

AMERICAN
art
COLLECTOR

 WATCH 6 VIDEOS IN
THIS ISSUE SEE PAGE 34



*Also Showcasing
Glass, Ceramics & Wood*

CONSTANT EVOLUTION

Jeremy Mann brings 50 new works to John Pence Gallery, displaying his growing style.

BY NICKI ESCUDERO

Viewers of the trailer for the upcoming documentary on painter Jeremy Mann, called *A Solitary Mann*, get a peek into the 35-year-old Oakland, California, resident's home studio. It's the largest room in his house, while surrounding chambers are designed to be organic and changing set designs for paintings. His studio contains everything from sexy fashions for his gorgeous female models to dead roses, skulls, taxidermy and empty wine bottles. Various light setups create whatever moody effects Mann is going for in his figurative works, which feature abstract techniques that add endless mystery to his subjects.

Mann balances his figure work with his landscapes, often depictions of dark or stormy scenes. More

than 50 new works by the prolific artist, dating back to last November, will be on display at John Pence Gallery in San Francisco beginning July 9. Mann says his focus on painting technique, including mark-making, color and, especially, composition, comprise his style, from the grittiness and engulfing atmosphere that exudes a sense of loneliness in his cityscapes to the subtle curves and lighting effects found in his figurative work.

"Switching between subjects keeps me sane and helps me hone my style," says Mann. "But, then again, I often get sick of my style and practice new avenues, usually in rendering and brushwork, in order to push myself further. Whatever it is, I want the feeling of a Jeremy Mann painting to be evident across all my work and subjects."

1
The Advent of Winter, oil on panel, 43 x 60"

2
The Garden, oil on panel, 36 x 24"







3

Mann says he's still growing as an artist, but his talent was evident to John Pence Gallery owner John Pence when Mann was a young master's student, who graduated as valedictorian of his class from Academy of Art University in San Francisco. Pence put Mann on his roster only a couple days after graduation, after Pence judged the university's annual spring show and awarded him as its winner .

Mann says he'd walk by the gallery every day on his way to class, thinking there was no way he'd ever be good enough to show there. He attributes his hard work and dedication in school to getting him on the gallery walls, while Pence says Mann's university work was an instant standout among his peers.

"You can tell by looking at the work that he applies paint with such force," says Pence. "You can see that Mann, in his paintings, went up to the canvas and boldly did what he wanted to do. Even the sternest person on the face of the earth gets sucked in."

Mann calls the underlying balance, harmonies and compositions in his works, elements he wishes subconsciously move the viewer, "the scaffold all memorable works are built upon." He says his cityscapes may be felt as either powerful representations of a city or beautiful little comments on the colors of atmospheres that happen during the day. The oil on panel works *Another Night Through Storms* and *Evening Storm on Market* represent a moment caught in the middle of a night of a horrible downpour, when everyone but Mann ran away from the rain.

"I couldn't stop smiling, standing soaked to the bone in the middle of traffic, watching the rain wash away all the detail and envelop the scene with atmosphere and light," Mann says. "To stand in the middle of the storm and see beyond its terror to the harmony that lived in it—I wanted to paint those moments."



4



3
Evening Storm on Market, oil on panel, 43 x 60"

4
Black Violet, oil on panel, 36 x 28"

5
Another Night Through Storms, oil on panel, 36 x 36"

6
Jeremy Mann painting in his studio. Photo by Loic Zimmerman.

5

In his figure work, Mann says he hopes to tell stories through vague emotion or an expression of melancholy love. He has a developing station in his basement for reference films, using antique cameras he has repaired to shoot scenes on old film lenses to create images as close as possible to how he sees life and his paintings—"fleeting, honest moments without manipulation."

In his oil on panel *The Garden*, Mann says he strove to capture the strength and demure in a woman's pose naturally within the atmosphere of barely recognizable nature and adornment.

"I prefer to paint moments in between, when things are most natural," Mann says. "The light was so subtle and soft at the time that it brought out the transitions and colors I'm most drawn to."

Mann says he loves painting plein air landscapes, though he rarely exhibits them. "Those I usually keep to myself," Mann says, "the one part of my art I don't have to share, when I'm out in the wild, or across the sea, alone with myself and the vast and beautiful world, where my brain finally shuts up for a moment, and I can relax and recharge." Mann says his next desire to fulfill is to convert an old van into a traveling studio "and just drive and paint from life—see what happens."

But before that, and before the worldwide festival debut of his documentary this year, he's releasing a 400-page tome, the first volume showcasing his artwork, called *MANN vol. 1*. There are only 10 pages of text in the 12-by-12-inch book, the rest consisting of his paintings from the past five years, including more than 20 actual-sized images of works. The book debuts at his opening reception at the gallery, and since Mann is against creating prints of his art, it's a way for fans to obtain much of his work in one publication.

Pence says Mann's work is constantly in demand, with global collectors spanning from Israel to England to Australia and New

Zealand. One of Mann's collectors in Switzerland, Thomas Meier, owns about six of his works after collecting for the past five years, and says Mann's constant innovation is exciting.

"Jeremy certainly has what it takes, including the willpower and strength to make something altogether new," says Meier. "He can and will create new work that is unexpected and cutting-edge." Indeed, Mann has no plans to stop his development as an artist.

"I hope collectors and admirers alike will be moved by my style," he says of the exhibition, "and recognize the struggle and growth across the many works there." ●



JEREMY MANN

When: July 9-August 29, 2015

Where: John Pence Gallery
750 Post Street, San Francisco, CA 94109

Information: (415) 441-1138, www.johnpence.com

