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WINTER 2012 • THE ART INDUSTRY'S NEWS LEADER SINCE 1977 NEWS

EXPLOPING MIAMI ART WEEK



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PERSPECTIVES

ABN



IS IT ART?

MAKING ART ACCESSIBLE
DURING MIAMI ART WEEK

BY ERIC SMITH

“It’s interesting... but is it art?”

It’s a question you hear during Miami Art Week, as the ratio of quirky, kitschy and downright eccentric art soars at the same rate as the influx of visitors—with more than 50,000 collectors, gallery owners, designers and artists all making their way to the country’s most anticipated fine art extravaganza.

And while ultra contemporary art certainly has its place among the 20-plus shows that take place around Art Basel (Art Miami, SCOPE, PULSE and Artexpo Miami among them), is there still a market for buyers interested in more accessible offerings?

Absolutely!

Sure, crowds and media tend to swarm around the more show-stopping pieces, just as they cluster around the super-charged Porches at a car show. But when it’s time to buy, elegant and affordable beat over-the-top and expensive every time. In the end, there aren’t all that many people who want—or can actually afford—such impractical luxuries.

If you’re scouring Miami Art Week for wallet-friendly finds, let me offer some tips:

1. HIT THE BIG FAIRS, BUT SHOP THE SMALLER ONES

By all means, visit the big, iconic art fair that started it all, as Art Basel offers a never-ending supply of visual eye candy. But when it’s time to whip out your checkbook, spend some time browsing the smaller art fairs like Artexpo Miami, Aqua Art Miami, NADA, Pool, Verge, Overture Miami and Design Miami/ (see pg. 42).

2. SCOUR THE GALLERIES FOR ONE-OF-A-FINDS

Rambling through the maze of Miami Art Week events can feel a bit overwhelming. If you’re looking for smaller doses and more intimate settings in which to explore art, take a detour through the smattering of galleries that call the Wynwood Arts District home. Recently declared the world’s sixth most “stylish neighborhood” by *Complex*, this trendy neighborhood boasts more than 70 galleries, museums and private collections. (Check out the warehouse of preeminent collector Martin Z. Margulies, whose massive collection includes works by Willem De Kooning, George Segal and Mary Ellen Mark.)

3. MINGLE WITH EXHIBITORS AND ASK ABOUT THEIR OFFERINGS

Remember that you’re only seeing a sampling of an exhibitor’s work at an art fair. If there’s an artist whose work you really enjoy, approach him or her (or the gallery or publisher representing the artist) and find out whether the artist has any pieces within your price range. Ask if he or she offers any limited edition, archival quality reproductions (many artists do). If the work is very large, ask if he or she has any smaller pieces. It never hurts to ask! And it gives you the chance to forge a personal connection with the artist—to get to know more about his or her inspiration, technique and larger body of work.

Of course, these tips apply to any art exhibition. But if you’re lucky enough to be attending Miami Art Week this year, the *Art Business News* team will be out and about—and we’re an official sponsor of Artexpo Miami. We hope to see you there!

By the time you’re reading this, our all-new Website will be live at ArtBusinessNews.com. Please take a moment to see its many new features and share your feedback with us at letters@artbusinessnews.com. And be prepared for plenty of exciting new announcements in 2013. Happy holidays! **ABN**

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ALEXIS BURYK

(www.lexibphotography.com)

is a Chicago-based writer and interdisciplinary artist working in photography, performance, text and installation. She has studied at the Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre, iO Chicago, Second City, NYU and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where she completed an MFA in Writing. Her written work has been published in *liner*, *The Ukrainian Weekly* and *MovieMaker*, and her photographic work has been featured at Chicago's

Palmer House Hilton Hotel. In this issue, she learns how to paint anything (p. 50).



KEVIN

CANFIELD is a

freelance writer living in New

York City. His work has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Spin*, *Bookforum*, *Film Comment* and many other publications. For his *Art Business News* debut, Canfield chats with a handful of artists about the delicate balance between artistic vision and client demand when working on a commissioned piece (p. 34).



