

M. A. DORAN  
GALLERY

AN INTERVIEW WITH  
JONATHAN SOBOL



We asked Jonathan Sobol about his artistic journey and his recent body of work. Read below to see what he shared.

*Thank you for taking the time to engage with my paintings.*

What drew you to making art and when did you know it would be your career?

*All children draw and paint, I never stopped because it was my way of learning about the world, and gaining a kind of control. And it seemed to communicate with others better than words did. Having been constant with painting, it became a career when I found it to be a trustworthy path to follow.*

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Jonathan Sobol, #1060, Oil on canvas, 30 x 36 in.

Was there a pivotal moment in your career that changed the way you saw yourself as an artist?

*I never saw myself as an artist. I saw myself as a painter. Nothing has changed. However, in my early youth I was surrounded by painters who recognized that I was one of them. That recognition gave me the courage to pursue painting.*

How do you typically begin a new work? Do you plan extensively, or start more intuitively?

*I used to plan, but it always came out as I planned. This became uninteresting. Now I let myself become the expression of something greater than my mind. The intellect is sly and deceptive, feelings never lie.*

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Jonathan Sobol, #1066, Oil on canvas, 11 x 14 in.

Over the last five years your artwork has been quite a departure; what has inspired this new exploration in your work?

*In a world that is ever changing, why remain static?*

*But do not think that there is no connection to what came before.*

What questions and ideas are you exploring in this new body of work – One Foot in the River?

*There is a movement of interest that expands and recedes. In this series, one can see what is of interest. In painting, words are meaningless, painting is a visual experience in and of itself. That experience is the path and the reward.*



Jonathan Sobol, *Light, Dancing Dark* #1059, Oil on canvas, 20 x 40 in.

You have a really wonderful way of using color in your work. How do you approach color? Do you choose it based on intuition or from a technical perspective?

*Thank you. I studied the technical aspect of color intensively until it became second nature. Now it is intuitive. Color is emotion. We all have 'favorite' colors, innate choices*

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*based on our genetic makeup. When I became aware of the repetitive stranglehold of personal color preferences, I decided to break that hold. It became my challenge to find the ugliest color (to me) and put that on a canvas, then I had to find the color that made that ugly color beautiful. This expanded my ability to work in a world of color that was no longer based on bias, but upon harmony.*

Can you describe a day in your studio?

*No day in the studio is ever the same, often I do not paint, but engage in the demands of the world, taking care of what needs to be done. All this ends up in the painting. Perhaps the only constant is that more time is spent looking at the canvas than putting paint on it. A lot of paint is also removed from it, the process is never smooth.*



Jonathan Sobol, *Moving Lines of Energy I #1079*, Oil on canvas, 20 x 20 x 1.5 in.

You love motorcycle riding, does riding influence your art?

*No, but motorcycling, when done properly, is being totally in the moment. This is what painting has been for me. Life is nothing but the moment, all else is either memory or imaginative projection, neither of which are real.*

Anything else important to your artistic practice that you would like to share?

*In essence, painting is a reflection of 'being', so an awareness and examination of the totality of personal experience is of great importance in what I do.*

Thank you, Jonathan, for sharing.