

**Doug Smithenry  
and  
Chad Wooters**  
Small Format Paintings



Doug Smithenry, *billboardman2*

College of Lake County  
Robert T. Wright Community Gallery of Art  
May 20 – June 24, 2005

## **Doug Smithenry**

In an age of cheap and easily produced imagery, Doug Smithenry no longer feels the need to generate original imagery to use as subject matter for his paintings. His job is to recycle. The artist breathes new life into existing images by physically manipulating them and then translating them into paint on canvas. He has concentrated his efforts by relying entirely on pictures gleaned from the Internet.

The use of the "found" images for constructing visual compositions has always been an appealing act to Smithenry because these existing images act as a sort of cast of characters, plot, and scenery which are ripe for further visual and conceptual development. The problem that he set for himself is to invent a contextual space within his paintings for these varying source materials to mingle.

The contextual "glue" that adheres these isolated images together can be discovered in the manner of which Smithenry applies the paint. In order for the images to function within the confines of the composition, he gives them all a similar make-up by painting every detail in the same deliberate manner. All color and value are reduced to small pools of color; similar to the way one would go about creating a paint-by-number painting. This gives a sort of democratic feel to the surface of the painting, all areas supposedly receiving equal attention.

### **Biography**

Doug Smithenry holds a BFA in Painting and an MA in Art Education from the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana. He also earned an MFA in Painting from Washington University in St. Louis in 1991.

Smithenry has had solo exhibitions at Aron Packer Gallery in Chicago and Atelier 31 Gallery in Seattle as well as at Coker College, South Carolina; Lakeland

College, Wisconsin; Indianapolis Art Center; and the Kansas City Artist's Coalition Gallery. He has exhibited in many group exhibitions and was recently included in a five-person show at the GAS art gallery in Turin, Italy.

Smithenry was selected as a finalist in the 2001 Young Painter's Competition at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. He has been awarded four residencies at the Ragdale Foundation in Lake Forest, Illinois, and participated in the 2000 Studios Midwest Summer Residency Program in Galesburg, Illinois. Smithenry's paintings have been reproduced in Harper's Magazine, The Common Review, and in the book Living Artists 2005 by Ivy Sundell. Fred Camper in the Chicago Reader reviewed his work.

## **Chad Wooters**

Chad Wooters paints mainly still life. His models are tools, hardware, and packing materials; although he considers subject matter irrelevant. Wooters cites as his example the appreciation of portraits and illustrations of unfamiliar people and symbols. It is the faithfulness of a painting, and not its meaning, that Wooters claims stir the soul. To this end, he suppresses self-expression to overcome thoughtless mannerism and falsity of style, in the attempt to make every stroke match the visual truths of his models. Wooters believes that depictive art in its highest and purest form retains little evidence of the maker's identity.

Wooters insists that a painting has the ability to reveal what cannot be expressed in words. Its beauty transcends both concept and narrative. A truly universal art needs no interpretation. As such, the objects selected by the artist are without symbolic intent, though they are familiar and readily available to him.

Using an alkyd-based binding medium that replicates the luminous effects of 16th and 17th century

paintings, Wooters constructs his paintings according to the principles of depictive art formalized by the Australian artist, Max Meldrum. In this tradition, painting is an observational science that consists of nothing more than accurately representing three-dimensional reality on two-dimensional surfaces by recording the tone, proportion, and hue of visual experience.

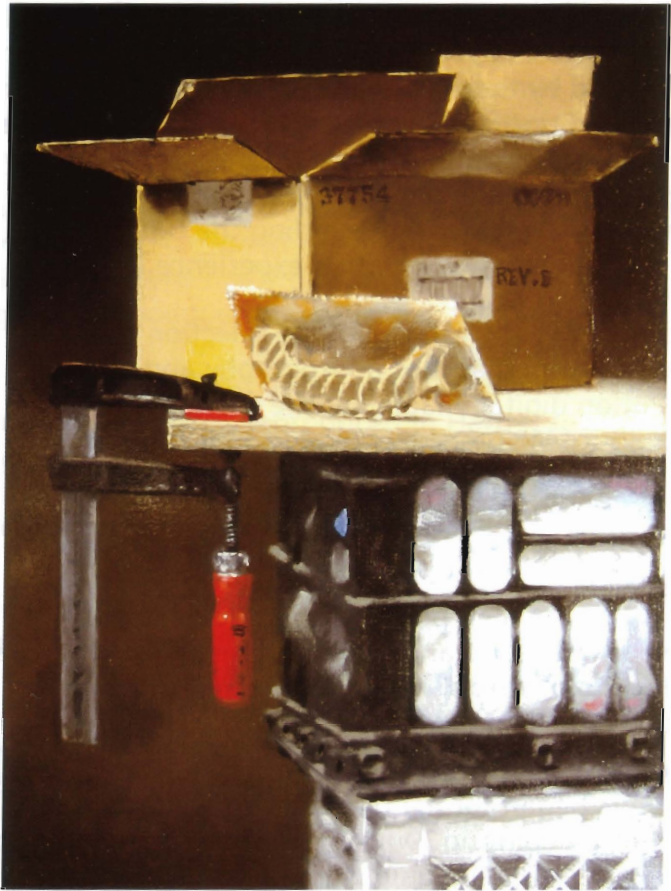
In contrast to the indiscriminate selection of visual qualities from snapshot photography and high-resolution digital imagining, the economy and restraint of Wooters' technique connects people across time and space by showing only what is human in what is seen.

