



THE ARTIST
IN HIS STUDIO



MyWorld

A visit with expressionist MARSHALL NOICE in downtown Kalispell, MT
BY WOLF SCHNEIDER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KELLY GORHAM

You're known for electrified landscapes done in an expanded color palette—are these custom colors? They're not custom colors, but they are unique colors. My painting is done very vigorously, so a lot of the colors mix themselves on the canvas. And I have a strong preference for more modern paint formulations, unlike the oil paints the old masters used, where the colors were made from organic materials. Modern oils that I like best are basically chemical formulations, and higher chroma.

Meaning, you get high while you're painting, Marshall? Only from the effect of the vibrancy! Not chemically. [Laughs] Although I did spend the summer of 1969 in Haight Ashbury. Not the Summer of Love, but only a summer or two after.

I think the Summer of Love was 1967. Yes, it was.

Do you have a collection of psychedelic Filmore posters left over? No, but I had a whole bedroom-full while I was growing up, my favorite being a Bob Dylan.

The pale lilac and grape colors you use—the streams and skies up there aren't really that color. Actually in springtime the sediment that comes down the mountains with the run-off does cause the streams to have a very milky color—it's called glacier milk. In the shadow, it can look purplish. In the sun, whitish teal. Although a literal description of landscape is not high on my list of priorities. [Laughs] What I'm after is the way colors change next to

another color. I'm looking for a precarious color balance.

I hear you consider abstract expressionist Mark Rothko, Vermont landscapist Wolf Kahn, and tonalist Russell Chatham as influences. Cross Russell Chatham off. The only similarities we have are that we are Montanans and we both do landscapes. Add Theodore Waddell instead, another Montanan. Also, Diebenkorn. De Kooning.

Acrylic, oil, or watercolor?
Oil and dry pastel.

You've said Montana is your muse. What does Montana have over the other Rocky Mountain states?
It's bigger and better.

If Missoula is for progressive Montanans, and Livingston for artists and actors, is Kalispell for fishermen? Nah, they've got better fishermen in Livingston. Kalispell is for explorers.

What's the population there?

In Kalispell, 14,500. In the Flathead Valley, 70,000. And we do have actors and musicians—Julia Roberts owns a place up here, Tom Selleck. Bruce Springsteen is worth bragging about. He actually plays at the Northern Bar in Whitefish.

Good to know! You're pretty close to the Canadian border, aren't you? 80 miles.

Your studio's in a turn-of-the-century tin-front building on Main Street.

My studio is in the back of what was the Silver Dollar Saloon built in 1899. I have 14-foot ceilings covered with pressed tin, which I painted a beautifully reflective silver color. So the paintings are actually reflected in the ceiling when I stand back.

You grew up in North Dakota and Minnesota. Have any Indian blood in you? Yeah, my grandpa was half Chippewa-Cree.

Tell me about being a drummer in a blues band—isn't the drummer the most macho one? Well, Mick Jagger and Keith Richard are probably both more macho than Charlie Watts. The drummer *is* the backbone. Your mistakes are good and loud. And rarely missed by even a moderately attentive concert-goer.

You play any George Thorogood or Stevie Ray Vaughan? We're more of a Delta-blues, Chicago-blues band. More influenced by John Mayall.

What'd you learn as Ansel Adams' workshop assistant during the summer of 1977? I learned about making a photograph that is filled

with a sense of light. And that everybody's eye goes to the area of greatest contrast first.

At 52, what quality have you decided an artist must have, and what quality will only do an artist in?

An artist must have insatiable curiosity. Perfectionism will do an artist in.

What's your mantra? Think it, do it.

What's the trait that's served you best in your career, and what's the trait you deplore in yourself?

Best is my concentration. Deplore? Oh, I don't smoke, I don't drink *that* much. I *am* human and I'm a man, which is two strikes against you, right?

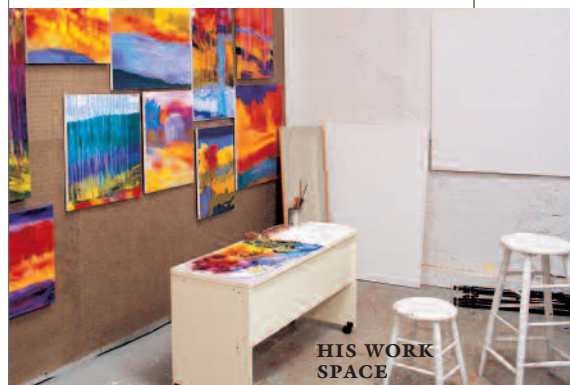
Which artist, living or dead, would you most like to trade a piece of art with? I'll take the Sistine Chapel.

Which artist would you most like an hour of advice from?

I'll stick with Michelangelo.

What's the range that your work sells for? From etchings for \$200 to oil paintings for \$10,000.

What does an artist need most: a good accountant, a good truck, or a



good red wine? You better have all three. Also, someone to ride in the truck and drink the red wine with. □

Noice is represented by Lucas Gallery, Telluride, CO; Waxlander Gallery, Santa Fe, NM; Center Street Gallery, Jackson, WY; Coda Gallery, Park City, UT; M.A. Doran, Tulsa, OK; and Anne Loucks Gallery, Chicago, IL.

