



Auberge

Michael Flohr's Visual Adventure

By SANDY MITCHELL

It is a rare and celebrated occasion when an artist is discovered that has a unique talent, fresh vision and exceptional ability to transcend artistic predisposition. Michael Flohr is just such an artist.

Flohr's work is a visual adventure. Not only in its exquisite beauty, modern impressionistic style and the emotion elicited in every painting, but in the artist's ability to effect the invention of a genre unique and true in and of itself in today's contemporary art world.

I caught up with the artist at his studio in Golden Hill, San Diego. I asked Flohr about his escalating career, how he felt about the recognition his art has been getting and how he feels about his decision to become a professional, fine artist. Meet Michael Flohr...

"My parents enrolled me in my first

art class when I was 5 years old. My family has always encouraged my artistic talents

I was able to experiment with all types of media and artistic styles. In 1999, I was accepted into New York's Society of Illustrators and was awarded the Herman Lambert scholarship by the Society the following year."

"I graduated from the Academy of Art in 2000 and was honored with 'Best of Show' for my painting *Irish Coffee* at the Academy's spring exhibition that same year. That piece and two others were later selected for exhibition at the de Young Museum, San Francisco's oldest public museum located in Golden Gate Park. I couldn't believe that my work was hanging next to other master painters, especially my biggest inspiration, Claude Monet! I am really proud of that achievement."

With acceptance into the Society of Illustrators, Flohr joined the ranks of



Cappuccino

and for that I am eternally grateful. I chose to pursue a degree at the Academy of Art College in San Francisco. There,

legendary predecessors such as Norman Rockwell, Maxfield Parrish and N.C. Wyeth. That honor, coupled with his selection for a museum exhibition so early into his artistic career, is a sure indication that this is an emerging artist to be watched.

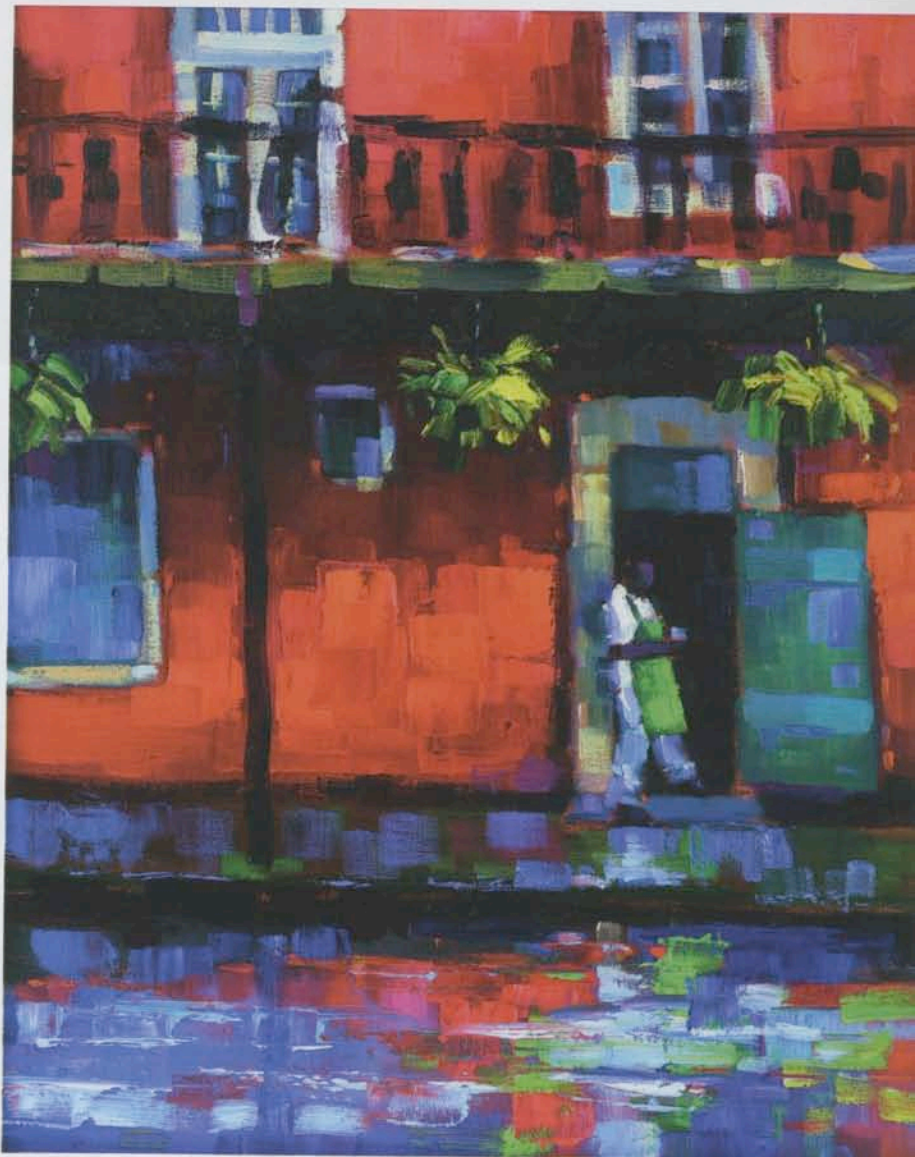
In a contemporary art world that has craved a fresh, new approach in the creation of effectual works of art, Flohr fills this void with his series of paintings that cover subject matter ranging from nightlife scenes, cityscapes, still lifes and figurative portraiture. Flohr's work is largely urban in content, frantic in execution yet solemn in interpretation. His paintings have an eerie ability to capture a fleeting moment, as if from a peripheral vision, resulting in a permanent "déjà vu" for the outsider looking in. Bordering the surreal, yet strangely familiar, Flohr's images capture what seem to be the artist's furious study of a gloriously regular moment in time. A moment it seems, in which many can relate.

