

Issue 9
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Abstract Expressionism: Mark Rothko (1903 – 1970)

Mark Rothko was a Russian-born U.S. painter. He was one of the leading figures of Abstract Expressionism, though he rejected the classification and even “abstract painter” was unacceptable to him. He studied painting under Max Weber.

While visiting a friend at the Art Students League of New York, he saw students sketching a model. According to Rothko, this was the beginning of his life as an artist.



He founded an art school, “Subjects of the Artist” in 1948 with Robert Motherwell, another famous figure in the movement (to be featured in a future issue). Rothko was initially inspired by the freedom of expression by Miró, Ernst, and American surrealists but his mature work developed from 1948 as

single abstract images or symbols presented through color, line, and

shape: floating horizontal rectangles with blurred edges, the background color subtly and dramatically related to the color of the rectangles.



In the spring of 1968, Rothko was diagnosed with a mild aortic aneurysm (defect in the arterial wall, that gradually leads to outpouching of the vessel and at times frank rupture). Ignoring doctor’s orders, Rothko continued to drink and smoke heavily, avoided exercise, and maintained an unhealthy diet. However, he did follow physician advice not to paint pictures larger than a yard in height, and turned his attention to smaller, less physically strenuous formats, including acrylics on paper. Meanwhile, Rothko's marriage had become increasingly troubled, and his poor health and impotence resulting from the aneurysm compounded his feeling of estrangement in the relationship. Rothko and his wife Mell separated on

New Year's Day 1969, and he moved into his studio.

On February 25, 1970, Oliver Steindecker, Rothko's assistant, found the artist in his kitchen, lying dead on the floor in front of the sink, covered in blood. He had sliced his arms with a razor found lying at his side. During autopsy it was discovered he had also overdosed on anti-depressants. He was 66 years old. The Seagram Murals on display at the Tate Gallery arrived in London on the very day of his suicide."

Featured Artist: Edward Gilmore

A prominent artist in his own right, Edward W. Gilmore was born in Oakland, California in 1966. To truly become acquainted with him, you must become acquainted with his passion for art, lust for life, adventure, willingness to risk, creativity, and child-like curiosity. These are just a few of the colors that make up the palette of his life.



Edward has been fascinated with color since he was a young boy. Nature provided the canvas for his art. Such

balance in nature was exciting to his young mind.

His first mentors were his father and his grandfather. His father, a master craftsman, taught him about precision and creativity. He taught Edward how to take pride in his work and pay attention to detail.

As a teenager, Ed would sit and watch the master house painters in San Francisco paint the old Victorian homes with their big brushes. One day, one of the painters took Edward under his wing and began teaching him these incredible techniques. Soon Edward was painting with his newly acquired skills. At 18, with his innate sense of color balance, he was asked to design the color compositions for these magnificent old homes. For many years he designed the color formats to be used in these homes, including many homes of celebrities.



What I've Been Up to Lately:

Well, I have 4 paintings left in inventory. That's a good thing, since I have had luck selling, but an unfortunate thing, because a salon called recently wanting to feature seven of my paintings. Right now, I

have two hanging in an art supply store. I am skeptical about them selling there, because most customers will be there buying supplies for their own art. Worth a try though. I can't wait to get back to painting. It looks like June will be the month.



Architect, 2008

Something for You to Play With:

[BRUSHster](#). You will need [Adobe Shockplayer](#), which is free. Click [here](#) for how to configure Windows Vista to run Shockwave. You may have to refresh your browser once you get to Brushster. It's fun and worth your trouble.

Poem of the Month:

"Shattered"
 This moment
 I wait.
 Listening to the four-wheeled collages
 of metal echo by
 I actually feel some relief
 for the apparent
 forgetfulness of my acquaintance
 as I was not in the mood
 for chit-chat to begin with.
 Like a warm rubber band,

I am trying to find my elasticity again.
 This moment
 I have no snap.
 Or a crackle or a pop, for that matter.
 Is it lack of love and respect for me
 that causes you to respond to him,
 or is it because you find it unimportant
 one way or another?
 I keep trying to assure myself that it's
 the latter,
 but then again,
 I have convinced myself of so many
 "truths" where you are
 concerned already, not questioning
 why I am motivated to do
 all the convincing.
 I don't want to face that.
 Is there some wished truth about me
 that you have brought
 into existence?
 Doubtful.
 I am not watering the seeds of my
 retrospective plant. Or
 maybe I am.
 I do not feed them, give them warm
 baths, or towel-dry their
 bright blue ears and bring aid to their
 bleeding gums.
 I merely drink their blood until the
 flask has become dry and
 sticky, thick like paint, this life-blood,
 with no medium to temper
 it, hard to work with.
 I smell and see first signs of the
 rebirth of corpse trees and
 look forward to the panoramic
 greenery on the mountain.
 My beloved mountain, where goats
 watch me as I check the
 mail.
 Where hills and valleys are laid out
 before me like a justfinished
 quilt.
 Pride and life blazing their trails
 I have wished to be in the rolling hills,
 camouflaged in green drapery, rather
 than being dragged
 across the rocks like raging waters.
 cjh
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Quote of the Month:

"Art has something to do with the achievement of stillness in the midst of chaos. A stillness which characterizes prayer, too, and the eye of the storm...an arrest of attention in the midst of distraction." – Saul Bellow (1915 - 2005) (American writer.)

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