



ERIK SKJOLSVIK

20 year retrospective of paintings and drawings: 1995 to 2015

Bedford Public Library
2424 Forest Ridge Drive
Bedford, TX 76021
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When Erik Skjolsvik (Schols-vik) began exhibiting his art around 1990, his work looked much different from what you see here today. As the *Fort Worth Star Telegram* art critic Janet Tyson once wrote in January 1994, "what occurs are jarring clashes of rawness and refinement, graphic crudeness and formal beauty." As time went on, the often interpreted angry works of art transitioned towards a more meditative, and serene body of work that has evolved tremendously, or very little, depending on how you look at it.

His work has been exhibited in galleries, museums and non-profit art spaces throughout Texas. In addition, he played an instrumental role creating large sculptural installations for the T-Rex Cafe in Kansas City and a scale model satellite that hangs in the Smithsonian's Newseum at Washington DC.

Using ink on paper, or enamel and acrylic urethane on canvas or wood, Skjolsvik renders calligraphic forms in repetition until he intuitively halts. The end product reflects controlled chaos or possibly a quiet spiritual quest. Whatever the interpretation, the titles may reference feelings of past or

present, theory of mental inhibitions or ambitions and unpopular culture. The non-representational forms are not conscious abstractions of anything that he conceives of through premeditated processes; they are rather like documented feelings or behaviors created with a few simple materials. The angst in his art still exists, just as it does in life.

Occasionally, the architectural drafting and photorealistic itch surfaces. Like the "Endless Intersection" series which represents a mental state rather than a simple representation of a blurred landscape. In this series, he attempts to capture that instance when we catch ourselves staring out into the wild blue yonder while apparently looking forward. The brain activity and mental routes we take moment to moment and day to day are infinite in theory, yet it is these moments of clarity or utter confusion that he wishes to capture.

During this 20 year span, there are gaps not documented here amid the tiny journal like drawings. These years, Skjolsvik spent his hours designing and painting photorealistic

backdrops for rock and roll bands, including Pantera, Slayer, Machine Head, and Megadeth just to name a few. These giant portable murals have been seen by millions of people around the world. Without the use of today's computer and printing technology, Erik utilized his technical drafting skills to transform small photographic images to gigantic, stage-worthy proportions. On a smaller scale, he designed logos, t-shirts and CD covers for music, motorcycle and hot-rod events.

Presently, Skjolsvik works as a preparator, which is defined as "one who prepares specimens and artifacts for museum display." Beginning this practice in 1990, he apprenticed under Kevin Marshall, Loretta Eubanks, Rick Yamada, and Bruce Lee. All of these individuals are enormously respected in the museum field.

Understanding the ephemeral nature of commercial art, Skjolsvik returned where he left off, creating art that he enjoys and hopes that other people may respond.