

James Bockelman

Biographical Statement

Born in Hebron, Nebraska James Bockelman grew up in Des Moines, Iowa. And though he doesn't remember the word design being used in the home, one of his earliest memories of visual organization occurred when his mother asked him to help her move the furniture in the living room. As he recalls, "She explained to me why we moved the couch just off center, in order to create a room within a room". Encouraged to take art courses throughout high school, one of his political cartoons was published in the Des Moines Register for a contest related to the Presidential race of 1980. In 1989 he graduated from Concordia University with a major in art education and moved to Ontario, California where he taught eighth grade for three and a half years before returning to Concordia as an instructor of art. In 1997 he earned the Master of Fine Arts degree in painting and drawing from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln.

Since that time, his work has been represented by Lo River Arts in Beacon, New York, the Karolyn Sherwood Gallery in Des Moines, and is currently represented by Modern Arts Midtown in Omaha. In addition to exhibiting in numerous group shows throughout the region, Bockelman's art was featured in solo exhibitions at the Sheldon Memorial Museum of Art in Lincoln, the Museum of Nebraska Art in Kearney, the Norfolk Arts Center in Norfolk, Nebraska, and the Kunstoffice in Berlin, Germany. A recipient of a Nebraska Arts Fellowship Award in 2007, his paintings were recently included in the exhibition Art Seen: A Juried Exhibition of Artists from Omaha to Lincoln at the Joslyn Museum of Art in Omaha and juried by Joslyn curator Karin Campbell and Bill Arning, Director of the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston. This fall, Bockelman is preparing work for exhibitions in Denver and St Louis.

Artist Statement

At any given time, I carry around with me an assortment of odd, haptic experiences and visual impressions — how can I forget my near sighted father, sitting in the dark living room without his glasses on, staring at the Christmas tree lights because they were fuzzy, orbs of color; and then him inviting me, his thirteen year old son to take my glasses off so that I also might participate in his seeing. These referents register with me. And I often find that a painting may begin there with a slight connotation, with little idea of how the final work will evolve. Though few of the paintings follow any overt theme or formula, they ultimately travel through the process of painting until they accumulate their own identity; these paintings move beyond their initial reference and become a work that I recognize as my own.

I trust the process of painting and often work on twenty-five paintings at one time. I do this because I want to bring all of them up together toward resolution. In doing so, I am able measure how the images dialogue with one another, exchange energy, or serve as an additional, critical space for one another. To decide how to begin a painting is just as important as to decide when the thing is completed. Though I hate using a square format, all of the paintings measure 22" x 22". The square was selected because of its historic relevance to the development of abstraction and as an appropriate location to study the activity of light and color. Rather than the traditional landscape or portrait, the square, with its even, dynamic energy alludes to a non-site, a location that is in-between. And though my mind and eye are often the most engaged while painting, the painting's size and scale relate well to the space between my shoulders and hips.

For my records I've titled this series of 22" X 22" oil on paper, These Referents Register.

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1. **Solitaire**. 2014. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
- 2 **Idyll**. 2012. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
3. **Red Ruffled**. 2013. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
4. **Imposter**. 2014. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
5. **Echo**. 2013. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
6. **Montagne**. 2013. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
7. **Pirate**. 2012. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
8. **Fields Overlaid**. 2013. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
9. **Modle**. 2014. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
10. **Trellis**. 2012. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
11. **Echo**. 2013. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
12. **Save Everything**. 2011. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
13. **Field of Play**. 2012. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
14. **Harlequin**. 2016. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
15. **Go!** 2016. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
16. **Trim**. 2016. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
17. **Frequency**. 2016. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
18. **Archangel**. 2013. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"
19. **Interference**. 2016. Oil on paper. 22" X 22"

2200.00 / signed original painting in frame

Select paintings are on view and more may be shown upon request.