

# PARK RECORD

## Brent Godfrey's metaphorical journeys

Kimball Art Center presents new exhibit of paintings

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Brent Godfrey uses the painting process to translate objects, figures and landscapes into physical metaphor. Combining varying degrees of abstraction and representation, he explores identity and memory, interpersonal relationships, societal structures and global connections. His focus is on the moments when meaning is revealed and understanding shaped through intellectual, emotional and physical experience.

Many representational painters focus on an accurate portrayal of what lies before them, while abstract painters are interested in intellectual expression using select elements of art making (color, composition, pattern, contrast, etc., which may or may not stem from a subject). Brent Godfrey is interested in visual art as it applies to the humanities. "I believe that the combination of physical, intellectual & emotional experience comes together in varying degrees, and it is at these intersections that meaning is assigned to one's experiences, sometimes clear, sometimes vague."

For Godfrey, visually articulating these journeys and "A-ha" moments requires a blending of varying degrees of abstraction. He says, "Abstraction also allows me to hover in the areas of human experience that lie between words or outside language. Abstract work allows me to obscure challenging subject matter--this can make a painting more accessible and helps invite viewers that might otherwise immediately reject it."

Godfrey is unique as a mid career painter in that he has continuously worked both abstractly and representationally.

Most artists choose a more singular direction early in their career, limiting exercise in techniques and mental processes. The pieces in this exhibit will be a blending of representational and abstract techniques, with an emphasis on abstraction and its processes. One of the most frequent comments heard from people standing in front of an abstract painting is "I don't understand abstract art." This often leads to an urge to dismiss it. Godfrey believes the best way to educate people on visual subjects is through visual language. For this reason, he has included several series of paintings (about 25 total) in his upcoming exhibit, "Getting Real, Visual Expressions of Personal Perceptions," at the Kimball Art Center's Badami Gallery Aug. 6 through Sept. 26, that move from fairly realistic depictions to condensed abstracts with no recognizable subject.

Brent was raised in Roy, Utah--a conservative, suburban community sandwiched between farmland and a military base. His upbringing was intensely religious and highly conventional. An intense need to explore, question, observe and explicate resulted in an evolution away from childhood dogmas and established mental exercises that form the base of his work. He has been a professional painter for over 25 years, exhibiting in Europe and across the United States. His work is in public & private collections throughout the United States and has been published broadly.

"Though I have always enjoyed drawing and painting," Godfrey says, "I also embraced music, drama, literature and writing throughout my upbringing. I later studied psychology as well. This has given me a broader perspective on the humanities." He graduated Cum Laude, with a Bachelor of Arts from Weber State University, received a Master of Education from Brigham Young University, then continued painting studies in Italy, Taos (New Mexico), and at the University of Utah. "My extensive travels affect my world-view and inform my artistic perspective," he says. "Hundreds of hours in museums probably inform my work more than my classroom experience."

*Experience Brent Godfrey's exhibit, "Getting Real, Visual Expressions of Personal Perceptions," in the Kimball Art Center's Badami Gallery Aug. 6 through Sept. 26. Meet Godfrey during the Park City Gallery Stroll on Friday, Aug. 27, from 6 to 9 p.m.*