

Hampton III Gallery in Greenville, SC, Offers Work by Luke Allsbrook

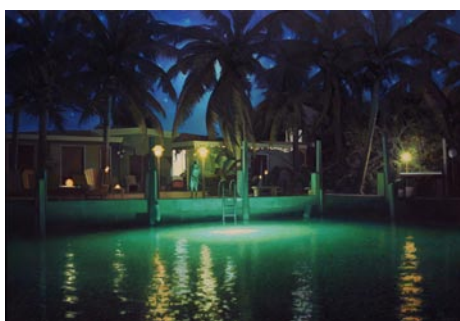
Hampton III Gallery in Taylors, SC, just minutes from downtown Greenville, will present *A Sense of Place*, featuring paintings by Luke Allsbrook, on view from June 7 through July 21, 2018. A reception will be held on June 7, from 7-9pm and a Coffee and Conversation from 11am-noon on June 16.

Allsbrook offered the following statement, "As a human it's my sad tendency to think that the world is about "me." But occasionally, I have had the experience which I'm sure you've had, when a special person or an extraordinary event breaks into the narrow enclosure of the self, and life flows in. I believe this is what happens when a beautiful picture is created. Somehow, the artist is given the gift of dis-interested love for something outside him or herself, and the necessary skill to capture and express that thing with paint. But every artist is tempted away from this self-forgetful enjoyment, motivated by a desire to cultivate a popular style, or flaunt a spectacular proficiency.

"How do I get to that place of true inspiration? I can't make it happen, any more than I can make a great friendship happen, and in both cases, my efforts to force the result may be counter-productive," adds Allsbrook. "Inspiration is a thing that happens to me—it's a gift. But what is my part? A great painting certainly won't materialize unless I stretch the canvas, mix the palette, and take a look around me. I must set the table for the angelic guest. There is nothing inspiring about this stage of the process. My latest exhibition has been taken down. My studio is empty. Perhaps there are bills to be paid. Ahead of me are uncertainty and discouragement, tedium and work."

"Another Monday morning starts. I load up the car and drive along back roads and parks, sometimes stopping to ask permission to look around. Most people are helpful; one man frowns and shakes his head. At these times, I'm reminded of Tolkien's *The Hobbit*. Thorin sends out two younger dwarves in the mountains to look for a place to shelter from a storm: "There is nothing like looking, if you want to find something. You certainly usually find something, if you look, but it is not always quite the something you were after." The place I eventually find to paint is usually not what I planned on finding. Similar to the very process of painting a picture, I have to relinquish my demand on the outcome and reject the voices that whisper to me what I "ought" to be painting. Artwork may involve incredible precision and care but it does not respond well to over-control. E. M. Forster said creating art is like trying to catch a winged horse."

Allsbrook continues, "I am looking for a place that does something inside me, something I know for sure when it happens. Finally, I pull onto a dirt road and dust kicks up behind the car. Everything feels old. There is a white clapboard farmhouse with a screened-in porch. The shade of the long porch, the shade of an elm tree, and the shade of a sheltering vine have all become one thing, part of the land. I round a turn and my heart starts to thump. It's like reading the first few pages of a great book. I get out of the car and start to walk. The oak trees must be over a hundred and fifty years old. They line the side of the road like living columns. There is a breath of cool air, and through the flitting leaves, like a patchwork quilt, I see the crisp shapes of the mountains. Everywhere I look I see a painting. It's like those paintings are already finished. I just have to do the work. For the next year, I will come here and paint, hour after hour, sweating in the sun or chilled by biting wind. I will know this place so well that it will become a part of me. I will see a hawk kill a squirrel in one of the oak trees. I will stand ankle deep in the river, straining my eyes to see the patterns of color that let my brain know that I am looking at clear



Work by Luke Allsbrook

rippling water. There will be some dead ends. "That didn't work. Okay, try this. That didn't work. Okay, try this."

"I want the beauty of the things I see to drive the paintings forward. And that's why I feel it's a distraction from the real purpose of painting to be concerned about my own 'style'. Flannery O'Connor said that great art should be based on observed facts 'that make actual the mystery of our position on Earth'. The undulating lights on a sandy river bottom can move me so deeply that they speak to that mystery. They whisper to me that I don't inhabit a meaningless universe, that there is a spiritual reality above and beyond the facts of the material world. Consider the endless variety of paintings in an art museum. An artist might paint an apple, a battle scene, or the graceful curve of a neck. The work might be loosely painted or rendered with endless detail. What is the common thread? Somehow the artist has made loving contact with the Truth out there, in reality. The artist has forgotten himself in the revelation of that thing. C.S. Lewis said: 'But there must be a real giving up of the self. You must throw it away 'blindly' so to speak... Even in Literature and Art, no man who ever bothers about originality will ever be original: whereas if you simply try to tell the truth (without caring two-pence how often it has been told before) you will, nine times out of ten, become original without ever having noticed it. The principle runs through all life from top to bottom. Give up yourself and you will find your true self. Lose your life and you will save it.'"

Luke Allsbrook received a BFA in Painting from Indiana University (Bloomington) and an MFA (cum laude) from The New York Academy of Art. His work has been exhibited in galleries and museums throughout the US and is included in the Forbes collection, Mercedes Benz, The US Department of State, and in the collection of His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales.

Allsbrook served as official tour artist for The Prince on his 2005 state tour of the United States. The recipient of the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundations Grant and two-time Posey Scholar, he has taught drawing and painting at the New York Academy of Art, The Lyme Academy of Art, William Paterson University, UNC-Asheville, and in Italy with the University of Georgia Cortona Program. He resides with his wife and four children in the mountains of Western North Carolina.

Hampton III Gallery is located on Wade Hampton Boulevard, in Taylors, SC, (a couple of miles from downtown Greenville). In 1970 the gallery opened with the vision to provide quality art to the community. The gallery features work from leading painters, sculptors and printmakers from the Southeast. Today Hampton III Gallery is the longest running commercial gallery in South Carolina, representing over thirty professional, award-winning artists. The 2400 square foot gallery maintains an inner gallery that hosts changing one-person or group exhibitions every 4-6 weeks. Eight surrounding galleries offer a continuing display of works. Artists' lectures, demonstrations, discussions and special tours are provided.

For further information check our SC Commercial Gallery listings, call the gallery at 864/268-2771 or visit (www.HamptonIIIGallery.com).

The deadline each month to submit articles, photos and ads is the 24th of the month prior to the next issue. This will be June 24th for the July 2018 issue and July 24 for the August issue. After that, it's too late unless your exhibit runs into the next month. But don't wait for the last minute - send your info now. And where do you send that info? E-mail to (info@carolinaarts.com).



April 23 - September 12, 2018

Sikes Hall

Clemson University

Curator's Talk & Closing Reception

Wednesday, September 12, 2018

3:30 - 4:30 pm

Participating artists:

Amber Eckersley, Hannah Gardner, Geneva Hutchinson, Dustin Massey, Rachel Rinker, Zoë Rogers, Sydney Smith, Caren Stansell, Anna Sullivan, and Annamarie Williams



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