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Matt Sesow interview with Getunderground.com

by Star Jewel Smith
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remember your spirit

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[WTF?!] - 10.16.02 - by: *Star Jewel Smith*

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innocent child
held ransom by destiny
guided to the runway
hellbound faces of darkness
conquer death
release
hopeful spirit
bring light and life
to the world



when matt sesow was eight years old he was playing in an airfield near his home in lincoln nebraska...as a small plane landed his left arm was severed above the elbow by the one of the propellers...recently with the account of his friend matt reconstructed the incident and documented it on the back of his painting ***guided to the runway***

los angeles self taught and educated artist carol es who is also a survivor of a traumatic childhood experience introduced me to the artistry of matt sesow...highly intrigued by the plethora of brutally passionate art available for view on his website sesow.com i arranged to meet matt on a perfect summer sunday afternoon at his studio and home in adams morgan washington dc...

when i arrived matt was on the phone...a rare occurrence since matt spends his days isolated inside his studio *thrashing* his innermost being into visual expression...i left a message on his voicemail saying i was waiting outside to gain entrance to the building...after ten mintues as i was ready to call again matt appeared on the doorstep and greeted me...



once inside his studio i was intoxicated by the stimulating and alarming red brightness that characterizes the majority of his artwork decking the halls and walls of his flat...since the essence of art supplies wafting through the air permeated my bloodstream i refused the beer he offered me and instead immersed myself in the words of a man who in spite of his modesty and shyness is living the life of a truly dedicated artist...a life he did not foresee or plan but happened on by circumstance and perhaps fate as if his guide to the runway predestined his course of life

his former wife artist carole mccallum introduced matt to the world of art...as they dated matt challenged himself to paint as he desired to develop an intimate connection with the woman he loved...with the moral support of carole a confident powerful and uniquely individual artistic articulation manifested in vivid color...although much of his work expresses the trauma of his past matt courageously lives and breathes in the present and moves forward into the future with the ever changing political and social climate of our society



matt earns a decent living as an artist...after saving his earnings from a career in the computer field he was able to buy his studio on columbia road in northwest dc...his talents allow him to maintain his own website and coordinate his gallery appearances all over the united states...he also has a substantial amount of collectors who have a vested interest in his work...driven to succeed yet stay clear of the influence of mainstream manipulation one of his goals as an artist is to make art accessible to everyone

in september i attended the pre ceremonial festivities of the twentyfifth annual adams morgan day art exhibit and celebration held at the meridian international art center where his work ***guided to the runway*** was on display...i had the pleasure of meeting his friend photographer michael olliver and his girlfriend artist dana ellyn kauffman...at six am the following day he and dana hand carried an enormous amount of large and small pieces and set up a booth on the shady side street a block from his home for the two day festival...



i rode the metro to adams morgan and walked a mile to the festival...it was a lovely day to be outside...blue sky sunny and refreshing...after browsing around i returned to his booth to see how sales for the day were going...as we spoke matt was informed he would be receiving an award...i wanted to be there at the ceremony and capture it on film however he asked me to oversee his work and attend to customers so i readily agreed...i instinctively thought of his initial self consciousness about discussing prices when he first started selling art years ago at the georgetown flea market...



i smiled and chatted with people who sifted through the boxes of smaller and affordable four by six *everyman* paintings...a gentleman looking through the array of ten by fourteens spoke with me while he tried to make his decision...before matt departed matt agreed the man could purchase three for thirty dollars...the man laid some out on the table...he switched them in and out and we eyed the combinations...he wanted to frame them and display them as a set so we looked for three complimentary yet contrasting portraits...matt paints some images over and over...though they are all the same image in subject they differ distinctly in color mood and design...after making a decision i set them aside until matt returned so he could sign them...

quite a number of people were surprised matt was not around and i assured his quick return...i bragged to his more affluent customers that matt would return shortly from receiving his second place award for best in show to price the large canvases they sought to buy...upon his return we taped his award to the pole on his booth...matt offered me a painting as a gift for assisting in his absence...it was a tough decision like choosing the other smaller work he offered me the day of our first meeting...both paintings are nicely framed and hang on a wall near my den workstation



a week later on another perfect summer day i met up with matt again at a street art festival in chinatown...he and dana had made their way across dc via public transportation with both his and her art packed in portfolios and backpacks...their booths were stationed side by side...as matt



explained to me selling their art as well as painting together on occasion is their typical date...together they exemplify a romantic yet realistic and achievable notion of individuality and togetherness as they both work to attain their desired artistic accomplishments...

as we spoke that afternoon between his natural and easy interaction with patrons matt told me of his desire to return to a deeper and more intimate expression of darkness and hopelessness...a subconscious release of intense emotion matt has seemingly overcome as he has risen from darkness into the light through his art...

matt and artists like him are role models for others who face the same enormous struggles like all the courageous artists on exhibit at the los angeles art show held ransom...they possess the ability to teach through example how to cope with and overcome uncontrollable circumstance and misfortune...through their inner strength and courage they overcome and balance their lives into a positive existence...they also teach people who have a tendency to blow out of proportion ordinary day to day problems and imperfections as well as unwittingly take for granted and forget the blessing of life



remember your spirit...this is the time to share life love and create...rejoice in the soulful beauty of humanity...

matt...thank you for that most important reminder...you are a truly beautiful human being

...for more information on and to view more art by artist matt sesow please visit www.sesow.com...

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