J. JASON HOREJS

has been in the art business his

entire life. Horejs' father is a nationally-collected painter. Horejs started working in a gallery at the age of 17. In 2001, he established Xanadu Gallery in Scottsdale, Arizona, where he has worked with artists and collectors from around the world. He is the author of "Starving" to Successful, which offers artists a comprehensive understanding of the gallery business and a systematic way to approach galleries. In this issue, he shares his commandments of pricing (p. 26).



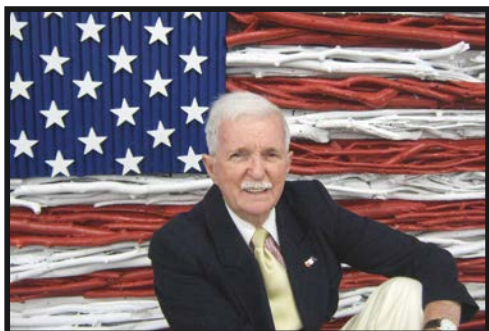
ZACHARY WIGON

is a New York-based writer

and journalist. His work has been featured in *The New York Press*, *NYLON* and *Filmmaker Magazine*, among many other outlets. For his first *Art Business News* article, Wigon caught up with the co-founders of Indiewalls, an innovative new company playing matchmaker between artist, venue and buyer on the walls of restaurants, hotels and cafes around New York City (p. 38).



Otok Ben-Hvar, MFA, known in the artistic international sphere as "A Magical Disneyland Figure Come to Life,"* is a rare multifaceted firecracker artist; whose life nor his art is an imitation of anything. Ben expresses and reveals art aesthetics in ways many accomplished artists never do, simply by living life and zestfully inventing new ways to apply paints in unique, various, unimaginable transitions to create new forms of art.



Ben, through his Firecracker Art, creates artwork that visually embodies our lives, patriotism, freedom and the independence every patriot and art lover enjoys.

Distinct Achievements on Record

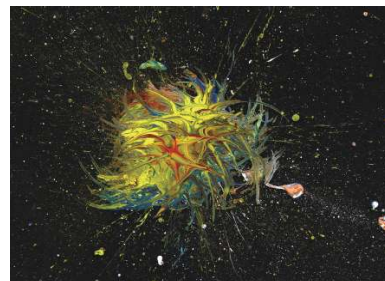
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*The author Peter Bostock: "The Great Atlantic Air Race"



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On the Cover: How&Nosm paint Miami's Wynwood Walls. Image courtesy of the artists and Wynwood Walls. Photo by Martha Cooper.



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INSIDE THE FRAME

ABN

ART IN **MOTION**

GIFs. In the early days of the Internet they were, well, *crude*. All dancing babies, flashing “Under Construction” banners and the occasional spinning globe. But as the Web has evolved, so has the GIF—into a medium some call an art form.

The GIF turns 25 this year, so it’s a fitting time for *Moving the Still: A GIF Festival*, the first large-scale exhibition dedicated to the format. In keeping with the collaborative nature of the Web, Moving the Still began with an open call inviting artists to submit their original GIFs for consideration by the festival’s Selection Council, members of which hail from a variety of creative industries, including photography, video art, painting, fashion and music.

The accepted entries, on view at movingthestill.tumblr.com, range from the stunningly beautiful (Nick Knight’s *Roses McQueen Met Ball*) to the vibrant and energetic (Erica Anderson’s abstract *Red Streaks*). However different they are though, they



CELEBRATING **THE GIF**

all have one thing in common: They’re art.

“The GIF file format is in and of itself its own medium—a medium that has already been employed by some of the world’s top contemporary artists,” explains Collin Munn, editorial manager of Paddle8, an online destination for art collectors, which launched the project with Tumblr.

Moving the Still will culminate with a Miami Art Week exhibition, where 25 pieces will be projected onto screens and presented alongside contextual material on the history of the GIF.

GIF art, Munn says, “seems to continue the trajectory begun by the advent of video art—which was a slowly accepted medium, too—but in a different way, by blending antiquated ‘stop motion-esque’ aesthetics with clearly digital ones. A look back at the diverse history of video art makes me very excited to see where the GIF goes.”

