

Three USU Art Professors Share their Views of Familiar Spaces at Gallery East

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Price, Utah - A combined exhibit, entitled "Familiar Spaces," will feature the work of three USU art professors and will be on view in the month of March. The exhibition of paintings by professors Noel Carmack, Terry Powers, and Woody Shepherd will be open to students and the public at Gallery East in the Central Instruction Building (CIB) on the campus of Utah State University Eastern.

The exhibit visualizes the familiar places and spaces they often visit or occupy in their surroundings. Although their styles and approaches are diverse, they seek to convey the feelings or reflective moments when visiting those spaces.

Noel Carmack

Noel Carmack is from Paso Robles, California. He paints industrial landscapes, depicting the structures, book cliffs, and railways of the Southeastern Utah area. Carmack also creates portraiture and figurative work from life. He has been a member of the art faculty of Utah State University Eastern since 2008. He received BFA in illustration and an MFA in drawing/painting, both from Utah State University. He has exhibited his work both regionally and nationally. He works from his home studio in Price, Utah.

"The focus of my current work is the coal mining structures, tipplers, powerhouse stacks, and rail lines of southeastern Utah. I work from sketches and photographic references but try to capture the immediacy of the time and place.

These paintings represent the deteriorating structures, and the weathering marks left on the landscape. My current work in fact falls under a category of what would be called industrial landscape, often featuring the machinery, structures, and tools which have been used to mine or extract the natural resources of this area. I strive to convey the impactful presence of the people and industries that have been here for decades.

I am interested in the juxtaposition of what is man made and what is nature. My paintings are meant to be a reflection of what people and the efforts of extraction have done to affect—for better or worse—the beauty of the landscape."

Terry Powers

Terry Powers is a painter based in Logan, Utah. He paints directly from observation—wandering through his home and the world beyond, searching for moments to describe in paint.

Eschewing intermediary tools like photographs, he embraces the immediacy and unpredictability of painting from life. Powers earned his BFA in Painting from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2003 and his MFA in Art Practice from Stanford University in 2013. He is currently an Assistant Professor in Painting and Drawing at Utah State University.

"I paint people and places directly from observation, without the use of photographs, projectors, or other intermediary tools. My work depicts common subjects, seeking to bypass conventional aesthetic judgments and restore these objects to a world where everything is inherently interesting—where the ordinary invites a second, more careful look.

I find my subjects intuitively, discovered through the rhythm of daily life and an active engagement with my surroundings. As a result, my paintings are of places and people within close reach—my living room, friends and family, and familiar locations. This approach transforms everyday experience into an ongoing search for potential subjects, making even the most unassuming moments feel ripe for exploration."

Woody Shepherd

Woody Shepherd is from Birmingham, Alabama. He attended school at the Rhode Island School of Design, where he received a BFA in Painting. Soon after he attended Yale University where he received an MFA in Painting and Printmaking. Woody has been a part of

the Utah State University Art and Design faculty since the fall of 2005. He exhibits his landscape paintings internationally.

“My paintings recreate the experience of being in the natural environments I visit. Our perception of a place is shaped by memory, imagination, and all of our senses working together. I try to capture this through layered representations, heightened color, and expressive marks. These elements come together to create an illusion of landscape space.

Paint is the perfect medium for bringing this vision to life because it has a kind of magic. I use it in many different ways, letting forms and styles push and pull against each other until they find balance. I like when things clash and interact—it creates movement and energy that you cannot quite put into words.”

The places I paint are often hidden, secret, and not tied to any specific location. They are my escape from the overwhelming real world. These spaces feel peaceful, meditative, and enlightening. I have always been drawn to places like this, and my paintings are a reflection of that.”

The exhibit, “Familiar Spaces,” will run until April 4. A closing reception and gallery talk will take place on April 3, 3-5 PM, at which Carmack, Powers, and Shepherd will discuss their creative processes. Students, family and the community are invited to attend the reception and/or gallery during the academic year from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admittance into the gallery is free and open to the public.

Questions can be answered by Noel Carmack, Gallery East curator, at 435-613-5241 or email at noel.carmack@usu.edu.