

Artist Statement

The human form is inherently beautiful. When I paint, I meditate on that beauty through the two-part process of observation and presentation. I feel that observation, if perfected over years of careful practice, should lead an artist to experience their subject in a very plain and exacting fashion. When I observe something, I strive to leave my mind void of any misinterpretations or inventions. In its perfected state, my observation is precise and mechanical; it is *rule bound*.

However, when I finally take brush to canvas and endeavor to present my vision of a chosen subject, my observation does not strictly govern my brushstrokes. In 2007 I began a project wherein I used multi-colored stage lighting to illuminate my models. This project set my work on a path that diverged from observed reality. The absolute freedom to manipulate existing color – or to explore new, arbitrary color schemes – is the foundation of my work. My subjects are often secondary to their presentation.

Later in 2007, I stepped away from human models and painted, for the first time, action figures – toys – as though they were human. These *figurines* were a refreshingly new subject. They held many of the inherent beauties of the human form, as well as their own unique and unexplored qualities. In addition to being a deeply satisfying subject to paint, they appealed to a much broader demographic than my traditional figurative nudes did. I now paint both humans and humanoid forms: *figures* and *figurines*.

When I create a painting, I strive for perfection. However, when a mirror-like rendition of reality is no longer the goal, perfection becomes a malleable concept. I like to think of each painting I create as a study in color and light that results in an image that is more sublime than the last. It is a process of trial and error: every painting is a *thesis in beauty* that will inevitably be disproved by the painting that follows it.

Philip Carlton

Education

Coe College, Cedar Rapids, IA.

B.A., Art, 2007.

▶ Cumulative GPA 3.79

▶ Graduated 'Cum Laude'

University of Minnesota, Institute of Technology Honors Program, 2001-2002.

Art exhibitions and gallery representation

Exhibitions:

- ▶ April 27 -- May 4, 2007
Sinclair Galleries
Coe College, Cedar Rapids, IA.
"Subject to Revision"
(a senior thesis exhibition of new paintings)
- ▶ June 22 - 23, 2007
The second annual Harvester juried exhibition.
Cedar Rapids, IA.
- ▶ Spring 2007, Spring 2006
Area Student Art Exhibition.
Mount Mercy College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Gallery representation (past and present):

- ▶ ZuCot Gallery
Atlanta, GA.
- ▶ Campbell Steele Gallery
Marion, IA.
- ▶ The Art Vault
Cedar Rapids, IA.
- ▶ Deck The Walls
Bloomington, MN.