Visit movingthestill.paddle8.com for more information.

—REBECCA PAHLE

ART BIZ CONFIDENTIAL

J. JASON HOREJS GOES FROM “**STARVING**” TO SUCCESSFUL

If you’re like most artists, you’ve got one goal in mind for the upcoming year: *Sell more art!* Yes, even if 2012 was a banner year for you, there’s always one more client out there. And one more gallery in which your work is destined to hang! Frankly, it can all be a bit overwhelming. Just as with personal relationships, it takes time to forge professional connections. And only a lucky few artists know a true industry insider who can also serve as a part-time creative confidante. Until now.

Art has been a lifelong endeavor for J. Jason Horejs, the founder of Scottsdale’s Xanadu Gallery, who has been playing matchmaker to artists and collectors since the age of 17. Five years ago, he developed a workshop to help artists put their most professional selves forward when approaching galleries. Now he has taken that passion for education one step further with “*Starving*” to *Successful: The Fine Artist’s Guide to Getting Into Galleries and Selling More Art*, a must-read handbook for artists wanting to improve their bottom lines.

“My goal in these pages is to give you an understanding of the art business, a concrete plan for systematic preparation in approaching a gallery and the necessary tools to cultivate a relationship with the gallery owner/director,” Horejs notes in his Introduction. Few people are better equipped to provide just that.

By focusing the bulk of his 180-plus pages on the importance of building relationships (not simply assuming that your art will “speak for itself”), Horejs offers a unique—and much-needed—perspective into what it truly takes to successfully sell your art. Within its 17 chapters, Horejs offers his readers step-by-step guidance on how to achieve greater success. His advice is easy to read, simple to follow and truly invaluable for all artists in every stage of their careers.

Visit www.xanadugallery.com/book to purchase a copy. (The book is also available via Amazon.com and for Kindle.)



—JENNIFER M. WOOD

INSIDE THE FRAME

ABN

BUY DIRECT, SELL DIRECT

ART MARKET NETWORK STARTS A NEW TREND IN ONLINE ART BROKERING

The world of buying and selling art is high-powered and often hard to negotiate. Many online art brokers specialize only in high-end art, or limit their selections to well-known artists.

Last year, Mark Cunningham, owner of Gallery Art Market in Springfield, Missouri, created Artmarketnetwork.com, an online brokerage service dedicated to connecting buyers and sellers directly, without third party involvement, and offering a wide selection of art from established and emerging artists alike. Because it's a true brokerage site, Artmarketnetwork.com gives artists, art collectors and art dealers the opportunity to sell—or resell—works on the international stage, directly to interested parties.

The advantages are immediately apparent. Art collectors may want to part with some or all of their existing collection, and Artmarketnetwork.com offers them a convenient showcase for everything from sculpture to paintings. Art dealers can use the site to enhance their gallery recognition while selling directly to the client through the site. And artists no longer have to struggle with the efforts and competition of getting into brick and mortar galleries to have their work viewed by potential clients.

As for art lovers, there's no need to scour galleries and art exhibits for their acquisitions and no hard sell. There's also the chance to locate desired artworks at very reasonable prices. It's a win-win for the art world.

A quick tour of the Website turns up works from artists as varied as nationally-renowned Navajo painter R.C. Gorman, light painter Jesse Barnes and noted wildlife artist Susan Morrison. The site's carefully constructed navigation feature lets buyers review available work by selecting to view private seller, artist or gallery/dealer, then by media type, edition type or category. Buyers can, therefore, peruse the site in a highly selective manner, choosing only those artworks that will complement their homes, offices or existing collections.

The most interesting and unusual aspect of the site is that



Larry Dyke's *Confetti Rooster*, courtesy of Artmarketnetwork.com

it acts merely as virtual display space for sellers, who join the site through a free membership. Art Market Network collects a modest commission on each sale, but the transaction itself is enacted entirely between buyer and seller, who utilize the Website for security.

