

Douglas Kneibert interview

Answers to a series of questions.

For the first 25 years of my painting practice I did non-objective structured paintings. These were done in various medium, but mostly oil, a little later acrylic. I used various techniques over the years from spraying oil in thin veils to applying acrylic with crumpled paper towels much like an impressionist painter using brush strokes. During this period, the 70s through the 90's I experienced tremendous success in major markets. New York City, Chicago, and San Francisco as well as Kansas City and St Louis. During this period, my work went into collections across the country plus a few in Europe. The art world changed drastically after the mid 90's and my most important dealer closed the gallery in Soho.

At this time, I had to find a new market for the new work which changed tremendously from non-objective abstraction to Landscape. This direction change happened over a brief time. I had started to see references to clouds, land and sky in the abstract works I was creating slowly evolved into fully articulated landscapes. I lost a large part of my market on both the coasts and started to search for new galleries. The most difficult thing for me as an artist is to find a dealer that loves your work and has an audience of collectors that do as well. I had to find that combination of a dealer and collectors in this search I at one time had as many as twelve galleries. I have narrowed that number over time to five galleries that represent my work. These galleries are in St Louis, Kansas City, Tulsa, Charleston NC and Miami. My Miami gallery has an international audience with collectors in South and Central America and Europe. The owners are one from Italy and the other from Columbia.

My source for my paintings comes from photographs. Never simply copying the photo but allowing it to suggest where it wants the painting to evolve. I always try to distill the image into my aesthetic and style. This creative flow creates the work and I usually work in series so I can use this same source or similar ones for a few paintings. The last painting, I made serves as a guide for the next one.

I am frequently asked why I have lived in a small midwestern town. I once asked my NYC Soho dealer of 25 years why he tended to show artists from third world countries? His comment was- Freed you live in a small town in the middle of Missouri. THAT IS A THIRD WORLD COUNTRY!

I guess that has allowed me to be an individual, follow my own muse, not to be influenced by constant art world paradigm shifts. Because of isolation I have been left to my own development without the ever-present hype and pressure of living in an art world center.

For 40 years I had a great job at SFCC and the Daum Museum, with wonderful colleagues, friends and was able to travel extensively around the world. I have had a comfortable home, a wonderful studio and most importantly an incredible wife of 55 years who has given me a fabulous family, three boys and a girl. I have had a great creative life living here in this small Missouri town.