



Abstractions for a Summer Day - Rob Calvert

September 6, 2011

by Pat Rogers

The sum of summer can be found by noticing moments and adding days until they equal an entire season. Rob Calvert decided capture these moments and combine them with memories from the past to make abstract art.

The result is the solo exhibition, "Summer's Time" on view at Canio's Books in Sag Harbor.



July 28 by Rob Calvert

Each piece in the show beckons the viewer to come closer and take a look. The art is nuanced with consciously-made brushstrokes and marks to capture the essence of light, mood and quality of specific days in the summer.

"In summer, I believe the movements of atmosphere and temperature are more apparent and dramatic than at other times, and thus our emotions and memories are correspondingly more pronounced," Calvert said.



August 15 by Rob Calvert

Nearly all of the art was made within the last eight months. There are paintings, solar plate etchings and artworks that combine both. Where painting and etching meet, a melding is created by carving space from the painting so the etching can occupy the same plane. In doing so, harmony and cooperation is fostered instead of one artwork obscuring the other, Calvert said.

"It's a subtle difference but an important one," he said.

Employing different scales in the composition and framing enhances the viewer's experience of

place, feelings and reflection, Calvert said. "The participant is both grounded and adrift. Only then am I on the right track," he writes in his artist statement.



13.00 July 20 by Rob Calvert

Besides the visual difference, titles help distinguish between paintings and artworks with a painting and etching or etchings. Titles for paintings list a specific day. Titles for artworks with paintings and etchings begin with the time, digitally expressed, before the month and day.

The additional information is a nod to scientific cataloging and to the glut of information available with a few keystrokes or virtual page searches.

"The particular format and title may suggest material subject to analysis or measurement, as if data were to be extracted, as if it were information," Calvert said. "It may suggest this material is free of ambiguity or not requiring interpretation and thus meeting the needs of our data-driven world."



22.00 September 22 By Rob
Calvert

Ultimately, it may be emotion and memory that trumps the specificity implied in the works.

Those searching for multiple meanings will not be disappointed: some dates have historical significance as a way to combine our collective past with the present and enhance the conceptual layers in the work. Events include the start of the Spanish Civil War (July 17, 1936) and D-Day (June 6, 1944).

"Summer's Time" is Calvert's first solo show in the area. A residence of Sag Harbor, Calvert gave up practicing architecture in 2004 to devote his attention full time to art. The switch has allowed creativity to roam and made possible the launch of his life's work, Calvert said. He had been making art since the early 1980's before making the leap.

"The head space to be in for art is not something you turn off and on," Calvert said. "The two worlds have different value equations that once adopted, fundamentally alter the way one looks at the world and sees with the heart."

Having practiced architecture for 25 years brings advantages to artmaking by incorporating architecture's differing point of view and purpose. He posed the following to illustrate:

"Architecture expresses what it's like to exist, and to be human, by enabling the asking of the question: What does it mean to dwell?"

Art begs the question: "What does it mean to be fully alive by having engaged the heart and the head in a more meaningful way and through the sharing of that experience with others?"



Rob Calvert amid "Summer's Time" at
Canio's Books

BASIC FACTS: "Summer's Time: A solo show by Rob Calvert" remains on view through Sept. 7, 2011 at Canio's Books, 290 Main Street, Sag Harbor. www.caniosbooks.com

Rob Calvert has exhibited in Virginia, North Carolina, Washington, DC and New York. Locally, his art has been shown at Guild Hall in East Hampton and the Crazy Monkey Gallery in Amagansett. His work was included the annual Springs Invitational in 2011 and 2009 at Ashawagh Hall.

Rob Calvert: www.rcalvert.net

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