



JEREMY LIPKING

An Artist's Object

It doesn't take much to catch California-based painter Jeremy Lipking's eye. Not because he lacks a critical viewpoint but because the human figure is so inspiring, imbued with an endless amount of interesting feelings, associations, and emotions. "What you can say with the figure is limitless," the artist says. "Just the head and lighting—they can tell the whole story. I imagine what is going on from that. I start thinking and get really deep into my own interpretation of the painting."

Lipking's interpretations follow in the well-trod footsteps of the Old Masters by gravitating toward depictions of the female nude. "It is the most classic subject for an artist," he says. "The female figure reminds me of the landscape—the curvy lines, the softness and fluidity. I look for poses with big movements or long, flowing lines. I don't like when the figure is compressed or crowded. I have painted the male nude, but I am just more attracted to the female figure than the male figure—it's better looking." When the artist decides to obscure the identity of a model, or position her with back turned, as in *Sleeping*, it is largely about creating a mood with light and color and not really about the model at all. In that sense, the figure becomes objectified—figuratively turned into an object so to speak—in order for the pose, composition, color harmonies, and light to become the ostensible focus of each painting.

"There is so much you can say with colors, shapes, design, and movement," Lipking asserts. "Painting the female figure has nothing to do with the body." Instead, it is abstract concerns like color and light that have allowed him to develop his technical skills, and he assures students that there is no hidden secret to a perfect painting beyond those. "Most students ask about what colors I use to get a specific flesh tone," he says. "I'll answer with the colors I use, but it is not about the palette. I could use any color to make a flesh tone—green, red, yellow. Really it is about the relationship of the colors—which color is next to which—that makes a difference."

Although his figures can appear exotic displayed against boldly colored surfaces, or sensual when adorned in diaphanous negligees, Lipking largely prefers to paint the figure



OPPOSITE PAGE

Chelsey

by Jeremy Lipking, 2010, oil, 20 x 16. Private collection.

ABOVE

Sleeping

by Jeremy Lipking, 2003, oil, 24 x 40. Private collection.

RIGHT

Maude

by Jeremy Lipking, 2010, oil, 16 x 20. Private collection.

outdoors. “Outdoors in natural light is one of the settings that appeals most to me,” he says. “Having the human element in a landscape painting—trying to think of what that person is doing there or who they are—you read everything differently.”

Courtney Jordan is the editor of ArtistDaily.com.