Cunningham—who has been involved in the art market since 1988—says he designed the site “to help create a new way to build a network of relationships within the art industry.” He spent a number of years bringing the site to fruition, and has addressed the issues of copyright infringement, convenient payment and simplicity of viewing and selecting fine art pieces.

Cunningham notes that over the years he has had many people ask him to help them sell or locate art. He says he has seen trends in the marketplace emerge, but right now he's starting his own trend—one that he hopes will help the marketing of art evolve.

For more information, visit www.artmarketnetwork.com. Contact Mark Cunningham at mark@artmarketnetwork.com or 417-865-1888.

15 MINUTES

GO WEST, YOUNG ARTIST

A CHANGE OF SCENERY ALTERS THE CREATIVE FATE OF CODY HOOPER

BY JENNIFER M. WOOD

“Location, location, location” may be the first rule in real estate, but for Cody Hooper it’s a mandate that’s equally important in the art world, too. Three years ago, the 33-year-old artist took a serious leap of faith when—despite a tough economy—he decided to pack up his truck and make the 750-mile move from his hometown of Austin, Texas to the bustling (and tough-to-crack) art scene in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

“I relocated during a time that wasn’t rational,” Hooper recalls today. “I even slept in my truck until I eventually landed gallery representation, because I couldn’t afford a motel. I was determined to put myself in an environment that would fuel my soul, and now I’m living every artist’s dream.”

Less than a year after his arrival, Hooper was one of Santa Fe’s rising stars, noted for his unique modernist abstract works that are clearly influenced by the natural world around him.

JENNIFER WOOD (ABN): When did you first know you wanted to be an artist?

CODY HOOPER (CH): When I was about five or six I saw my mom painting with oils at the kitchen table. I would sit in a trance



and watch every stroke she made. I loved the richness and smell of the paints, but I wasn’t allowed to touch them. She bought me an art desk and supplies that Christmas and it’s all I remember wanting to do from that point forward.

ABN: When was the first time you called yourself “an artist?”

CH: I guess when I started painting full-time three years ago. That is when I decided I was an artist and [that] I would survive off of this skill alone.

ABN: How would you describe your style?

CH: It’s abstract with a hint of realism. I like the feel of combining contemporary abstract with natural elements, such as the flow of a flower shaded into an abstracted background. Some of my work has a landscape quality to it. I have lots of styles that I enjoy—some being much bolder than others—but they all relate back to nature.

ABN: What’s your preferred medium?

CH: Acrylic. Mainly because it’s easy to manipulate. I come from a watercolor background and I can still use those techniques with acrylic. Layers and layers built upon each other create [a] depth that you can’t get with oils. I also like to work quickly, so the drying time of acrylics is great.

ABN: What attracts you to a subject?

CH: Color, composition, textures and movement. I try to re-create all of this in my work. That’s why I love New Mexico so much: You are surrounded by all of this—amazing sunsets, purple misty mountains, the changing seasons. I go hiking often and see interesting things every time I go out. There is so much to explore out here and it has a sense of being untouched.

ABN: Location seems to play an important role in your work.

CH: Location is huge for me and probably every other artist. You have to be comfortable to think and focus on your work. I think the energy of the studio, the music you listen to and [your] location all have an effect on what you put out. My work instantly got better when I moved to Santa Fe... My work has more life and energy in it now. It's more colorful and dynamic. I feel better here. It's peaceful and I know I'm surrounded by the best artists and galleries. Santa Fe and New Mexico really do have a special creative energy.

ABN: *How do you define success for yourself?*

CH: Getting to have the freedom to do what I love everyday... I just paint what I love and the paintings always seem to find someone else who connects with them enough to have to have that painting in their home forever. That, to me, is success—knowing I can touch and influence someone in that way.

ABN: *What do you hope viewers take away from you work?*

CH: I hope they will see the passion and care for what I do. My goal is to create the most dynamic and interesting work that I can. By doing so, I hope they can connect with the work on an emotional level. Like music makes you feel.

