



visual

GALLERIES » OPENINGS » PROFILES

BY AMY KEPFERLE

Due Diligence

THE DAILY PAINTING PROJECT



PAINTING BY LISA MCSHANE



PAINTING BY RUTHIE V

"FOR ME, I DECIDED THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO KEEP MY HAND MOVING, KEEP MAKING THINGS, AND OFFER MORE WORK TO MORE PEOPLE AND MAKE MY WORK AS ACCESSIBLE AS I COULD "

—RUTHIE V

FOR MANY, a New Year's Resolution involves someone giving up something they love—be it booze, television or cupcakes—in order to become a better person. For artists and friends Lisa McShane and Ruthie V., it was more about *adding* a challenge to their everyday lives that was designed to bring about change.

Thus was born the Daily Painting Project. With a goal of completing a painting a day for a year using local and regional subjects, the two entered 2010 with the pact intact. Six months in, they're offering up an exhibit that will showcase

what the project has, so far, wrought.



SEE IT

WHAT: The Daily Painting Project
WHEN: Opening reception 6-9pm Fri., June 4; the exhibit will be on display until June 26
WHERE: Works on Canvas Gallery, 301 W. Holly St.
INFO: www.ruthiev.com or www.lisamcshane.blogspot.com

"We'll be showing the best of our daily paintings, as well as the larger ones we've been working on," says McShane, who's been a full-time painter for more than a year now. "The daily paintings really inform the bigger paintings, in a way. Any time you're thinking about something and doing something every day, it affects everything else that you do."

Acknowledging that the first days of the challenge were the hardest, both artists have embraced it in different ways. While McShane will often start one painting and finish a different one within the course of each 24 hours, Ruthie V. has found herself using the parameters to try new techniques (painting with fire, sketching extreme facial expressions, etc.), but not spend

too much time fretting about the finished product—which she often posts to her website when it's done.

"The idea of sending things out before they're edited is really different for me," Ruthie V. says. "I don't know if it's something I'll continue after the year is over. Anytime you put your work out there with your name on it, you are representing yourself. It's been hard—and fun—to keep sending stuff out there and let people see both the ugly parts and the successes."

Although they don't create in the same studio—each has a home space to call their own—both artists say doing the project together is kind of like having a running buddy to keep them on task. They regularly call, email or meet with each other to discuss both problems and successes. "It's about the discipline of it," McShane says. "Having that discipline and thinking about it, the daily stuff, really makes you drill down into your ideas."

"My skills have improved immensely since the first of the year," Ruthie V. adds. "My brushstrokes are more decisive, my images are more interesting and I'm able to make something and move on rather than deliberating until the moment is entirely missed."

For those who've followed both McShane and Ruthie V.'s artistic arcs in Bellingham, "The Daily Painting Project" exhibit will provide a chance to pick up their works for prices that won't break the bank. Ruthie V.'s unframed, quick studies will be available for around \$100, and McShane will also have a variety of small, more experimental pieces for sale.

"For me," Ruthie V. explains, "I decided that it was important to keep my hand moving, keep making things, and offer more work to more people and make my work as accessible as I could." ☺