

I have been active as a professional artist since 2002. I primarily work in oils and mixed media drawings, and most of my work tends to be figurative in one way or another. I have exhibited nationally and internationally, and I have work in the permanent collections of two American museums.

This body of work represents a cross section of my obsessions as an artist the past five years or so...It also represents a return to a place that I feel like I fled in order to have a better life. Some tremendous things happened to me when I left Memphis for the Pacific Northwest. I grew up in the South, but never really considered it a place that I belonged to...Although I have had a lifetime of travel and being a traveler does something to your outlook on place. While I was living in Portland, I was contacted by an art dealer in France who was really taken with my vision, and I have been exhibiting with his gallery the past five years. It is a wonderful thing to have your vision taken seriously as an artist and to have a relationship develop because of it. The rabbits, the animals, the portraits, these are all paintings that were meant to accompany the 1500 or so large drawings I have sent to France the past four years. My dealer died unexpectedly last fall, and although his widow continues to operate the gallery and represent my work, it was a terrible blow...

My process seems to be little more than responding to and navigating a constant compulsion to create, and to create with the knowledge that I do not know...I used to say this to myself constantly because I recognized the need to get the hell out of the way...My process is intuitive, but not stupid, and I trust the voices and the winds that speak to me from other places. I also enjoy the tension between abstraction and representation, and buzzing or burning that edge as closely as I can get...There is so much pictorial possibility in this line of work...I think I have wanted my work to present a life almost as if it were seen in a vision, as a succession of visionary states, or images seen in a trance...Kind of like markers on the edge of things...I have always seen the world slanted...I'd like to think these images offer a glimpse into a softer unknown, one that is closer to us than strange would be, a gentle alienation. There is something about the way these paintings wrestle with the idea of the eternal, clumsily it can seem, an art that is completely at the service of a vision of reality. It should be noted that I am deeply interested in representing reality in my work, but the kind of reality, the depth of it, is what is up for grabs. I want to leave the door wide open. The language of modernism is useful in this regard, where I can take representation and abstraction and smash them together as tightly as they can go. In some of the work the abstraction bleeds over, and in some of the pieces the representation provides the window frame.

There is violence in my work. There is also queerness and strange, and forms looking directly at the viewer, sometimes challenging, sometimes puzzled at their existence, sometimes simply existing in a kind of tunneling fullness. I often want this work to cast a queer light, like a strange light shining in a dull and often painful place.

–Christopher St. John

1. **My Double Rabbit Shadow**, 8"x10" framed mixed media drawing 2014 / 400.00

This series of drawings is a part of a larger body of work that focused on rabbits and the human form. The touchstone of this work is living in a post 9/11 world where fear is a constant part of our lives. I was interested in creating forms that felt like the results of living with a pervasive sense of vulnerability.

2. **Big Headed Rabbit**, 8"x10" framed mixed media drawing 2014 / 400.00

Like most of the figurative work I have done in this vein, the rabbits in this series are both keenly aware of their strangeness and of the viewer, and they are at a loss to do anything that would change their situation without creating unintended, cascading and reverberating consequences. The lyrical line quality and the plastic colors all reference pleasure.

3. **Bound Rabbit**, 8"x10" framed mixed media drawing 2014 / 400.00

4. **Cat in a Sweater**, I Swear-oil on panel, 8.5"x10", 2015 / 450.00

I am often using the knife in my work, and smearing the paint in such a way as to capture or suspend a moment in time. I often feel closer to animals and think about their confusion living in a human dominated world.

5. **A Flood of Emotion for an Animal I Love**, oil on panel, 8.5"x10" 2014 / 450.00

6. **Selfies**, oil on panel, 8"x8" 2015 / 350.00

7. **Selfies**, oil on panel, 8"x8" 2015 350.00

8. **Selfies**, oil on panel, 8"x8" 2015 \$350.00

9. **Selfies**, oil on panel, 8"x8" 2015 / 350.00

10. **Selfies**, oil on panel, 8"x8" 2015 / 350.00

11. **Selfies**, oil on panel, 8"x8" 2015 / 350.00

12. **Selfies**, oil on panel, 8"x8" 2015 / 350.00

13. **Selfies**, oil on panel, 8"x8" 2015 / 350.00

14. **Feeding Time for a Young Shit**, oil on canvas, 11"x14" 2015 / 500.00

15. **Portrait of a Young Boy**, oil on canvas, 11"x14" 2015 / 500.00

16. **A Cat's Double Nature**, oil on canvas, 11"x14" 2015 / 500.00

17. **One Shy Rabbit Seeing the World Through a Pair of Old Time-y Glasses**, oil, wood, metal on panel, 12"x12" 2014 / 500.00

18. **Three Rabbits in a Religious Trance-oil on panel**, 7"x8", 2014 / \$300.00

19. **Three Rabbits in a Religious Trance-oil on panel**, 6.5"x8", 2014 / 300.00

20. **Three Rabbits in a Religious Trance**, oil on panel, 7"x8", 2014 / 350.00

21. **Quirk**, oil on panel, 9"x12" 2014 / 500.00

Sometimes the images and colors in my work come to me more like sound and more like the wind from another world. The figures that arise are usually just as baffled as I am at their arrival.

22. **Gurk**, oil on panel, 2014 / 500.00

23. **Quirk**, oil on panel, 2014 / 500.00

24. **One Rabbit in Ecstasy**, oil on panel, 2014 / 500.00

25. **The Dislocated**, oil on panel 24"x24" / 1200.00

Each of these portraits is an exploration of the portrait in the most abstract terms. I was interested in taking this form and distilling it to its thickest, juiciest, nerviest essence. Done largely with the knife, I was trying to create an analogue in part for the way that the human presence fills a space. I have always been interested in that friction zone between representation and abstraction and the way that perception creates a kind of buzz in the way that we experience each other. This portrait depicts a woman.

26. **The Dislocated #2**, oil on panel, 2013 24"x24" / 1200.00

I had originally done this series with the intention that the portraits be displayed upside down. I worked them this way trying to unsee the way I remembered faces, but when I finished the pieces and turned them right side up, I was tremendously surprised at how well they worked.

27. **The Dislocated #3**, oil on panel, 2013 24"x24" / 1200.00

This painting in the Dislocated series tries to create a visual analogue for the persistence of the screen in our lives.

28. **The Dislocated #4**, oil on panel, 2013 24"x24" / 1200.00

29. **Gothic Detroit #1**, mixed media on paper mounted on wood panel 11"x14" 2015 / 600.00

30. **Gothic Detroit #2**, mixed media on paper mounted on wood panel 11"x14" 2015 / 600.00

31. **Gothic Detroit #3**, mixed media on paper mounted on wood panel 11"x14" 2015 / 600.00

32. **Gothic Detroit #4**, mixed media on paper mounted on wood panel 11"x14" 2015 / 600.00

33. **Gothic Detroit #5**, mixed media on paper mounted on wood panel 11"x14" 2015 / 600.00

34. **Gothic Detroit #6**, mixed media on paper mounted on wood panel 11"x14" 2015 \$600.00

This series Gothic Detroit was completed while I was at an artist in residence program in Detroit last September. It had been five years since I had been anywhere east of the Mississippi and away from Portland. This residency had a profound experience on my life and my work. My French art dealer and close friend Dominique Sablons died unexpectedly while I was in Detroit. I was also struck hard by the state of the city with its poverty, decay, and its Gothic architecture. I knew American life had become bad for many of us, but seeing it firsthand in a place like Detroit, experiencing what I had always really only considered a marginal darkness really validated my vision as an artist.