ABN: *What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?*

CH: "Go to Santa Fe." That changed my life and started my career.

ABN: *What's the worst piece of advice you've ever been given?*

CH: "Create and stick with one style." How boring is that? I think every artist has a distinct brand to the way they create; you don't have to pigeonhole yourself into creating the same look over and over and over again. As an artist you should always be challenging and changing. It's what makes this exciting.

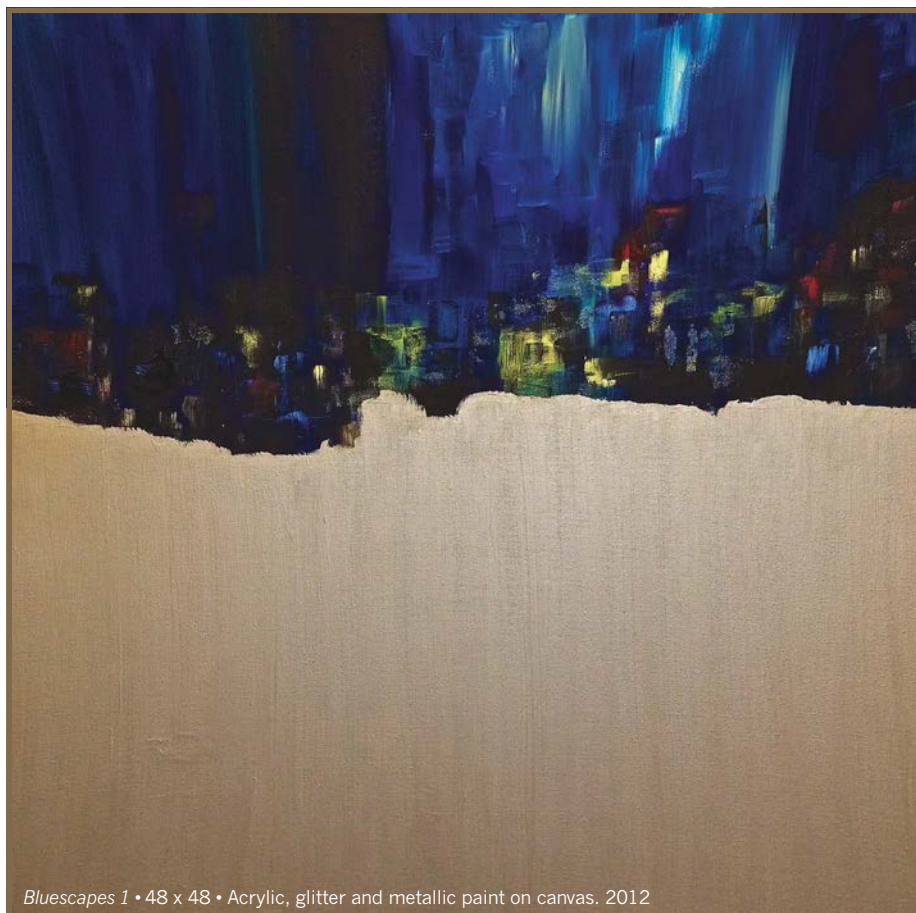


Natural Melody 24" x 24" mixed media on panel

ABN: *What's the most surprising thing you've learned about the art world?*

CH: There are no rules. If you create amazing work, your options are unlimited. I was told that it would take me 10 years to break into the art world, to get into Santa Fe. I packed up my art, knocked on doors and found a gallery that believed in me and they took me on my first year. We did great and I was able to start painting full-time and get into other galleries because of that... You can be anything you want in the art world if you work for it and have no fear.

