



City Art Gallery in Columbia, SC, Features Works by Lee Monts

City Art Gallery in Columbia, SC, is pleased to feature artist Lee Monts in his third solo exhibition with the gallery, titled *Floating*, on view from Sept. 21 through Nov. 11, 2017. A reception will be held on Sept. 21, from 5-8pm.

Monts began painting in Nov. 2002 at the age of 38. This exhibition will mark his 15 years as an artist.



Work by Lee Monts

Since 2011, Monts has been a popular member of the stable of artists at City Art. Following his last show at the gallery in 2014, Monts has continued to jury into many shows and win awards for his work. Awards include works submitted to the SC Watermedia Society (2014), Union County Arts Council (2015) and the Artist Guild Gallery of Greenville's *Small Works Show* (2016 – third place). Monts participated in Columbia Open Studios in 2016 and 2017.

Monts is not a full-time artist and works as a Program Manager with the South Carolina Department of Health and Envi-



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ronmental Control in the Environmental Affairs arm of the Agency, specifically in the Bureau of Land and Waste Management. His formal training is in Geology with a BS from the College of Charleston (1986) and a MS from the University of South Carolina (1990). He has been employed by the State of South Carolina for over 28 years.

This current show, entitled *Floating*, will feature several large paintings on canvas as well as small acrylic works on paper. Many of the works have a strong coastal or water body influence. All his landscapes are completely imagined. As in past shows, Monts has continued to produce an abstracted landscape image with simplicity. However, many of the more simplistic landscapes in this show have been created with many layers of translucent color accomplished using the recent introduction of high flow acrylic paints.

"I do not seek perfection in my paintings," Monts states. "My objective is to create a piece of art where a non-existing

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space results from intuitive and emotive efforts, and where some feeling of familiarity is created for the viewer."

The pieces in *Floating* have followed and flowed from experiences Monts has faced over the past several years as the result of personal growth through age, interpersonal relationships, work place rumors (floating words) and misguided perceptions – his own and those developed by others. Painting has been a way to address the adage that "perception is reality" and the frustrations of perceived inaccuracies in many aspects of life, both in and out of the work place.

Known for recycling materials as in his popular "Retired Brush" and "Retired Sandpaper" small works series, Monts has created a small number of miniature art pieces by cropping his Styrofoam painting plates into images that appear to him. These pieces include "Wrangling Whispers", "Windstorm of Whispers" and "Whispers in the Landscape" that capture his feelings on happenings in the work place where gossip always seems to be prevalent.

Monts is sure that most people experience this common actuality of life. His ability to find images in random paint markings is something that he himself does not understand, but he appreciates the ability to turn something that would have been otherwise trashed into an art piece. This philosophy coincides with his DHEC job duties toward protecting the environment from added waste items going into a landfill. And, perhaps some of the painting titles will create additional words to be floated around office halls and via strings between tin cans or other forms of communication.

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