



For Dan's Papers By R.B.Stuart September 26, 2005

North Fork Artist of The Week Painter, Max Moran

Max Moran considers himself a 'brush in the bucket and paint on the palette' kind of painter, although his work is far from that. Moran was born and raised in Xenia, Ohio and since high school he had the gift with a brush. As a teen, with the athletic departments commission he painted a mural on the gymnasium wall. The theme was representative of the school mascot, the cowboys. The more acclaim each stage of creation begot from the athletic department, it drew criticism from his art teacher. By the end of its creation, the western mural of three cowboys on horses had earned him three F's. A devastation then, but now at 45 years-old, it brings amusement as he realizes the work by such a young hand would eventually surpass that of his first severe critic.

"You can trust paintings to tell you about history. I wanted to understand and that's what led me to painting, to satisfy broad ranges of curiosity of my place in the world," Moran commented.

Moran comes from an Irish American family of four siblings. His father's hobby as a folk art painter/sculptor was stunted due to WW II and his time as a soldier overseas. What his father was unable to fulfill, the son would.

And that became apparent when he was awarded a scholarship to the Columbus College of Art and Design in 1977. Moran said, "College opened my eyes with the art community, giving me the language as how to operate in the art community."

When it comes to painting he describes it as, "It's just a part of you. Getting up everyday and being conscious inspires me as does art and other people's work. Sometimes you don't choose what to do---it chooses you. You'll know it because it won't feel right....it will feel out of sync," Moran reflects. "Every time you go out to paint you have to get your hands dirty. And if you're not struggling, you're probably not doing something right," Moran advises.

"It's all about enlightenment. Being more efficient with my projects and my time. There's a lot of material out there---one lifetime is not enough to explore. I'm always haunted by a quote, 'I wish I could have stayed with it,' " he concedes. If there was one mistake from the past Moran could change, "When visiting a friend I wouldn't have parked my car on the streets of West Center Philadelphia. For my car with its entire contents was stolen. I lost most of my life, my master slide portfolio, family photo's and other family heirlooms. It was one of the catalysts that resulted in my moving to NYC," Moran concluded.

Moran moved to Mattituck 15 years ago, and each locale brings with it a new period of work. In Ohio he began with his most powerful and raw brush strokes, portraits. On to NYC where he painted storefronts, capturing the romantic aspect of daily life on the city streets, as one sees depicted on the streets of Florence, Italy. His move to Cape Cod would allow him to paint the beauty of seaside living in landscapes, which carried him to LI where he continues as a plein air painter, but adding rain to his canvas. The rain series captures your gaze, in a trance the rain washes over you. At some point maybe he will come back full circle to his first love of portraitures.

In 2002 Moran showcased his "Manhattan Rain Series," and the Bentley Publishing Group took notice and recently introduced a reproduction poster of "Waiting for a Cab-Park Avenue," to the international art publishing market at Art Expo New York. The poster ranked #71 in Bentley's Top 100 list in just six months of its release. Winning out 30,000 other art posters in their line.

If you'd like to see Moran's rich collection of work Westhampton Beach Performing Arts Center will unveil his paintings at a cocktail reception on Sunday, October 9 from 3 pm - 5 pm, on display through January, #631-

288-1500. To view his current work visit his website at www.maxmoran.com or contact him directly at artofmax@optonline.net. ----R. B. Stuart is a New York author, freelance writer, columnist and poet.