For more information on Cody Hooper—including information on his *Evoke* series, which he'll be showing throughout the southwest region—visit www.codyhooperart.com. **ABN**

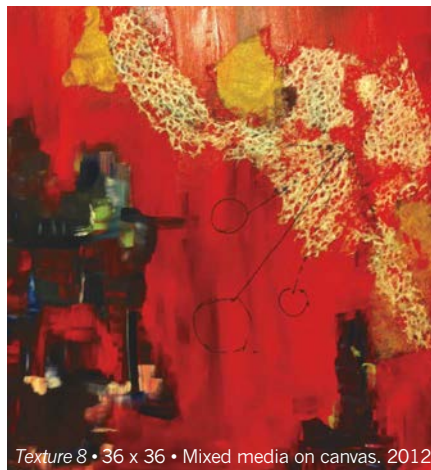


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THE DELICATE DANCE OF PAINTING FOR HIRE



Jivan Lee surveys his work; Lee's *Dialogue, with hat*

BY KEVIN CANFIELD

About five years ago Jivan Lee (JivanLee.com) decided to create a painting of a home in Mamaroneck, New York. “Just for fun, I was painting the entrance of where I was staying at the time, which was my sister’s house,” Lee recalls. “A neighbor saw that and was like, ‘Oh man, would you do that for me?’ And that was it.”

That was Lee’s first time working as a commission artist. Though at first he didn’t find the neighbor’s place terribly interesting, he agreed to give it a shot.

“In this case the house was just not beautiful to me in the way I would be compelled to paint something,” says the New Mexico-based artist. “But I spent an hour or so just sitting there, looking at everything. I found what was compelling to me and I made a painting around that. In this particular case there was a beautiful tree right in front of this house that cast a shadow across the entire thing, and that shadow really was what made it possible for me to be inspired while painting.”

Lee’s experience is not unusual. Artists who make a living painting commissioned pieces—or those, like Lee,

who supplement their income with the occasional commissioned work—are often faced with a unique set of questions: How does my artistic vision mesh with the desires of the client? What kind of input should clients have as I’m painting? And how *much* input? Every artist has different answers to these queries.

Robbi Firestone, a Tacoma, Washington-based artist who creates what she calls “Spirit Capture Portraits”—these, she says, “focus on one’s outer likeness and inner beauty”—has been doing commission work for eight years. Her paintings are inspired by impressionism, and these days, she says, 95 percent of



Robbi Firestone unveils her portrait of Bart Millard to the MercyMe singer

her professional work is commission-based.

Once she has been hired to create a painting, Firestone interviews the customer “about their passions and their possibilities. Usually when people are becoming familiar with my work, I ask them to spend some time on my Website (RobbiFirestone.com) and really get to know my work, because I’m not a photorealist or classical realism artist. I have

my own style.”

Firestone charges \$15,000 to \$20,000 per portrait—more than 20 percent of which goes to charity, she says—but on at least one occasion she told a potential customer that she wasn’t the artist for the job. “I just started asking him about his aesthetic and he seemed a little uncomfortable, so I ended up recommending him to another artist in the region because I could just tell my work wasn’t

Pacific Northwest enough for him.”

Though she passed on that particular job, Firestone says she was happy to send a bit of work to another painter: “I’m really happy to support other artists. I feel like a rising tide lifts all boats.”

Federico Leon de la Vega, a Nayarit, Mexico-based artist who specializes in large paintings of fruit—oranges and tangerines are among his most popular subjects—and Pacific Coast seascapes, says his Website (FedericoLeondeVega.com) is a useful marketing tool but adds that he gets a lot of commission work from diners who see his paintings in his wife’s restaurant.

Not too long ago “an elderly couple came and they had a couple of hamburgers and some coffee and stayed a long time,” says de la Vega. “You could tell that they were still in love after many years. They came into the gallery (next to the restaurant) and he just asked, ‘Would you do a portrait of my wife?’ I said I’d be delighted. That’s the way it happens most of the time.”

Like Firestone, de la Vega gets a sense of what his customers are looking for by doing preliminary sketches and color studies. Though he has never had to



ABOVE: Federico Leon de la Vega in his studio
LEFT: de la Vega’s *Naranjas Enamoradas*

"I DEFINITELY HAVE TO GET INSPIRED IN EVERYTHING I DO."

turn away a customer, de la Vega—who charges about \$7,000 for a 5' x 7' fruit painting—admits that not every job is as compelling as the next. "Some commissions are more difficult to get inspired [for] than others," he says, "but I definitely have to get inspired in everything I do. I try to find beauty in everything that I put my brush to."

