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KENT WALLIS

American, b.1945

Artist's Statement

The pseudo-intellectual community will have us analyzing art for analysis sake; viewing art for viewing sake; buying art for buying sake. They will tell us white is black, good is bad, ugly is beautiful. All this will be done in an effort to convince the ordinary person that he or she cannot understand nor appreciate art. They endeavor to build a class system separating the "ordinary" from themselves. Hence snobbery has told us what's good and what's bad in art. Juries are built to accept or reject art based upon these notions. And notions they are, absurd to any real thinking individual. The artists that bite into this foundationless philosophy wander off into avante guard ramblings without ever stopping to pay the price to learn to paint. They truly want us to believe ugly is beautiful. That's not for me. I am working hard to learn to paint. I don't need a pseudo-intellectual snob to tell me if it is good. I'll know and the public will know.

Painting for me comes from the heart not the head. Emotion communicates. Intellectualism befuddles us with rules, dogmas and ramblings. No matter what the subject matter, I paint what I am. I cannot hide it. I cannot change it. Show me an honest "out of the heart" painting and I'll tell you about the painter. Show me a painting with intellectual symbols and "social messages" and I'll show you a confused and frustrated painter. When someone views my painting I want them to see emotionally with me. I want it to be light, energetic, and (dare I say it) beautiful. I'll leave the dark seamy side of life to those who are dark and seamy. They can paint what they are. Inspiration is born of the heart, not the head. True art elevates rather than degrades.

Every artist has strengths and weaknesses. Some are great draftsmen. Others are great composers. I'm a colorist. I can hardly wade through the other things because I want to get the thick, juicy color working. I don't want a square inch of mud.

I'm not good at intellectually looking at color. I don't study complements and analogous color theories. I just put down on canvas the colors that look good to me trying hard to not create mud on the palette through mixing or on the canvas by overworking. I know when the painting is finished. It's when I like it and it's beautiful. If there is a muddy spot, I clean it. I have discovered that when one practices, his ability to see mud improves. Some don't see the difference between color and mud. They have not practiced enough. We get better at painting by painting.

ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

Kent R. Wallis once thought his success would be found in the business world. In his earlier years he attained a Bachelors' and Masters' degree in business administration thinking this was his forte. After working in the field for ten years, Kent noticed that he was not feeling fulfillment at his job, but had a desire to be more creative and spontaneous.

Having spent time as a child drawing and painting, Kent was anxious to turn to that for a creative outlet. Within six months after he began as a hobbyist, Kent, feeling driven to paint, packed up his family and moved back to their home in the mountains of Utah.

Knowing that an artist's income can be hard to maintain, Kent first opened an art supply store while he developed his artistic skills. His wife, with seven small children, managed the store until 1980, when Kent began to sell his paintings well.

Now, Kent's work is world-wide. Beginning in the West, Kent first displayed paintings throughout Utah, California, and Arizona. He has spread nationwide with a major one-man exhibition in Washington DC at the Venable Neslage Gallery during the Fall of 1988 and internationally with a one-man exhibition at Frost and Reed Galleries in London, England, the winter of 1992. He had another successful one-man show in Washington DC at the Marion-Price Gallery the Fall of 1997.

With his exposure through the vehicle of reproduction, Kent's posters have been an international best seller already for Portfolio Graphics, Inc., Somerset House Publishers, and Leslie Levy Fine Art Publishers, Inc.

Kent attributes his appeal to his course of "Plein Air Painting". In good weather or bad, you will find Kent trudging through the outdoors to find that inspirational moment that he can captivate on canvas. His style is a blend of romanticism and impressionism. Of course, Living in Utah has offered inspiration to his works. The rural valleys and the forest-laden mountains provide great strength. Small communities offer the cozy warmth of your own home. Kent has broadened his subject matter by painting picturesque views of the West Coast; New England and Victoria, Canada. A recent trip to England has given him another venue for painting.

During Kent's artistic career, he has received many prestigious awards. While having been a Sweepstakes' Winner in the Oregon Trail National Show and a Juror's Choice in the Springville Museum Salon, Kent has received his most prestigious awards by becoming a member of the Society of American Impressionists, the Society of Plein Air Artists of America and the Northern California Society of Plein Air Painters.