

Painter David Vickery



Editor: Brenda Bonneville

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(Image: "Rockland Plaza" by David Vickery)

Cushing, Maine artist David Vickery says that his work is "about the merger of nature and culture - an attempt to make sense of our place in the world. I look at interior spaces and our imprint on the landscape with an eye for the imperfect, quirky, and sometimes elegant adaptations we've made in order to live here." He has exhibited in Maine, Massachusetts and New York, and was chosen for the six week Carina House residency on Monhegan Island in 1993. His work is in many private and corporate collections across the country.

When did you first realize that you were going to be an artist and when did you first start making art?

I drew a great deal early on and loved art class as most kids do. Later I became very interested in large-format photography in high school, but it wasn't until I became hooked on painting in college that I knew I was going to be an artist.

Who or what inspires you?

Transcendent everyday scenes, other artists engaged in contemporary realism, and masters of the past such as Vilhelm Hammershoi and Edward Hopper.

Is (was) anyone else in your family in the arts?

My grandfather was a talented draftsman but never pursued it professionally. My daughter is an accomplished violin/violist.



(Image: "Dormer" by David Vickery)

Are you self-trained or did you go to art school?

I took drawing, painting, and art history courses at College of the Atlantic ('87-89), but self-taught after that.

Is the process of creating your art long or short?

Long - both in deciding what to paint and in executing. I take a great deal of care in composing the picture, and as much time is spent staring at the painting as applying paint!

Tell us something about your work.

It's precise realism, or naturalism, of local scenes and interiors with an eye to contemporary relevance and a connection between the natural and man-made.

Do you have a subject matter that defines you as an artist?

No, I have a wide range of subject matter; whatever inspires me as I go about my life. My best subjects are often serendipitous discoveries. Self- Portrait with Ski Patrol and Rockland Plaza are good examples.

What makes you stay with a particular subject matter? Why are you drawn to it?

Because it resonates with a subconscious agenda that I don't fully understand.



(Image: "Self-Portrait With Ski Patrol" by David Vickery)

How do you stay motivated?

I'm usually very excited to see an idea develop through to completion. Failing that, the need to make a living!

What have you been working on lately? Are you experimenting with anything new?

A portrait, of which I've done very few. The human face is quite a landscape unto itself, very exacting and unforgiving, but more expressive than most other subjects.

Has your medium changed from when you first became an artist?

No, it's still oil mixed with liquin, applied in thin layers. I still have a couple of paint tubes from my college days 20+ years ago.

What advice would you give to an artist just starting out?

Find out what you're really passionate about and follow it. All of the tools, teachers, and techniques will fall into place - with some trial and error.



(Image: "Fales' February" by David Vickery)

What kind of comment do you despise the most when overheard at one of your openings?

When people comment on the frames and not the paintings. I'll know I've "arrived" as an artist when people stop talking about the darn frames!

What kind of comment pleases you the most when overheard at one of your openings?

When people say that they see growth and progress in the work.

How have you handled the business side of being an artist?

Fairly well - I'm able to make a living at it. However, I prefer to put my time and energy into creating art rather than marketing it, or myself.

Do you have any outside interests other than art?

Building, alternative energy (I put up a windmill on my property), and vegetable gardening.

Are you disciplined about your creative process (in other words, do you treat the process like a job, where you keep particular hours in the studio), or are you more spontaneous?

I generally keep regular studio hours.



(Image: "Rust Cycle" by David Vickery)

How would your life change if you were no longer allowed to create art?

It would be less interesting and more confined.

What's the best part of being a full time, working artist?

Being able to do what I want, keep my own hours, pursue personal, eccentric ideas and have the resulting work appreciated.

What's the worst part of being a full time, working artist?

Unpredictable income.

Where can we find your work?

Dowling Walsh Gallery, Rockland, and Courthouse Gallery, Ellsworth. And on my web site, where I post newly completed work, dvickery.com .

- Brenda Bonneville, editor

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