

Jeffery A. Cornwell's paintings – some thoughts

Jeffery A. Cornwell is a remarkable artist. His paintings communicate to the viewer as Nature does. We connect to them immediately because we see what at first appears to be familiar. Our conceit in this recognition is subtly and wittily challenged by him. The idea of the Nature we think we know is Cornwell's point of departure to take us on a voyage of rediscovery. It is a journey that makes us content as well as curious. What is the traffic situation where both lights are red in the intersection? How many other birds are in the sky? Are those cows staring at us and why? Where exactly is this landscape we think we recognize?

Most of us take Nature for granted most of the time. Cornwell's paintings arrest us. They compel us to take a closer look; to slow down and to re-imagine the beauty and even the smell of Nature. His paintings are great composites of what he has observed especially in Nature. His landscapes capture the low horizon and the vast skies of Florida. Cornwell is a great observer of clouds and the sky. He likes to paint "pure sky" and he has in **Escape**, 2017.

His paintings are a tribute to the beauty of Florida and its atmospheric effects. Storms, sunsets, skies are part of this artist's repertoire. The one painting **Walk Solitude**, 2001, where he has placed a figure on a beach in a storm helps us project ourselves into the scale of the composition. Cornwell admits that the pink sky and the incredible wave pattern in **Quietude**, 2008, was inspired by Van Wezel on the North Trail in Sarasota.

Cornwell likes cows as well. He is close to his sister who lives in Gainesville and has spent some time studying cows. He is a student of them too. This we surmise after looking at how he depicts them. He seems to know them very well indeed and is able to paint them on the smallest scale.

Cornwell's process is laborious and well considered. He uses glazes and spends enormous amounts of time building them one over the other. He often uses as many as four different brushes to achieve his desired result. The closer your inspection the more your reward from your experience of their subtlety. In a way, he has made concrete with painting supplies the atmospheric effects we experience in the "real" world. His colors have a translucent quality that is as visually stunning as the colors in nature that have inspired him.

After spending time with Cornwell's paintings one cannot look away without a smile and thinking that he has made Nature even more seductive, enticing and satisfying than our last memory of it. And he encourages us to go discover it anew.

(Many of the ideas in these notes are from conversations with Jeffery over the past six months.)

Mark Ormond
Curator of Exhibitions
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A Brief Biography

Jeffery A. Cornwell studied at Ringling College of Art. He then apprenticed with Toro Yamamoto and honed his skills as a freelance painter.

His work has been exhibited in solo and group shows in galleries and alternative spaces. His work has been represented by galleries in Florida, Georgia, Texas, and on the west coast of the United States. His work is in private collections throughout the United States and Europe. He is an active member of the SARTQ artists collective.

Cornwell is an Adjunct Art Instructor VPA program at Booker High School in Sarasota, Florida. As an educator, he teaches in the Teen Studios at Ringling College and is the coordinator of the College's Summer Teen Studio program.