

What Art Means to Me

Making (and viewing!) art frees me from whatever might be weighing me down, physically and emotionally. Art invites me to lose myself in the subject matter and in the painting process, to learn and grow, evolve and connect.

My *Perspectives & Retrospectives* show is about that journey. I've always painted whatever appealed to or interested me at the time. Now I'm painting differently, and deeper. I'm deeper. And feeling more connected than ever.

Recently, for the first time in my 60 years of painting, I did my first series, "Odes to the Sycamores." A total of 17 images, so far, and more to come. I had long wanted to paint them, having taken photos of them for years. I grew up with them at my Grandma's house. If I see one and it's reachable, I photograph it. I should have a bumper sticker, "I Brake for Sycamores!"



It pleases me immensely that many who have seen my "Odes" have been impacted by them, remember them, and reach out to me to let me know. I have received photos of sycamores from them, in their home states or in their travels in the U.S. or Europe.

Folks have told me that they now know what that tree is that they pass often, admire, and never knew its name. They are now more drawn to it and appreciate it in a different way. I have also received photos of other interesting trees they have encountered and want to share with me. It warms my heart to receive them and know that people are seeing the world, or at least these trees, differently.

I didn't begin with the intention to do a series. As I let the sycamores take hold of my imagination, I began to see the trees in different light(s) and wanted to express all of those views. That led to a second series, drawings of Ponderosa Pines, which I hope will also have an impact on those who see them. I have loved immersing myself in the trees and painting them from different perspectives.

I am enjoying, so much, painting and drawing in series. It's expanding my interest and awareness and often has me thinking ahead. As I'm creating one image, I'm starting to think what will be my approach in the next one(s). It stimulates my creativity. It pulls me forward. It keeps me going.

In the world we find ourselves in today, I think art becomes more and more relevant and important, for everyone. I know that making art calms my world and the sharing of it with others gives me great joy. When it impacts and pleases others, that's the best. It lifts me up and inspires me to continue. It's always my hope that my art will heighten your awareness of beauty in our world, that it causes you to see it and enjoy it more.

Pat Herman
PatHermanArt.com
Summer, 2023