

William Russell

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Brief Biography:

William Russell is a multi-disciplinary artist. For 40+ years, his creative life has included fine art, illustration, visual journalism, teaching and web design. Bill has shown his work in a variety of settings including Stanford University, SFMoMA Artists Gallery, Marin MOCA, California College of the Arts in San Francisco, Sofie Contemporary in Calistoga and Reactor Gallery in Toronto, Canada. His paintings can be found in private collections throughout the Bay area and in Canada.

Born and raised in Canada, William went on to earn his degree from Parsons School of Design in New York. For eight years William was an adjunct professor of Illustration at CCA. He had artist residencies at Recology San Francisco and the Kala Art Institute in Berkeley. He posts every week on his blog: IllustratedJournalism.com

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

2023 *Winter's Bloom*, Sofie Arts Contemporary, Calistoga, CA
2022 *Ice Show*, Marin Museum of Contemporary Art, Novato, CA
2015 Stanford Art Spaces, Palo Alto, CA
2012 Siren Salon, San Anselmo, CA
2012 123 Bolinas, Fairfax, CA
2011 *Recology Sketchbook & Prints*, San Francisco A.I.R. Exhibition
2010 Hunters Point Open Studios, SF, CA
2008 Bay Area Sound Studios, San Rafael, CA
2008 Hunters Point Open Studios, SF, CA
2006 Center for the Book, SF, CA
2005-17 Marin Open Studios, San Rafael, CA
2000 Reactor Gallery, Toronto, Canada

Selected Group Exhibitions:

2024 *Eco Evolution: Power for Change*, Sausalito Center for the Arts, Sausalito, CA
2023 *Delicious!*, Art Works Downtown, San Rafael, CA
2022 *Contemporary Botanicals*, Art Works Downtown, San Rafael, CA
2019 *Transcend*, Member show, MarinMoCA, Novato, CA
2019 Marin Fair, San Rafael, CA
2019 *So Far*, Sofie Arts Contemporary, Calistoga, CA

2018 *New Naturals*, Sofie Contemporary Arts, Calistoga, CA
2018 *Reflections: After the Fire*, Sonoma State Art Gallery, Rohnert Park, CA
2018 *Tell Me a Story*, O'Hanlon Center for the Arts, Mill Valley, CA
2018 *The Fire and the Rose are One*, Sofie Arts Contemporary, Calistoga, CA
2017 SF Open Studios, The Farm, San Francisco, CA
2017 *Contemporary Landscape*, MarinMoCA, Novato, CA
2017 *Beginnings*, Route One Gallery, Pt. Reyes, CA
2016 Summer National Juried Competition, MarinMoCA, Novato, CA
2014 *SoFoSix*, San Rafael, CA
2009 *Bad Acid*, Propeller, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
2007 IndexG Gallery, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
2006-8 National Juried Competition, Falkirk Cultural Center, San Rafael, CA
2006-7 National Juried Competition, MarinMOCA, Novato, CA
2007 The Garage Gallery at Embarcadero Auto, San Francisco, CA

Other Selected Information:

- taught illustration at the California College of the Arts, San Francisco, CA, 1993-2000
- created utility box painting, Dublin, CA 2020
- held leadership positions at Graphic Artists Guild and spoke on artist advocacy panels, 2003-2005
- artist-in-residence at Kala Art Center, Berkeley, CA 2018
- made presentations at California College of the Arts, Art Academy, SFAI, Hartford Art School, etc., 1994-2015
- created digital projections for *Stages: A Solo Work about Life Shifts*, No Strings Attached Dance Company Awakenings, Beginnings Dance Festival, Los Angeles, CA 2015
- artist-in-residence at Recology San Francisco, 2010
- created *Greek Vase/Street Scene* heart sculpture, Hearts-in-San Francisco, in support of the SF General Hospital Fund, San Francisco, CA, 2004
- represented by San Francisco Museum of Modern Art Artists Gallery, San Francisco, CA, 2014-2021
- featured in [video](#), *Bill Russell - Artist Sketches*, Spirit House Productions, 2021
- created a large linocut print for Center for the Book Steamroller Event, San Francisco, CA, 2006

A Review by curator and art writer DeWitt Cheng:

'William Russell's works, with their intuitive orbs and arabesques of black enamel paint, resemble musical scores set free from their staves...collaged printed elements assimilate bits of the real world, or at least references and metonyms, into the frozen music of the pictorial architecture. Some works with their exuberant shapes and dynamic rhythms, belong to the lyrical tradition of Matisse's cutouts and Stuart Davis's semi-abstract oil paintings. Biomorphic surrealism is also a source; look at the starbursts, flowers, eyes,

flames, and seedpod forms, as well as the typographic elements, hinting at words, sound, and poetry, and Miro comes to mind, as well as such non-surrealists as Rauschenberg and Motherwell. Russell's lyricism is generally playful, but it has a darker side, too, mixing myth, history and politics.'

A Review from gallerist Jan Sofie:

William Russell's "Floral Series" exhibits a generous affection for the natural world and places the birds and flowers of his attention in composed scatterings, often on a flat field for scrutiny like a charming abbreviated guidebook.

His large-scale paintings of four of the magnificent Slot Canyons in Utah - Antelope, Willis, Dry Fork and Mind Canyons - portray dark and vigorous brush outlines of major forms that appear supernatural in hue, but actually radiate their true pigments of earth.

Selections from "Ice Show", Russell's recent installation at the Marin Museum of Contemporary Art, depict a dramatic fire and ice landscape, inspired by the artist's recent trip to Iceland and his fascination with the place and its obvious signs of global warming. Several works depict icebergs that have broken away from the melting polar icecap, becoming vivid novel forms as they slowly thaw. Strange characters also appear in the paintings - in kayaks, on a Nordic sailing ship, or as bathing-capped swimmers treading the inhospitable waters - and these add an ironic twist to worlds of ancient beauty alongside the harsh awareness of humankind's impact.