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Chris Judy Paints the Town by Richard Dennis

So you've never understood that whole abstract art thing, eh? You like the pretty colors, and the neat little swirls, but have always just thought that the paint was just hurled nonchalantly at the canvas? Then, my friends, let me introduce you to Chris Judy.

Born and raised in Texas, Chris Judy grew up with a deep interest in sports (specifically football), music, and art. Even to this day, he credits much of his ball playing hand-eye coordination to the skills he uses for each of his paintings. He likens the talent of pre-visualizing football plays to pre-visualizing what a finished painting will look like on a canvas. His father, as his website states, was a major influence on honing this talent.

After graduating from The University of Texas at Austin in 1998, Chris relocated to Dallas where he began a career in Finance. He admits that it wasn't a bad career, and the money was there, but he "felt a tugging" from the creative side of his brain. "It was like a nagging feeling", he says. "A voice telling me that I was doing the wrong thing [with my life.]" Eventually Chris began painting, and decided (at a friend's urging) to hang a painting in Primo's restaurant on McKinney Ave., "just to see what would happen."

Something did happen.

The painting sold within weeks, and word of mouth began to immediately spread about Chris' art. He was commissioned by affluent Highland Park homeowners to create individualized pieces for their homes and businesses. Often he would take a color scheme that that one of his client's fancied and create a piece of art around it. Chris will be the first to tell you that being an artist, like anything else, is a business. Sometimes he works under the desires of the clients; sometimes he follows his own creative drive with nothing else to guide him except his inspiration. He doesn't feel like there's anything wrong with either. "It's all art", he says.

That's kind of the beauty of meeting Chris for the first time, actually. He has that "artist vibe" through and through, but his upbringing and personality house a practical, salt of the earth quality that prevents him from exuding the "ego" that you find in a lot of creative types. He even takes the time to contribute to several charity events around Dallas each year. Chris is an artist, that's for sure, but one that understands that creating life on the canvas sometimes goes hand-in-hand with making a living as well. But one thing's for sure, one conversation with Chris will convince you that it's not just "slinging paint at the canvas." Chris gets almost giddy when he discusses the way that light dances around a room and onto a canvas. In fact, light itself is a major theme that runs through his paintings. Paintings titled, Flash, Free, Electricity, and Obsession rank among his favorites because of the way they "seem to find light in the darkness."

With the, now official, stamp of "new and emerging talent" in the Dallas art scene (he was previously spotlighted on CBS 11 and UPN 21 back in October), Chris has risen from obscurity in just 18 months and has already made his mark on the medium in the metroplex. The 31-year old Texas native is unassuming, friendly, and yes...you guessed it: knowledgeable. Without saying much of anything in regards to specific technical craft, Chris can make you fully believe that the colors on the canvas in front of you were put there for a reason. In fact, aside from pure "God-given" talent, "touch, feel and flow" are key sources that help to drive Chris's inspiration. "Music flows through me when I paint", says Chris. In fact, from the way he talks, you half-expect it to just pass through him straight onto the canvas itself.

With his polite demeanor and approachable quality, Chris can make you want to just kick back and let the world of the painting unfold around you as he tells of its inspiration. Talking to him is a treat; the paintings he delivers personally from the back of his truck are another treat altogether. I'm not even a fan of abstract art, and I couldn't take my eyes off one of his designs when I viewed it in person. For the uninitiated, check out his painting Losin' It on his website, www.chrisjudyart.com. He credits this work to a day when he just "went crazy" and threw all the rules out the window. For a painting that came together with no rules, the image that emerged is far from formless. It's a thing of beauty.



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The Silver Lining
Chris Judy