

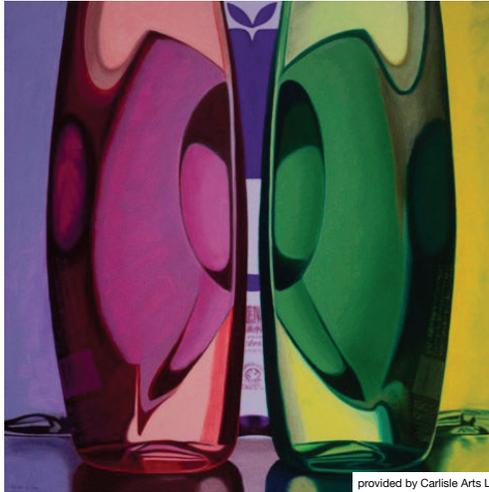


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Art: Everyday objects inspire artist's 'method' at CALC



provided by Carlisle Arts Learning Center

"Dishsoap #17" is included in "latest Methods, recent paintings by Peter Seidel" on display at CALC until May 30, 2015.

May 06, 2015 9:00 pm • [Joseph and Barrie Ann George For The Sentinel](#) (0) Comments

Peter Seidel experienced an artistic "epiphany" in the most unusual of places — the grocery store.

On a trip to the toiletries aisle, Seidel was struck by the variety of colors of the mouthwashes; greens, blues, yellows that when held up to the fluorescent lights produced illuminated hues which resulted in the inspiration for his work over the last decade.

Much of his love of color and transparency began with collections of colored glass which he enjoyed displayed on windowsills. The refraction and overlapping colors became a major influence on his work. Yet his interest quickly moved to the colored liquids as he perused the grocery aisles of hand soap, mouthwash and dish washing liquid.

Seidel amassed the bottles of liquids, and with the use of a light box, used back-lighting to create unique still life oil paintings. Seidel refers to his work as "painting in the light of the everyday." The phrase describes both the importance of light and the use of everyday objects but also gives a nod to the importance of seeing what is always front of us.

Peter Seidel's oil paintings are on display this month at the Carlisle Arts Learning Center in the G.B. Stuart Gallery in "latest Methods, recent paintings by Peter Seidel." The large canvases with vibrant "pop" colors take advantage of the gallery space's full natural light. While the subjects are utilitarian, they appear to transform into graceful, otherworldly shapes in luminescent colors.

"These paintings are explorations of modern subjects; supermarket treasures that are often used but perhaps seldom seen," Seidel said. "All of the works arise from my delight in the unexpected and kaleidoscopic shapes of transparent color found in such things when revealed in the wonder of light."

In addition to the spectacular colors, Seidel pays close attention to the form, both flowing as well as architectural. In "Hand Soaps #3," four gently curved bottles with blue, yellow, pink and purple colored soaps overlap to create new colors in their reflection and refraction of light. At the same time Seidel captures the nuances of light and color, he meticulously drafted the bottles' pumps with an almost Art Deco look.

Seidel attributes his interest in form, especially in the three dimensional form, from his ceramic studies with local art Professor Dennis Akin as a student at Dickinson College in the 1970s.

Attention to the curves and bellies of ceramics began to inform his awareness of form. The collection of paintings in "latest Methods" shows a respect for the vessels and the current resurgence of creativity found in product design. Seidel states that he was not at all being "cute or

kitschy" in choosing these products. They genuinely inspire him on many levels.

Seidel changes his light box approach in "Dish Soap #23" and "Dish Soap #24" as he lights the subjects from the rear with fluorescent tube lights to produce intriguing results.

In the former, the bottles have distinct lit stripes across the center; but in the later, the light is refracted to create abstract shapes within the bottles. Seidel's careful attention is not only to the bottles of colored liquid but to the shadows and reflections surrounding them.

It is over simplistic to call Peter Seidel's paintings Photorealism. The viewer recognizes the images easily, because the truth of the rendering is so accurate. The shapes and the blended colors seem so on point; it takes a minute to start to appreciate what we are seeing.

We begin to look past the depiction of the subject matter and to focus on the subtle shapes and abstractions, to appreciate the mastery of color and draftsmanship and the tonal changes within each painting. Careful observation and delight in the visual world around us is the driving force of Seidel's work. He invites the viewer to see what he has noticed and so perfectly recreated in paint on canvas, which is his ultimate desire.

"latest Methods, recent paintings by Peter Seidel" is on display at the Carlisle Arts Learning Center (CALC) until May 30. CALC is located at 38 West Pomfret Street in Carlisle. Exhibitions are free and open to the public.

For more information see www.CarlisleArts.org or call 249-6973. To learn more about the work of Peter Seidel visit his website at www.peterseidelart.com.

Joseph George holds a degree in history and art history from Dickinson College. He and his wife, Barrie Ann have spent much of their 25 years together traveling and visiting art galleries locally and throughout the world. Their tastes range from fine art to street art.

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