

Brian Bergquist
An English Expressionist

15. November bis 22. Dezember 2006

Painting: my secret vice...

At an early age I came into contact with the painters at a local colony of studios in London. These guys being mostly middle aged, I was exposed to the painting of an earlier era; the Fauves, the expressionists and especially the German expressionists. Of these, the strongest influence was to be the so-called 'English Fauve', Sir Matthew Smith, and I cannot claim to have shaken it off even today. Unfortunately my formal education in Art ended at about the age of fourteen, when my paintings were torn up in front of the class. This didn't bother me greatly, however, for I was multi-talented and many other routes were open to me. In this, of course, I was already misjudging the passion for painting – and painting outrageously – that had already seized me. No, I told myself: I can always paint at home, in my own time and – especially – for myself. With that another lifetime habit was born, together with the internal conflicts that went with it.

Thus, wherever my nomadic career as an applied mathematician took me, I signed on at the local Art College for evening classes. There I was introduced to drawing and painting from life; both portraits and nudes. In that I was lucky, for another influence that was to alienate me even further from 'official' painting had not reached such lowly levels. Abstract Expressionism had swept England together with much of Western Europe, and soon evolved into a chaotic form far removed from its American origins. The effect was near-catastrophic, with many successful painters like John Bratby – another favourite, but not an influence – actually giving up painting; even Lucien Freud and Francis Bacon were eclipsed for a couple of decades. Personally, I now felt more like a dinosaur than ever, for although I encountered a few breathtakingly beautiful canvases – Gillian Ayres comes to mind – most abstract expressionism seemed to be meaningless noise at best and charlatany at worst.

So I continued with my two passions – overtly a scientist and covertly a painter – whenever possible. A painting hiatus of some years occurred during my first marriage, but in the early eighties my second wife – the painter, Inge LeDosquet – persuaded me to start again. Through Inge I encountered the local painters, and through them I had my first exhibition in Leicester in nineteen ninety-two. I sold nothing, despite being well reviewed, but seeing

some forty of my works together convinced me at last that I was – and I still am – a good painter; not fashionable, maybe, but good. I learned also that in following my own path and ignoring the current trends I had gained in strength and confidence. Nevertheless, if it was down to me I would not be exhibiting in Munich, for my old reclusive habits had not died. That I am here is due to Egbert, Freiherr von Maltzahn, who irrupted into my studio about a year ago, and whose enthusiasm for my work has rekindled my fires as never before.

How would I assess my painting today? Much of my early interest in colourism, expressionism and figurative painting is still evident. The difference is that I'm painting more boldly and freely than ever before. True, I have to plead guilty to being 'retro', but in these times that is inevitable, I suspect. As Francis Bacon remarked, during the twentieth century many promising points of departure in painting were passed over in the hurry to get to the next innovation, and these remain rich fields for enterprising painters to exploit.

Brian Bergquist

Eröffnung

Dienstag, 14. November 2006, 18 bis 21 Uhr

Der Künstler ist anwesend

Ausstellungsdauer

15. November bis 22. Dezember 2006

Termin nach Vereinbarung