



BEN STEELE, MERILL INN, OIL ON CANVAS, 55 X 50"



WENDY CHIDESTER, LUNCH BOX & RED STRIPE THERMOS, OIL ON CANVAS, 24 X 24"

remember the sound, smell and touch of the object."

Chidester's love for painting forgotten objects stems from her time in Helper, Utah, a small mining town that is evolving into an artist community.

"I was browsing through an antique store on Main Street one day, when I noticed a collection of old cameras on display. I borrowed several of them to take back to my studio to paint," says Chidester. "While painting the cameras I couldn't help but imagine the photos the cameras had taken, the adventures each camera had seen and who the camera owners were. I have since been enamored by objects that were made to last forever but have lastly been forgotten or replaced."

Ben Steele is taken in by the historical context of art and is compelled to break down "the technical skill as well as the social impact a meaningful piece of art makes."

"I like to believe that my work is simultaneously a satire and homage to famous artworks," says Steele. "I also find that my particular style of art encourages me to learn as much as I can about art history and the art world. I also enjoy the conversation that the work creates between me and people who view it or collect it. The work is meant to be a commentary on how I see the world, and it's exciting when I get to share that with other people and hear about their point of view."

Steele keeps a sketchbook full of ideas and then lets them evolve in his imagination until he can see it on canvas.

"If I need reference or source material, I track it down or sketch it. Since my subject matter can be so diverse, I try to paint each painting in a manner that suits it. Some are much more layered, while others might be painted pretty directly," says Steele.

For Charley Snow, inspiration comes from one of two sources: individual cows and common places.

"For the portraits, I'm inspired by the cow itself—it might seem strange but I think there are cows that are more aesthetically beautiful than others. I think cows evoke empathy in the viewer—people can feel connected to cows in an open way," says Snow. "Other times I get the concept for a painting from being in a place that's loaded with expectations or can be taken for granted, like the subway or beach."

Participating in an exhibition with other artists from his town is a unique experience, one that Snow hopes will resonate with viewers.

"I'm happy to be in a show with two Helper contemporaries and good friends. There is definitely a Helper aesthetic and work ethic," says Snow. "Hopefully having three of us in the same show will help communicate that to everyone who sees it." ●

For a direct link to the
exhibiting gallery go to
www.americanartcollector.com