

the Art Cellar

Tony Griffin

"Everything begins with something observed and felt. Observation is not an end but rather a beginning point for an emotional, formal, or imaginative statement of exploration. I believe in the responsive energy that comes from painting directly in front of the motif, the give and take between painter and subject, painter and painting."

- Tony Griffin



Tony Griffin is a classically trained painter. Griffin's work has evolved from a deep-rooted understanding and appreciation of the academic approach to a more personal and direct interpretation of his experiences and surroundings.

He is a perceptual painter; his work is based on observation and direct response. While Griffin remains faithful to the principles and ideals of his classical training, his work has developed into a looser, more confident voice - a testament not only to his skill, but to his personal vision.

In 1970, at the age of eleven, Griffin embarked on his artistic journey in Florence, Italy. While attending the American International School of Florence, Tony lived and apprenticed with fresco artist Ben Long. During this time, he received training from the atelier of Sigorina Nera Simi at the recommendation of the Italian master, Pietro Annigoni. Griffin's early artistic training was heavily influenced by the Italian Renaissance masters - a set of artistic ideals that was enjoying another renaissance in Florence's dynamic community of expatriate artists of the 1970's (and still persists to this day). With a solid foundation in academic drawing, Tony briefly returned to the United States in 1974 to attend the North Carolina School of the Arts (1974-1975) and was to permanently return later to attend the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art (1979-1983). Currently, Tony divides his time between his studio in Charlotte and his summer home in the mountains of North Carolina.