



Artist Bio: Chris Ahlers

Chris Ahlers studied film production at Ryerson University from 1987-90, and in 1992 opened Wyndham Art Supplies with his parents Otto and Marg. Since then he has maintained a part-time studio practice while being involved in the store and the creative processes of countless artists. The daily exposure to other artists' approaches and methods have informed and enriched his appreciation for both the conceptual and material considerations in his work. He shares a studio with his wife Tammy Ratcliff. Ahlers' work has been exhibited in private and public galleries across Southern Ontario, and he has taken part in group shows at the Art Gallery of Guelph, Wellington County Museum & Archives, Renann Isaacs Contemporary, the Guelph Studio Tour, Guelph Arts Festival, and the Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition. His work is in public collections in Toronto and Guelph, and private collections in Canada and the U.S.

Artist Statement

As a non-objective painter, my pieces often refer to the 'real world' or lived experience but do not necessarily depict it in straightforward terms. For me the act of painting is often a reaction to, or reflection of the sights and sounds, textures and moods I experience in daily life. I use painting to convey and also convert information and sensory input from one form to another, like a filter or lens that can magnify, distort or clarify. My method tends toward the intuitive, where plans can change according to the relationships that emerge within each piece as it develops.

I am interested equally in the material aspects of paint; it's tactile qualities and surface, colour, volume and with compositional concerns. Working primarily in acrylic, I incorporate numerous paint mediums and additives as well as collage and drawn elements. I like to play at the threshold between painterly mark-making that is rich in gesture and intent, and more ambiguous forms and passages that appear to have occurred naturally, or over time. My goal is to create work that is visually engaging and offers a space in which a viewer can explore and dwell, make associations and infer personal meaning.

