



Burnell Yow!
Raven's Wing Studio

2301 Naudain Street, Philadelphia PA 19146 • 215-546-7457

Bio of the Artist

Burnell Yow! (the exclamation point is part of the name) is an intuitive artist who works in the varied media of painting, collage, assemblage, sculpture, photography and digital art.

Since 1995, he has maintained a full-time studio called Raven's Wing, which is currently located near Fitler Square in Philadelphia. Yow! is a member of the Philadelphia Dumpster Divers and is a volunteer for the Philadelphia Open Studio Tours (POST), an annual event in which over 200 artists open their studios to the public for two weekends in October.

The printed word on this unique and multi-talented artist has appeared in American Style, Red Herring, Art Matters, Philadelphia Inquirer Sunday Magazine, Synapse, City Paper, and Eye Level, and in Philadelphia Magazine (where he was named one of the twenty-five "hippest" people in Philadelphia).

His work is shown in numerous venues and is viewable on the web at:
www.ravenswingstudio.com

Artist Statement

After nearly fifty years of sometimes following rules and sometimes ignoring them, I have come to the realization that "there are no rules, only materials." To explore, investigate, experiment, and ultimately live out what Picasso meant when he said "Art is a leap into the dark," is my *raison d'être*.

I am an intuitive artist in that I work from the heart, not the head. The unforeseen event, the "accident," the unexpected all play a very large part in my creative play. Seldom is anything planned. I prefer to let the materials suggest the direction of a work.

As far as materials go, I work with just about anything: paint, wood, glass, plastic, fabric, etc. I use a lot of "found" and "altered-function" objects in my work. And I frequently scan them for use in my digital works. "Found" objects are generally discarded items rescued from the trash, or found

at flea markets or thrift stores. They are old, used and with a mysterious history that lends them a magical quality. By “altered-function,” I mean objects that one buys new, let’s say, at a hardware store and uses in a way contrary to its designer’s intent. I can become quite inspired just spending a couple of hours in Home Depot.

In my studio, music also plays a part in the creative process. Drumming, singing my ancestors chant, playing my homemade flute, burning cedar incense and ringing my large orchestral gong all serve to take me to a level of sensitivity where making the “leap” is as effortless as breathing.

So, what I would suggest to anyone making art is to trust your intuition, your inner knowing; to allow yourself to be immersed in the process of creation as a joyous and sacred dance of materials; to neither listen to critics nor be one; and finally, to leap into the dark secure in the knowing that wherever your feet touch down will be the right place at the right time.

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