A native of Argentina who moved to the United States as a boy in the 1970s, Gino Savarino (SavarinoArt.com) paints professionally in Chicago, where he often works on commissioned pieces for private collectors, architects and interior designers. His commission work also includes performances in which he paints for groups of spectators. Savarino calls himself a modern abstract artist who works with "lots of texture and color" and whose style dictates the kinds of questions he asks potential customers.

"With abstract, it is different than a portrait painter or landscape work because the outcome is almost never



Gino Savarino



Jennifer Vranes poses in front of a completed 9' x 12' commission

what you expected it to be coming into the project," says Savarino, who charges anywhere from \$300 for a small painting to \$3,000 for a larger work. "They have some sort of an idea of what my style is, and they will in turn say, 'I'm looking for this size and these colors and I want it to have lots of texture.' For me, that's simple; that comes naturally. When they want certain shapes or [for the piece] to look a certain way, I try my best to accommodate them. But because it is abstract it's sometimes almost impossible to create *exactly* what they're looking for. Although I allow up to three revisions, it is always best [for clients] to give me a basic idea of what they're looking for and allow me to just create."

Recently Savarino had to explain to

artist colleague of mine that specializes in that."

Jennifer Vranes (JensArt.com), an Oregon-based artist who specializes in large-scale landscape paintings that she calls "happy art" (with a laugh, she says she has been told that her work helps lower the blood pressure of its viewers) has found herself in a similar situation only once since she began painting commission work in the late 1990s. "These people just wanted a copy, and I don't want to do a copy of anything," she says. "It's always unique and original."

Customers typically provide Vranes—who completed approximately 50 commissioned paintings last year—with furniture swatches and information about wall colors as she's working. "Sometimes

"GIVE ME A BASIC IDEA OF WHAT [YOU'RE] LOOKING FOR AND ALLOW ME TO JUST CREATE."

a potential customer that he just wasn't the right artist for a particular job. "A bride-to-be wanted me to do a live painting performance with an abstract background, but she wanted the foreground to be her and her new husband doing their first dance. I told her, 'Although I welcome new challenges, I cannot compromise my work or my style.' If it's not what I do, the best thing for me to do is what I did in this case: To refer her to an

they're really specific: 'Can I get this painting in this size?' And I'll say, 'Every painting is unique, but it can be very similar and it can be done in any size you need.'"

"If you want to make a living and create art for other people's homes, then you need to be flexible," Vranes continues. "I'm not the one living with it, they are."

Lee says he has never had to turn away a potential customer, but notes that

commissions (he has done seven, for which he charges up to \$12,000, over the last few years) are just a small part of his working life.

Asked what he would do if he was faced with a customer who wanted a painting that he was unmoved to create, Lee answers that he has “been lucky enough that I haven’t had to face that question, knock on wood. I hope I don’t really ever have to face the question of, ‘Am I going to modify my artistic approach to meet a collector’s demand?’ I think in that case I would just say, ‘Why are you commissioning the work from me? Find an artist who’s going to actually paint something with passion that you want to see.’”

