

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT

So far as an artist I've concentrated on painting. I find the work of Gregory Amenoff, Marsden Hartley, Anselm Kiefer and Joan Miro particularly inspiring. The study of art history provides me with a springboard from which to jump into personal explorations.

I like to push painting a bit into different directions. I attach objects to the painted surface for example to provide a textured element atypical of the traditionally flat plane of painting. But I retain the rectangular format characteristic of painting across styles and periods. While the edges of the rectangle may be rough with things poking out a bit, viewers will readily interpret the work as a painting not a sculpture.

I paint on burlap instead of canvas. This accentuates the criss-cross pattern of the cloth threads when paint is applied. So while the material is fairly uncommon in the history of painting, it acts to amplify the presence of the painter's hand on the surface rather than conceal it. I seek not to fool the eye with realism; my goal is to make clear this is a made thing, a painted work of art.

Burlap fits with my choice of other meager, often well-worn materials. I use discarded items such as rusted bottle caps and small broken mechanical parts alongside 'worthless' natural items like sticks and smashed pine cones. This suggests all the affairs of humanity and every tiny part of the natural world are part of a divine plan. There really is no junk; everything and every person has a beauty and a part to play. Using windows for frames is a way to say, "look into this different spiritual dimension".

## **Destry Sparks**