



TERRELL'S 'TURN SIDeways INTO THE LIGHT'

BENJAMIN TERRELL'S WORLD

Colorful new paintings at Springfield Museum

Come into *This World*, a collection of oil paintings enhanced with spray paint and acrylic, represents a journey, says local artist Benjamin Terrell. They signify a period in his life where he moved from dark to light.

Looking at these paintings, on view at the Springfield Museum until March 3, you'd never know there was a dark period. "The Radiant Pond" and "The Palace of Electricity" are titles of works that reflect the artist's fascination with light, as does his effort to make canvases as colorful as humanly possible.

It's with this goal in mind that he reaches for acrylic. He adds it to his paintings, he says, when he wants to make the color seem even more brilliant.

Light as a metaphor for knowledge, truth and spirituality has ancient roots in multiple cultural and religious traditions, some of which no doubt Terrell is drawing from. He is an avid reader whose interests lean toward matters of spiritual concern, and he talks about his paintings, in part, as markers on a journey.

The journey in question is an artistic one but also refers to a period in his life when someone very close to him was facing the illness of a loved one, and when he also suffered a loss.

The path from dark to light for Terrell meant leaving the familiar landscape of his own backyard along the McKenzie River. He left the landscape he knew for uncharted territories. He stopped painting river scenes such as those he saw by his house and began to paint landscapes that were far removed from Oregon.

Looking at some of the animals that populate this new series — zebras, large cats, monkeys, birds and butterflies — it becomes clear that these unknown spaces are inspired by the

artist's imagination; in other words, the new places come partly from within.

In these imaginative places, animals of all sorts, including humans, sometimes gather in entirely unpredictable situations. "Man with Telescope" gives us a view of an expansive landscape in which a man carrying a telescope walks on a path. Meanwhile what appears to be a koala bear observes from a pine tree rather than from the eucalyptus with which it is typically associated.

Both of Terrell's parents are journalists, and they gave him the time-honored advice to write about what you know — or, in his case, to paint what he knows. Obviously, Terrell went another way. His concern was that he would get bogged down in habit and predictability. He doesn't want to be stuck repeating what he knows.

"Having a new language is encouraging," he says.

"Turn Sideways into the Light" exemplifies the freedom a new language might inspire. It is essentially a color-field painting, an explosion of color not unlike the kind you see at sunset.

Flying over the blast of colors is a relatively small but recognizable object, a bird. Beside the bird is a gestural drawing of an unrecognizable object. This is my favorite painting in the show because, even if I hadn't talked to the artist or read his statement, I would have understood — I would have seen the light: the largeness of the format and color, the smallness of the bird willing to cross over it, and the unknown object hovering beside, all add up.

Terrell speaks about his paintings in terms of a journey: from cave to jungle and from dark to light. If that's too spiritual or otherworldly for you, then you can simply think of it this way: Terrell's paintings bring color into this world.

MUSIC

BY BRETT CAMPBELL

VIBRANT VOICES

Vocal music abounds this week in Eugene

If you love the sound of the human voice, this week brings a range of opportunities to hear a wide spectrum of singing — and even to join in.

Vocal music takes center stage and beyond at The Shedd's 2018 Vocal Arts Festival Thursday, Feb. 22, through Saturday, Feb. 24. As anyone who's ever sung in a choir or a band or just around a campfire knows, there's really nothing quite like singing together to improve your spirits and sense of connection to other people, and you can start (or resume) any time.

Why not this Thursday, Feb. 22, when the vivacious **Honey Whiskey Trio** returns for the fifth-annual appearance to lead a community vocal workshop at The Shedd? It covers a diversity of styles, from shape-note singing to body percussion.

The award-winning Southern California women's a cappella trio performs its signature blend of folk, pop and bluegrass music there themselves on Friday night, Feb. 23. On Saturday night, Feb. 24, they join other vocal masters **Divisi** (the popular UO women's a cappella group), **Mind the Gap**, **Greater Eugene Chorus** and **Inspirational Sounds** in a celebration of singing.

You can hear some of the greatest vocal music ever composed — and sung by some of the state's finest singers — at **Eugene Concert Choir & Orchestra's** Sunday afternoon performance of Mozart's stirring *Mass in C minor* at the Hult Center's Silva Hall.

Mozart's great *Requiem* has a better story and considerably more drama, but it's a shame that his other choral masterwork isn't heard nearly as often. Also starring a quartet of acclaimed vocal soloists, it's the choral music event of the season. To finish off the concert, that same team will sing great arias from Bizet's opera *Carmen* and Verdi's *Rigoletto* and *La Traviata*. It's a

fine chance to get your vocal fix in the fallow season between Eugene Opera and Oregon Bach Festival showcases.

There's more than just vocal music onstage, of course. Back at The Shedd next Wednesday, Feb. 28, you can hear the sinuous sounds of Hawaiian slack key guitar, delivered by three of that fingerstyle music's living masters: venerable **Led Kaapana**, four-time Grammy winner **George Kahumoku Jr.**, and **Jeff Peterson**.

Actually, you will hear vocals, from high and lonesome to down and deep, as well as standard guitar and ukulele, and there's really nothing on earth quite as transporting as the shimmering, sultry sound of those detuned string melodies.

Finally, saxophone fans who usually have to be content with jazz — not that there's anything wrong with that — for their favorite instrument have a rare opportunity to hear some 20th-century classical sax masterworks Thursday, Feb. 22, at the University of Oregon's

Beall Concert Hall, when Portland alto master **Sean Fredenberg** joins pianist **Chuck Dillard** in music by popular French composer Jacques Ibert (*Don Quixote Songs*), Paule Maurice (the musical portraits *Tableaux de Provence*) and William Albright.



HONEY WHISKEY TRIO
PHOTO BY FRANCES CHEE