

If I were a filmmaker or writer, in this compelling period of our history, I would choose the same documentary themes on "the human condition" that I have chosen as a painter. The struggle to "make a difference" is a challenge. It is not an easy one because the public is often overwhelmed with an intense sense of helplessness, only too aware of current and historical instances of man's reckless inhumanity, resulting in unnecessary wars, ecological disasters, pervasive illnesses and homelessness. I do believe that if we knew how to raise consciousness in the world many of us would be willing to devote ourselves passionately. As challenging for the scientist discovering the catalyst to be added to resin, though in small proportion, to give form to the formless, art can be a powerful voice to evoke change, Picasso's "Guernica". Murals of Diego Rivera, Rodin's, "Burgers of Calais". The artist's individual style is their invention, their catalyst, an original mixture based on the life of contemplative Research and Development. I make no apologies for the experimental diversity of my work. Though inspired in tradition, the brush paintings and drawing experiments inform the figure and portraits for their immediacy and emotional content. For my students present, and I thank you for coming, the path is a thousand times harder to find what you must say as the purpose of your life and harder still to find an effective way to say it that comes only from your own voice.

Mark W. Strickland

