She carves these by hand on linoleum. The textures are from torn papers, themselves like as not found in out-of-the-way places. These monotypes are studies in pattern, color, and even somewhat three-dimensional when you get up close. As with all of these, you can click on the picture for a larger view.

Until next time, keep your eyes open. The beauty is everywhere.