



The News & Events Shaping My World

October was an incredibly productive and enjoyable month for me. Usually right after Labor Day, I feel as if I'd like to just dig a cave and hibernate at least until the holidays are over; or actually until about April to be quite honest. This year I didn't let that feeling overcome me. It thumped me in the back of the head a few times and once on the ear I think, but I refused to acknowledge it - dismissed it completely! Doing that made a huge difference in my attitude and hence, the quality of my life compared to most of my past Septembers and Octobers.

Perhaps the "chamber-of-commerce-type" weather which dominated had a great deal to do with it, but I really believe the climate change in my case, came from within. Maybe; just maybe, I've grown up a little... finally. Not as much philosophically, as I still feel like a little kid always seeking fun experiences and new adventures; but more in my spiritual and deeper psychological way of thinking and reacting to conditions that are beyond my control. I can't control the weather, but I've learned how not to let it control me. I can't control the thoughts and actions of other people, but I can keep them from

controlling me. Finally, I can't change nor control things that have happened in the past, but I can control the way they affect me presently and moving on in the future.

So, with September and October, 2017 now in the record books, my forecast is for average temperament. I expect many extremes, some which will push my barometer and thermometer readings to new highs and to new lows, but never to those exceeding levels which cannot be balanced by simply removing, adding or changing the layers of fabric from which I am created. ☑

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I got lucky in early October with a modeling gig that I really didn't see coming! I actually didn't believe it was legitimate, until I was in the chair with a straight razor on my neck. **American Crew Men's Grooming Barbers** contracted me as a hair model for the Fashion Forward trade show at the Charlotte Convention Center. It was an experience I won't soon forget, plus it was great to get a little pampering, even if it was on stage with bright lights shining in my face.

To begin, I was reclined in the barber chair for a traditional shave including all "the works" first, a warm towel over my face; next a conditioning facial massage to soften my beard, then came the actual shave with a straight razor. That was followed up by the finishing touches of a cool towel and another moisturizing skin treatment.

Next, I was the spectacle for a haircut demonstration. It was cool that I got to discuss with the barber/stylist how I'd like my hair to be cut before we went on stage. She spoke to me about the trends in men's hair styles and how most recently, the cuts were very short so the only way to trend for the future was to go back to longer styles.

For me, this was perfect. She chose to demonstrate a razor cut, which came as a total surprise! She worked very quickly and precisely with the razor, giving me a very modern version of a retro 80's, almost punk style; long and tossed on the top and kinda medium-length and shaggy on the sides and in the back. The audience loved it and so did I! The best part was that **I was paid** more to be their model than it would have **actually cost** me had I gone to an exclusive barber in New York or Beverly Hills. ☑

Acceptance is usually a good thing I'd say, and in this particular case it was definitely better than rejection! I submitted artwork for a group art show at the **Hart Witzen Gallery** in Charlotte and was accepted. It may not be a huge feat for other artists, as the show was described as diverse and inclusive, but for me it is a mentionable accomplishment. I've only been in one other group show, which was at the **Wabi Sabi Warehouse** in Wilmington, NC when I first moved there. Since I haven't submitted artwork to be considered in other shows, that gives me a perfect two-for-two record!

I've always considered myself an artist, but with graphic design at the forefront, fine art was something I always had on the back burner. I grew up with the notion that commercial art was where the money was; and that painting was just making a mess. It was engrained in my head that even if I did become known as a painter, I'd starve because paintings weren't worth very much until the artist was deceased. I won't say that I regret not pursuing fine art sooner, simply because I'm a firm believer in the "no regrets" way of thinking, but I can't help wondering how my life would have been different, had I chosen to focus on fine art as a career choice, rather than graphic design and marketing.

My painting is still available, but it was still pretty neat to see it hanging in the gallery with people pointing and talking about it. I even had someone I didn't know approach and tell me how much he liked my work. I still have no idea who he was, nor how he knew me. ☑



Nemesis by Keith Cole, November 2015. Oil on canvas, 24 x 18, \$390.00

For quite a while I'd been admiring the beautifully, hand-painted river rocks done by **Ceil Tart**. She's the organizer of my Tuesday night drawing group, for which I will also begin modeling in November. She has several of these intricately detailed rocks displayed in the lobby where we meet. After looking at and fondling them every Tuesday night for several weeks, I finally broke down and pulled out my wallet. I purchased one of the larger rocks, which probably weighs about two pounds. It's very detailed in black and white, and is completely covered, with the design flowing beautifully and perfectly

from one side to the other. I have it placed in front of a mirror, so that both sides can be seen at once. The surface is very smooth and feels very pleasing to the sense of touch. Holding it is almost like taking a meditative journey into the captivating scene that draws you in and holds you there until you're ready to jump back into reality. She has many others, including a large selection in bright colors. I'm very happy with the one I bought and am planning to create a collection. If you'd like to start collecting, or need a gift for someone who seems to have everything, call **Ceil Tart at 704-641-5208**. ☑



October was a very busy month for me figure modeling. I started working at **The Art Institute of Charlotte**, which was a challenge, but went very well. The first day I went in, the modeling platform was more like a fashion modeling runway than an art modeling stand.

The image that flashed before me of myself strutting up and down that thing naked was almost enough to make me faint. Somehow however, I held it together and made it through the three-hour session. The students and instructor were around the modeling stand in almost a complete circle, which was also a challenge. Usually at least one side is backed by a wall or curtain with the artists seated in a semi-circle.

At the next session I was prepared, but luckily the stand had been reduced to a square, which was much more familiar. Since there is only one figure drawing class per semester, I won't get my new schedule for another week or so. The instructor was pleased with my work and the students did some very impressive drawings, so overall it was a great experience and I'm looking forward to next semester.

I also began working with the **NC Academy of Art**, which is a small school teaching the classical style of drawing and painting. I have become one of their regular models and am also working with them on some marketing materials. I really like working with them because they are very talented and the students are also very good artists.

I scheduled sessions with another school and also with a very prominent museum in Charlotte, but I will wait until next month to report on those, after I have actually completed the sessions with their classes. ☑

If you'd like to submit a poem, short story, letter, small work of art or narrative photo to be considered for an upcoming issue, please do so by sending it to: kc@keithcole.com

Please keep all literary works to fewer than 250 words. Art and photos, will be produced 1 col. wide (2.57") and no more than 3.5" deep. Please make sure the resolution is at least 150 dpi at actual size to ensure good quality. **SPECIFY** exactly how you want to receive credit: including the exact spelling of your name and whether or not your work is already published. Also, include a statement granting me permission to publish your work electronically in this newsletter. Thanks! ☑

“Great things are done by a series of small things brought together.”

Vincent Van Gogh