

CORRIGAN CLAY ★ FINE ARTIST

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AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

When my brother died of Leukemia in 1994, faith and art were the greatest sources of solace to me, and yet the church and the gallery were worlds apart. These things that had brought me so much peace seemed to be at war with one another. I am a child of these two apparently divorced parents. My art is pressed forward by this sense of tension between perspectives.

I studied visual arts at Seattle Pacific University with the hopes that an art degree at a Christian liberal arts school might help reconcile my artistic passion and my spiritual life. While the degree was indeed very helpful, it focused primarily on formal aesthetics and technique, leaving issues of content, ideology, and expression to private consideration. After some years painting various commissioned works and struggling to find my real voice in my art, I finally got into a groove with my studio time and subject matter while working as a youth worker in Germany with American military teens. Art was again playing a therapeutic role for me, as my father died in a plane crash in 2003 and the student's I worked with were saying goodbye to mothers and fathers as they deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. As I painted, I began to notice the way in which the lush German landscapes told a story of a world divided. The wars of religion, industry, and governments left their traces on common ground through their architectural remnants. I found a kind of home in painting these landscapes, if for no other reason than that they were evidence that I was not alone in having to navigate a world at odds.

The experience of living abroad added deeply to my sense of contrasting but coherent epistemologies. I was never quite sure of my culture. I worked with military families, but I was not in the military and never quite felt at home in that culture. I lived on the German economy, but spent so much time working with Americans that I never quite assimilated to German culture. Yet, when I would come back to America, I felt more German than American. Sometimes, I even missed some of the efficiencies and (gasp!) hierarchies of the military lifestyle. I have always been a traveler, visiting 38 countries in my lifetime, and I've always found something beneficial to appropriate from the diverse cultures of the world. I always feel a little homesick when I leave a country, no matter how long I have been there... everywhere feels a little like home. Perhaps this sense is what informs my art's conveyance of the world as a unified home for humanity, and the various disagreements, the divergent and warring worldviews, as missing the point.

Throughout my travels I have had the privilege of visiting some of the world's finest museums and art sites: The Met, The Guggenheim, MoMA, the Louvre, Pompidou, the Vatican Museum/Sistine Chapel, the Duomo, the Rijksmuseum, the Tate, the National Gallery in London, the British Museum, the State Hermitage, MudAM, the National Gallery in D.C., the Art Institute of Chicago, and various other galleries and museums around the states and Europe. The vast array of images and the tremendous range of skill and emotional depth I have encountered in these special places has spurred me forward in my conviction that there are always new ways to see and express this world, even if it is only one world. I love the way in which art makes the diversity of human vantage points so plain, reminding us to listen to each other and to try to communicate in our own unique voice to expand the vision of those around us.

BIOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEW

1978 Born in Coos Bay, OR
1992-1996 Marshfield High School, Coos Bay, OR
1996-2000 B. A. in Visual Arts, University Scholars (Honors) program, Seattle Pacific University
1997-1998 Presentation & Marketing Calligrapher, Seattle, WA
1999-2000 Custom Art Framer, Seattle, WA
1999-2000 Margaret Sutton Visual Arts Scholarship Endowment
2000 Graduation honors: Magna Cum Laude, Alpha Kappa Sigma, President's Scholar
2001-2003 Commissioned portrait artist
2002-2006 Young Life youth worker & educator
2003-2004 Assistant Art Teacher, Bitburg American High School, Bitburg, Germany
2004-2006 Multimedia Set Designer, Heidelberg High School, Heidelberg, Germany
2004-present Integration of photography and oil painting
2004-present Documentary & Short filmmaker
2006-Present Graphic Artist & Web designer, freelance
2006-2008 Regent College, Masters of Arts & Theology, Vancouver, BC, Canada

EXHIBITIONS

2007 Group Exhibition, Lookout Gallery, Vancouver, B.C.
2006 My Art Space, South of France online collective exhibition and competition
2005 USAREUR Group Exhibition, Heidelberg, Germany
2000 Alexander Administrative Hall, Seattle Pacific University (Solo)
2000 Seattle Art Center, Senior Show

AWARDS

2006 3rd place, public jury, My Art Space International "South of France" competition,
2005 2nd place, USAREUR art competition, Heidelberg Germany.
1995 1st Place Coos County drawing competition, Oregon

COLLECTIONS

Robert Wade Conrad, St. Louis, MO
Nancy Wolgamott, Coos Bay, OR
Marilyn Monaghan, Olympia, WA
Chris & Christina Fulkerson, Seattle, WA
Kurt Hildebrand, Seattle, WA
Joseph Hattick, Colorado Springs, CO
Kelli & Garrett Nahas, San Francisco, CA
Jocelyn Cary, Vicenza, Italy
Chuck and Patsy Burton, Heidelberg, Germany
Marlo Daniels, Heidelberg, Germany
Sara Doughty, Heidelberg, Germany
Mel & Carol Mead, Eugene, OR

PUBLICATIONS

Etcetera Weekly Journal, Vancouver, B.C.
Fall Issue #12, December 11, 2007
Plumb Journal of the Arts,
Winter 2008