

C. Schuld Studio News

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IS REALISM DEAD?

NO--but among many art circles, centers and academia it is certainly getting kicked in the shins a lot.

Realism, with its long and distinguished history, has been in somewhat of a battle with photography since the camera became more affordable and user friendly. So why bother to paint realistically when the camera can capture the images? Because even with all the available editing apps for photographers, the painter can also zoom in and out, delete, alter, enhance and move images until the creative magic of a well-designed painting or drawing emerges. And just because the recognizable image was done by a painter instead of the camera shouldn't alter its value as "art" any more than it does for the photographer.



This painting "*Settling In*", acrylic, 30 x 48" required:

- kicking out the blue sky replacing it with evening golden colors and then matching those colors in the water reflections
- adding a horizon line area to better anchor the nest and geese

- cleaning up and deleting many of the dried grasses and reeds and moving some into position to increase feeling of depth
- handling the reflections in the water with looser and more impressionistic strokes, while tightening the handling of the nest and reeds
- adding a second goose to create more content and handling them with a combination of tight outer edge shape but loosely handled feathers

These are the changes I think were needed to accomplish what I wanted to show about this scene. You can see in the original photos below that the camera only served as my “memory card”.



I believe most people like pictures that look like something they can recognize and relate to. The key is to not be a copyist in the painting process—the content has to be creative and the craftsmanship has to be technically superb. So why didn’t I just wait, watch and work until I got the photo just right and hang that on my wall?

Because.....the power that happens in the painting process is the energy of the brush strokes, the layering and mixing of colors, the defining textures that create patterns and the eye commanding line work that eventually builds up to an image that shows it was created over time with multiple feelings, thoughts and relooks. It is almost a birthing process—a child of the artist offered to the world. That is a lot more than one shutter press of an image caught in that one split second of time. Did I just kick a naysayer in the shins a bit?

I asked a gallery owner about a year ago if people wanted realistic art and her response was, “People want quality whatever the style”. I liked that answer.

Realistically Yours,

Charlotte

PS. Frank Zappa said, “The most important thing in art is the frame.” While that might be a good joke I believe every art style has its merits and all should be judged thoughtfully by composition, content, craftsmanship and creativity standards—not by what one personally likes or dislikes.