

March 2017

## **Robert J. Quackenbush, Jr. Artist's Statement**

Two key factors guide my work: My vision of what I want to create in my art and my idea of how I want to connect with the Kansas City art community.

### **My Vision for What I Create**

Experimentation drives my practice of making art. I'm fascinated about how things go together: color, texture, geometry, found objects, new materials. And so, I find myself in the arena of innovation, and this leads to invention. Invention takes me into the unknown and the unknown places me squarely in the unavoidable spotlight of risk. And that's where I have the most fun and experience the greatest challenges.

I am also influenced by the artists who have come before me. I consider the history of art to be a record of progress. A record filled with insights and experiences delivered in a language we each have to decode as we deal with solving the challenges of being creative. All of my work embodies this decoding and that is how I resolve my dreams and ideas into the art that I make.

I continually work on a number of series, each new piece affecting and influencing the work that surrounds it. It's impossible for me to avoid the migration of ideas and images that flow among my paintings, printmaking efforts and sculpted pieces. The power of the horizon line, the beauty of architectural dimensions, the surprise of a textured surface, the mesmerizing angles of geometry, the unavoidable attraction of a found object---each an integral part of my ever growing arsenal.

### **My Connection with My Art Community**

A great painter and mentor once taught me not to be afraid of my imagination, and I thank him for that. He also exemplified the trait of generosity, a trait I admire and support to this day. I continually focus on being generous to my students and mentees as they develop their careers. I am responsive to charitable requests, whether that is the donation of a piece of art to worthy organizations or serving on a grant-making panel. I am a tireless advocate for regional artists, be it playing a key role in implementing a Nerman Museum retrospective show for the UMKC/ Handprint Press or helping in development efforts for the new International Residency at the Kansas City Artists Coalition.

I remain optimistic and energetically charged about the opportunity for artists in Kansas City.

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