Artist's statement

Bill Barrell

Art is a very important part of the fabric of our society. If we trace our history from the very beginnings we find that art guides us through it. It was always cherished and preserved and used as means of understanding where we have been. Art as object becomes cherished and protected. Museums are built to store and preserve these works. During times of upheaval art works are immediately moved to a safe place and out of harm's way.

The collector play a large role in the forming of parts of this historical aspect. Museums become the benefactors of large collections that represent a place and time of their creation. Recently I had an E-mail from a museum at William and Mary University in virginia, asking my permission to digitally copy a painting of mine. I had no problem with this but was curious as to how they came about the painting. I was told it was donated by Walter Chrysler a well known collector. I had painted this certain work in 1958. I do recall him buying it. He purchased it one dark and dreary winter in Provincetown Mass along with nine other pieces. I had only been painting for two years and a sale to such a well known collector buoyed my spirits. He bought more work over time and had a very broad view of my work that spanned fifteen years. Had he not shown an interest there is no knowing what would have happened to that work. So I am very grateful to collectors for playing thier roll in preserving art works for our society and the world.

A work of art is an ever giving entity. It has a perpetual energy that can be handed on to future generations. It can be expensive to collect art , but one has to look for exceptional examples such as the Volpys. A married couple that worked for the US post office. No large income there. They lived in NYCity in the fifties in a small apartment. Their love for art was unquenchable. They saved and went in search of art. The apartment became crammed with such luminaries as Jasper Johns, William deKoonig, Rothko, Rauschenberg and many more. A few years ago they donated their multimillion dollar collection to museums. They collected because of their love of art and knowing the need to preserve it.

I have collected art work over the years through trading with other artists and often buying small works at school auctions. I live with them every day and find that their energy source is endless. Collecting can start with drawings that are much more affordable and easy to store, then work ones way up to painting. When you buy art always remember you are helping to preserve a part of history. It can become a passion and that one can gain a better understanding of life.