

LINK GALLERY *presents...*

Passages

 by DIANE TESLER

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I studied art at Antioch College, but my life as a painter really began several years later when I lived in Hawaii. In the early '70s, I lived on the island of Oahu near two fields of abandoned cars and trucks. It was somewhat strange to

see the familiar, battered faces in an exotic landscape, and my head turned each time I passed by.

Overcoming an initial hesitation, I went out into one of the junkyards with a sketchbook. What I found there has remained a constant in my work ever since: the power of light to reveal form and the beauty of the discarded.

Moving to Virginia in 1973, I joined the Torpedo Factory Art Center in Alexandria, where I am a painting instructor at the Art League School. Connecting with a community of artists and the museum resources of Washington, D.C., proved enormously enriching. I expanded the scale of my work and my range of subjects to include still life, interiors and figures.

Through doing the work, I continued to learn what is important to me. One discovery was that oil paint was flexible and infinitely responsive and would be my favored medium for the long haul. Another lesson I

learned particularly through composing still life, was that the search for balance, albeit precarious and temporary, was embedded in every mark I made on a canvas.

Perhaps motivated by this search for balance, I longed to reconnect with the outdoor world as I had in Hawaii. An opportunity to do that opened up in 1986, when I accompanied a friend on a painting trip to northern Indiana. Here I found an austere land of open skies and abandoned farmhouses and quite simply fell in love with the place.

In 1991, I purchased an old house in the town of Kewanna, Ind., that I could use as a summer studio. This enabled me to work on larger projects on location as well as develop relationships with the



people in the area (some of whom ended up in my paintings). I purchased the old Odd Fellows Hall in the center of town for use as my studio, and in 2012, made the big leap to full-time residency in Kewanna.

The pattern of my life has been to look inward, and to stay with those subjects and techniques that strike a deep chord while bypassing whatever might be currently fashionable. Among my role models are the American painters Charles Burchfield, Edward Hopper, John F. Peto and Wayne Thiebaud.

D.E. Tesler

