

BRIDGETTE MAYER GALLERY

Interview with Bridgette Mayer and Damian Stamer, January 2016

BM: Hi Damian, I am very excited to open your first solo exhibition in Philadelphia in a few weeks. Thank you for taking some time to answer a few questions so the Philadelphia public can get to know you a little better. **Could you please tell us about your background and how you decided to become an artist?**

DS: I had played saxophone in the middle school band, but when I entered 9th grade in high school I didn't want to be in the marching band, so I had to pick another elective. I took art and quickly became obsessed. That was nineteen years ago and I've been dedicating my life to making work, mostly painting, ever since. I've never really had a back-up plan....

BM: **Where did you grow up and how did this influence your work?**

DS: I grew up with my identical twin brother, Dylan, out "in the sticks" of rural North Carolina north of Durham. Home, with all of the associated memories, explorations, and the passage of time between childhood and today, finds its way into most everything I create.

BM: **What is your general process of making your paintings?**

DS: Each painting is a unique problem to solve or an opportunity to invent and innovate. That said, some general processes include building up imagery with multiple layers and techniques, erasing certain areas, and then building things up again. I like the idea of imbuing this relatively new object with a sense of time and history, as if it has some stories and secrets to tell.

BM: **How do you decide on your palette and the image?**

DS: My imagery is usually based either on memory or reference photographs that I take out in the "field." Palette decisions are often rather intuitive; however, lately I have been exploring dusk and night scenes. So deep greens and blues are the colors I choose.

BM: **With your current body of work, what is new and a shift from your last body of work?**

DS: I have been playing with the white border or white negative space for a while, but this new work is bolder and more confident in its tension between image and void.

BM: **Where are the images inspired from and where is the reoccurring barn image from and some of the cloud images?**

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DS: They are all within a 15-mile radius of where I grew up in North Carolina. Some of the barns are the very same ones I passed to and from school on the bus every day. So they are all places and spaces I know well.

BM: What contemporary artists are you inspired by?

DS: Matthias Weischer, Neo Rauch, Nick Goss, Josephine Halvorson, Claire Sherman, Dana Schutz ...

BM: What do people not know about you or would be surprised to know about you?

DS: I was the Arizona State University 2004 Homecoming King.

BM: What is challenging with being an artist these days for you?

DS: I always want to challenge myself to find new ways to keep pushing the work, to keep adding to the years of work behind me. How do I facilitate and encourage breakthroughs that create profound and relevant results?

BM: What is on the horizon with you and your work?

DS: *Altered Land: Works by Damian Stamer and Greg Lindquist* opens at the North Carolina Museum of Art in April. In May, I am being featured in a group exhibition at the Gibbes Museum of Art in Charleston, SC and I have a solo exhibition in Berlin.

BM: What would you like the viewers to take away from the show?

DS: An excitement about the contemporary painting conversation and perhaps a new painting for their collection!