

# Chromatic Imaginings

Ventana Fine Art, May 20-June 1



▲ Angus, *The Rocky Break (Looking Back Toward Santa Cruz, CA)*, acrylic, 24 x 36.  
 ► Angus, *Calla Lily With Eggplant and Watermelon*, acrylic, 44 x 26.



VENTANA FINE ART brings contemporary landscape and still-life interpretations to the fore this month with a two-person exhibition featuring the vivid, high-intensity paintings of Frank Balaam and Angus. The show, entitled *Chromatic Imaginings*, opens Friday, May 20, with a reception for the artists from 5 to 7 p.m. The show includes nearly 20 new paintings from each artist in a range of sizes. Balaam's collection comprises his signature abstracted forest scenes, composed of rich, thick pigments that form subtle new dimensions. Angus' still lifes utilize bold blocking and layering to create a dynamic color story within each scene.

Balaam works in saturated, concen-

trated oils that he applies directly to the white canvas without blending or overpainting—a process that results in highly textured, tactile surfaces. His latest series, *Green Doorways*, includes narrow canvases that stretch to 6 feet tall and are densely packed full of luminous leaves, trunks, and branches. Balaam says these new paintings “naturally emphasize doorway-like proportions while drawing the viewer’s emergent awareness to an entrance into another subtly different dimension.”

Balaam has long been interested in trees, admiring them for their resilience in the face of destruction via forest fires, development, and other hu-

man actions. “In these paintings, life emerges from the rich, fertile jewels of tangled roots and undergrowth, to surge upwards into its youth and maturity,” he says. “Upon the ultimate flowering of the forest, its energy inevitably falls only to return each season to its primal state of birth, completing life’s journey in a circular dance of color.” Balaam donates a portion of his sales to local forest conservancies.

Throughout his career, Angus has remained passionate about still lifes. “They should have as much voice as any other subject,” he says. “I want

to elevate everyday elements as something to be looked at and explored.” His robust compositions, which depict familiar scenes of tables, flowers, food, and fabrics, exist as representational fields of color that complement and react, physically and visually, to create drama and energy across each canvas. Informed by modernist concepts, he strives to generate impact via pure color and simplicity of form. Bold, black “refraction lines” delineate planes within each composition as well, faceting the compressed space and adding a layer of kineticism.

Angus chooses to paint in acrylics because of their fast drying time, which allows him to apply many layers of color quickly and separately. This process produces multiple strata of pure pigments that retain their saturation and intensity throughout. He then exposes areas of the lower layers to “amplify the effect” of the color reactions and prompt a deeper visual experience.

Wolfgang Mabry, the gallery’s sales manager, chose to pair Balaam and Angus because of their similar interest in artistic expression through color. “Frank Balaam and Angus share a passion for color,” he says. “Their works are easily recognizable as unique products of astute observation, original interpretation, and high artistry. Energetic, calming, always uplifting, their paintings bring joy to every space in which they hang.” The show runs through June 1. —*Elizabeth L. Delaney*



Frank Balaam, Autumn Jewelled Woodland II, oil, 72 x 24.



Frank Balaam, Pine Shadows, oil, 72 x 24.

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