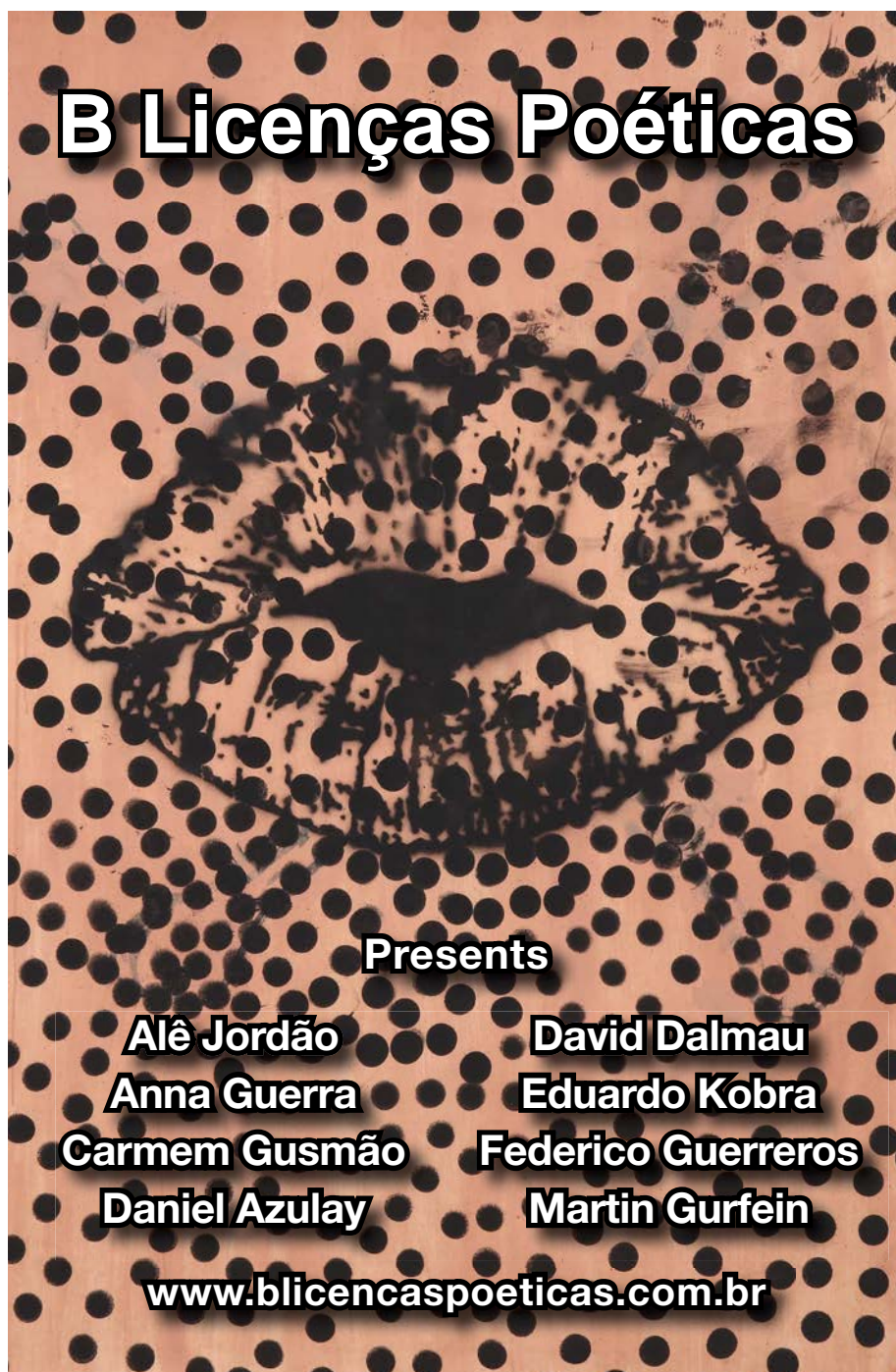
“YOU NEED TO BE FLEXIBLE.”

Firestone agrees, adding that artists who believe they can provide what customers are looking for shouldn’t hesitate to join the ranks of those who work on commissioned pieces.

“My advice to artists is that if you can get someone to hire you for a commission, then do it and see how it goes for your own personal self-discovery,” she says. “We judge ourselves so much, and we limit ourselves so much. So much of our identity is placed on how much money we make as artists, and I feel like the sooner you can open that pipeline to being comfortable with making money from your artwork, the better it is.

“I know great artists who are just terrified to do a studio tour,” Firestone continues, “or are terrified to post how much they charge on Facebook. Artists have to be brazen. You have to jump off the cliff—you have to put yourself out there.” **ABN**

“SO MUCH OF OUR IDENTITY IS PLACED ON HOW MUCH MONEY WE MAKE AS ARTISTS.”



B Licenças Poéticas

Presents

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Anna Guerra	Eduardo Kobra
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