

# Revisiting Switzerland became canvas for work

Barbara Gallo Farrell, Poughkeepsie Journal 12:06 a.m. EDT October 23, 2014



(Photo: Courtesy photo)

*Editor's note: Portrait of the Artist is a regular feature in Enjoy! that spotlights artists with exhibits in the Hudson Valley. If you are an artist in a current or upcoming exhibit and would like to be included in this feature, email [bfarrell@poughkeepsiejournal.com](mailto:bfarrell@poughkeepsiejournal.com). This week's Portrait of the Artist features Christopher Albert, whose work is on display at Beacon's Matteawan Gallery through Nov. 2.*

When did you first realize you wanted to be an artist?

I was involved in art at a very young age. I must have entertained thoughts of being an artist back then, but I can't remember. In my junior year of high school, I decided I had better work on becoming an artist because no other subject held any spark for me.

Tell us about the artwork in 'Harbor' and what inspired you to create it?

'Harbor' features two threads of work that come directly out of a 2012 trip to Geneva, Switzerland, in which I revisited a 1992 trip to that city. The paintings are infused with notions of the things we hold on to and the things that maintain a hold on us.

Do you stick to a certain theme in your work or like to explore new techniques and subjects?

My work as an artist is like taking a very long walk. I'm always finding something new to explore on the way. I may double back at times, but I'm always interested in what is ahead — this applies to both the technical and thematic aspects of my work.

Does being 'pattern blind' affect your method of painting and drawing?

I think assuming a kind of blindness (and there are many kinds) is helpful when working. If you can get over the fear of it, not being able to see the immediate terrain over which you are treading can be exciting and liberating, and it can deposit you in unexpected places.

What do you hope viewers come away with after seeing your work?

I don't have expectations for the kind of experience viewers should have with my work or for what they should receive from it. I'm happy to give them full ownership of their experience.

How have you handled the business side of being an artist?

Rather poorly, I think. I just don't care much about it. My business is smearing substance on surface and that business is booming.

What type of art decorates your home?

The walls in my home are thinking spaces. I have many of my own paintings, drawings and thoughts in progress hanging all over the place. Added to this mix are a variety of artworks — mostly paintings — by artist friends along with my girlfriend Angelika's photographs, all of which influence me.

How does your background contribute to your process as an artist?

This is difficult to answer in short form. My process is my background. How I've developed as a person directly guides my head and hand in everything I do as an artist.

What excites you about art — what keeps you interested?

I'm excited by seeing a work of art and realizing "Someone MADE this!" I can be thrilled by seeing the results of the confluence of another human's thought and action take form in an object I can experience. There's little that thrills as much as being hit with a live round fired from the creative impulse of another person.

What is your most ambitious project?

My projects eschew ambitious aspirations. My interest is in the experience of the turning of the days. My work is diaristic and decidedly unspectacular. My ambition is simply to continue.

Christopher Albert lives in Beacon, where he paints, tinkers and instigates projects that often include the efforts of other artists. His roles in some of these recent projects include: director of the bulletin board exhibition space, kork (2008-11); co-founder and co-producer of the Dead Hare Radio Hour podcast; and most recently, director of Crotch, an artspace in the crotch of a tree in his backyard. Visit [www.christopheralbert.com](http://www.christopheralbert.com).

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