

Artist Statement 2018

My paintings are about contrasts; contrasting real and imaginary images and emphasizing the flat surface of the canvas with the illusion of space. Sometimes I emphasize contrast by juxtaposing childlike renderings with realistic tropical flora and fauna imagery. Sometimes I emphasize contrast by juxtaposing nature with manmade or exterior landscapes with interior landscapes...wild uncomfortable spaces with the comforts of home. Fear, apprehension, and negativity is being replaced by hope and optimism. The juxtaposition exaggerates the difference between real and realistic, with whimsy and impetuosity, with calmness and anxiety.

The paintings are unified through idea and design treatment, but each painting tells its own story. And viewers can also create their own stories from the images I present. There is activity, nervous energy, and turmoil. The colors are vivid. The lines create movement and tension. Things might seem troubled or bad, but life is good. Maybe we can be optimistic...maybe not.

I gather images by taking photographs. I like to explore the back roads of Florida and other southeastern states...exploring the landscapes of my ancestors who came to Florida in the early 1800's. I make frequent and lengthy stops to photograph wild areas. I visit small museums, restaurants, and random out of the way historical sites from which I can collect my own kinds of stories. The essence of these stories is revealed in my paintings.

My painting process involves collecting, cutting, editing my images, and arranging and combining them with help from Photoshop. I then print a completed mock-up. I also enlarge portions of the mock-up which I use when I draw the composition onto the prepared canvas. I combine this process with gridding to draw as much detail as I can. My next step is the underpainting. I actually paint the whole composition, figuring out the shapes and details but without a final sensitivity. I get values, color, and lines figured out. I also am laying down a preliminary surface of paint. When this second step is complete, I paint it all again. The second time I can create color contrasts and patterns and also create the desired surface quality. This is the *real* painting...the fun part.