

Art as a True Representation of the Individual

"Art is coming face to face with yourself."

Jackson Pollock

Everything we do in life, every movement, decision, choice is an expression of our own free will and a reflection of the inner self. Artists deliberately choose their media, colors and intent when executing a work of art. At its most basic level, art is a true representation of the individual, their personality, thought process and eventual visual life of that process – a coming together of the inner self with the outer narration.

The results are often truly magnificent, a clarification of direction, theme and determination.



"Odes To The Sycamore, No. 10," ink and watercolor by Pat Herman.

The Ellen Firme Gallery, 92 U.S. 12, Beverly Shores, features mixed-media works by Pat Herman: a seasoned artist, Duneland Plein Air Painters member and lover of the towering sycamore tree. Her latest exhibit, "Odes to the Sycamore," clearly expresses her immersion into the subject.

This interest in a singular species is not a recent one, but instead harkens back to Herman's childhood.

Everything about the sycamore intrigues her — the bark, the flowers, small, fuzzy brown fruits. Deciding to create a series based solely on a single centralized theme is Herman coming face-to-face with herself and her love of this natural form. The result is wonderful mixed-media works (primarily watercolor and ink, sometimes with the addition of pencil). For example, "Odes To The Sycamore, #10" offers a glimpse of a zoomed-up view of the trunk and bare branches of either early spring or winter set against a wonderful clear blue sky. "Odes To The Sycamore, #14" is a much closer, zoomed-up view of the patternization of the bark. Her exploration of the subject is right on point for anyone following current public discourse regarding the environment and the importance of trees. For Herman, this has been a successful, intimate, in-depth exploration of the subject.

A posted statement reads: *"Sycamores are among the oldest species of trees on Earth, well known for*

The Inquisitive Artist

Linda Weigel



their longevity, hardiness and dramatic beauty. They can live for 250 years, or more. There are several American Sycamores that have been reported to be 500 and 600 years old." I found that statement to be surprisingly informative, providing a better understanding of Herman's fascination with the species. I expect she will continue to explore this theme. I am interested to see where the future leads her.

The show closes Nov. 8. I highly recommend seeing these fine works in person.



"Odes To The Sycamore, No. 14," another ink and watercolor piece by Herman.