The artist's paintings are a patchwork of avant-garde, impressionistic color exhibiting a stylistic fortitude that succeeds in redefining impressionism and abstract expressionism. Static movement is uniquely portrayed in his work through his brush stroke technique, masterful use of light and sumptuous, yet somber color.

When asked about his technique and how he feels his work differs from other contemporary artists, Flohr explains, "There is a flow that I try to keep in my paintings that evolves into a story of colors and movement that breathe together. A coronation of small, square strokes of premeditated color creates the rhythm throughout a piece. Then I combine them with broad brush strokes that serve to 'marry' the elements together. I approach each canvas with 'aggressive subtleness'. My goal as a modern impressionist is to capture a gesture and a mood, not necessarily every pore on the face of a person depicted in one of my paintings. I want my figures to be a part of the painting, not the painting itself. They work together in the environment creating the movement and emotion in a piece. I like to show light and how it travels, where it lands and how it can change color. Light alone can change the look or the mood of a place."

Ultimately, these qualities in Flohr's work predominate in its unique appeal and artistic integrity.

"My biggest inspiration in creating my art is everyday life. I have a huge passion to record humanity on canvas, the good and the bad; it is all beautiful to me.



Coffee Break



Cappuccino with Friends

I strive to express the familiar in my work and communicate a common thread among my subjects and my viewers. I want to tell a story with substance," Flohr admits. He achieves this with a genius of insight and artistic wherewithal unique to his work and a man of his young years.

"After graduating from the Academy, I toured Europe with a friend. This piqued my interest in European culture and was very enlightening for me and my artwork. It was this experience that led me to pursue the desire to capture the nuances of social interaction, city nightlife and cityscapes as subject matter in my work. Seeing strangers intermingle in strange, new places is an inspiration to me. I am the guy who can be found out with friends in a café and notice a beautiful, warm, orange-violet light chipping on peoples' faces across the room. I am immediately distracted and thinking of ways to combine color and capture that moment in my next painting.