### **Biography**

Chad Wooters was born in central Iowa. In 1984, he moved to Chicago and attended the Illinois Institute of Technology from which he received a degree in Architecture in 1989.

After much soul-searching for his true calling, Wooters began formal training in 1997 to learn the craft of oil painting. During private instruction from Oak Park artist, Dominic Vignola, he learned the modern tonal painting technique of the influential Australian artist, Max Meldrum. Wooters also learned traditional Flemish painting techniques from Chicago artist Andy Conklin. Since then, Wooters' expanded on personal study of Old Master paintings, modern materials, and the biology of human vision to develop an approach to painting that builds on the traditions of representational art and yet remains thoroughly contemporary.

Chad Wooters currently practices art from his home and studio in Lombard, Illinois. He is represented by The Steeple Gallery in St. Johns, Indiana.



*Chad Wooters, The Mastic Spreader*

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## **Doug Smithenry & Chad Wooters Exhibition Checklist**

### **Doug Smithenry**

- billboardman2*, 2004, oil on canvas, 36" x 36"
- couple*, 2002, oil on canvas, 24" x 12" (each panel – 2)
- nudists*, 2003, oil on canvas, 27" x 18" (each panel – 2)
- emceeman1*, 2004, oil on canvas, 36" x 36"
- family1*, 2003, oil on canvas, 20" x 36"
- fisherman1*, 2004, oil on canvas, 36" x 36"
- hazmatman2*, 2004, oil on canvas, 36" x 36"
- hazmatman4*, 2004, oil on canvas, 36" x 36"
- revolver*, 2003, oil on canvas, 30" x 30"
- protestors*, 2003, oil on canvas, 9" x 9" (each panel – 3)
- pinkyholders*, 2003, oil on canvas, 24" x 16" (each panel – 2)
- polarbears*, 2002, oil on canvas, 18" x 16"
- redsuirer*, 2003, oil on canvas, 11" x 9" (each panel – 4)
- suspenderboy*, 2004, oil on canvas, 36" x 20" (each panel – 3)
- wiltingwoman*, 2003, oil on canvas, 9" x 9" (each panel – 3)
- notoriouscriminal*, 2002, pencil, 10" x 8" (each panel – 4)

### **Chad Wooters**

- Can of Beans and Apples*, 2005, oil on canvas/panel, 9" x 12"
- Carpet Trimmer*, 2005, oil on panel, 9" x 12"
- Door Knobs*, 2005, oil on canvas, 12" x 16"
- Putty Knife*, 2005, oil on canvas/panel, 9" x 12"
- Foam Brush and Stain*, 2005, oil on canvas/panel, 9" x 12"
- Light Bulb in Clamp*, 2005, oil on panel, 12" x 9"
- Screwdriver and Outlet*, 2005, oil on panel, 9" x 12"
- Hanging Rag*, 2005, oil on canvas, 16 x 12"
- Clip Lamp and Pliers*, 2005, oil on canvas, 12" x 16"
- Tape and Brush Sketch*, 2005, oil on canvas board, 4" x 5"
- Shovel and Clay Pot*, 2004, oil on panel, 9" x 12"
- Coffee Cup, Brush and Box*, 2004, oil on paper, 10" x 8"
- The Mastic Spreader*, 2004, oil on canvas, 22" x 18"
- Old Jeans*, 2004, oil on canvas, 9" x 12"
- The Travel Kit*, 2004, oil on canvas/panel, 9" x 12"
- The Twine*, 2004, oil on canvas, 16" x 20"
- The Coping Saw*, 2004, oil on canvas, 16" x 20"
- Green Twisties*, 2004, oil on canvas, 12" x 16"
- Durabond*, 2004, oil on canvas/panel, 9" x 12"
- Onions and Potatoes*, 2004, oil on canvas, 12" x 18"
- The Bug Jar*, 2004, oil on canvas, 16" x 20"