"The works of impressionist artists throughout history inspire me, specifically Pissaro, Monet, Manet and Degas. Like these artists, I prefer to work in oils. I love oil paint because of its durability and the richness it brings to the canvas. I also believe that most people with an appreciation for art respect an artist's use of this classic medium."

"I do not work with models. I prefer to sketch 'in the mo-

ment' as a scene unfolds, most often with charcoal. Many times, these sketches will become works of art in themselves, because they capture a different mood. Sometimes I work with candid photographs. I look for visual clues in a scene and then consider the overwhelming choices of color I can use to create my interpretation of an image. Observation is everything for me. Whether it is seen, heard or read; it is all connected to that which can be processed into a visual."

Depicting ordinary moments in extraordinary ways, Flohr's work is an intellectually artistic mastery of color, perspective technique and vision. Blazing a trail that is sure to influence the eyes of fine art collectors around the world, Flohr's work is also sure to impact other emerging artists for years to come as well. As he grows as a person and evolves as an artist, enthusiasts of the arts are sure to enjoy the fruits of his commentaries on the world around him – and in the end, the one that surrounds us all.

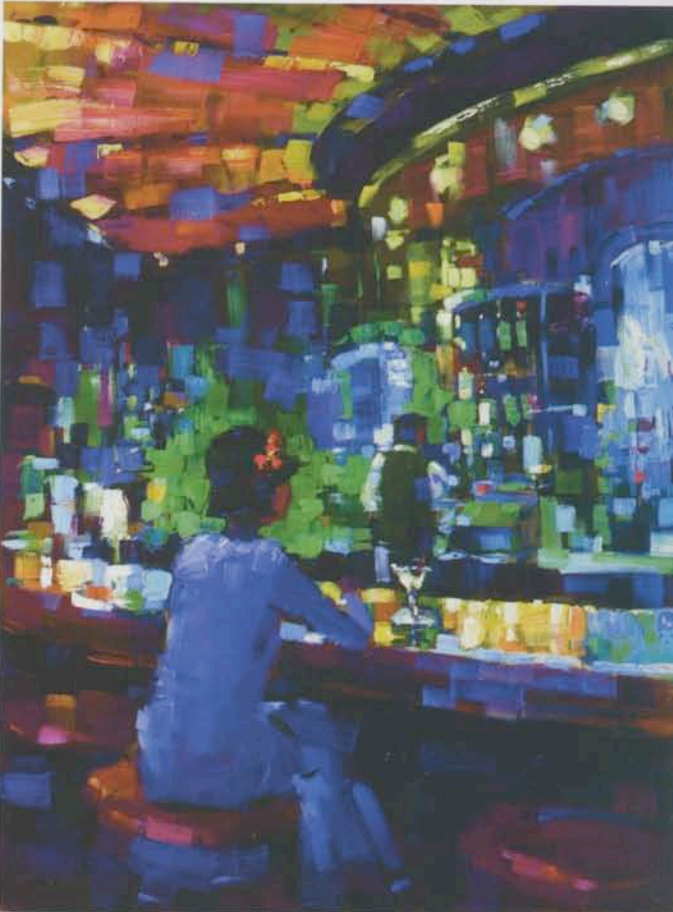
Multiplying his well-deserved exposure, most recently Flohr's work has been contracted for international distribution via limited edition, fine art publishing. Crown Thorn Publishing located in the San Diego, California brings 20 years of experience in representing fine artists and enticing art aficionados on the virtues of fine art collecting and will be showing Flohr's work in New York this March at the Artexpo.



Night at the Fox



Lunch Date



Mel At The Bar

Michael Flohr's work can be viewed in over 70 galleries world-wide.

Published and distributed by Crown Thorn Publishing, San Diego, CA • 92108 • 619.895.3027 • www.crownthornpublishing.com