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Untitled

Joe Oliver

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Oliver: Untitled

by E.A. Buboltz



Joe Oliver

Flame

*I am made of molton liquid
Hot to the touch
Gold in the flame*

*And I have let you
Listen to my soul
And I've heard your heartbeat*

*Deep and primeval
Hot to the touch
Gold in the flame*

Marie Ford



The Berrier School of Art is located in a storefront on Roosevelt Road in Glen Ellyn. The location alone is in direct antithesis to the schools of art contained within the university setting. Berrier carries this antithesis even further by functioning under the same principles as those of the old Renaissance Masters. Here individual students spend the better part of their days studying art, and consequently living their art.

During Renaissance times, the masters took on a number of understudies. These understudies learned not only the technical aspects of their particular form of art, but also the philosophy of thought that encompassed that art. In Renaissance times, the teacher's imprint on the individual student culminated in an art that was passed from generation to generation. The master was the focal point of this learning. Once the understudy thoroughly understood the techniques of the master, he would add his own creativity to his art. Thus creativity was born of the mastery of the technique.

Berrier considers his student's understudies. The student does not move from one teacher to another, in an isolated classroom, as one does in Academia. Rather, one is taught a totality of art. Art then, according to Berrier becomes not just a mechanical entity, but rather a system of thought about that art. This system of art being even more important than the school itself.

"There is an enormous gulf between Academic teaching and Studio teaching, in that, in Academics one tries to teach mechanics of painting before one can become creative." According to Berrier, "it is difficult to understand both the technical and the conceptual because these are two different realms. The difficulty in teaching art lies in the incorporation of these realms, in order to create a whole."

Berrier feels that his methodology of art is one of the most difficult methods of art to master. But, once the student has mastered this technique the student can go on and master anything, because one really understands art from the technical point of view.

"There is a vast difference between producing paintings and creating painters, one must learn to organize and make order, in order to create."

Berrier feels that "typically, when one studies in Academia, the teacher has no real responsibility for the student. The teacher's responsibility is chiefly to the educational system itself. The student thereby becoming secondary. It is only when the minds of both the teacher and the student are attuned to one another that the real creative process can begin. It is here that the student begins to move off into his own direction and produce that which is inherently his, while employing the techniques taught by the teacher." Berrier feels that he is ultimately responsible to the student. If he does not transmit his philosophy or art coupled with his technical knowledge, then ultimately he has failed.

The idea of the understudy is such that the student and the teacher attempt to reach a duet of understanding. When this duet of understanding has come to a full fruition, both the teacher and the student stand on equal footing, each respecting the others gifts.

Berrier feels that the teacher is someone who should make himself the subject of the learning process. By opening himself up as a teacher he in fact becomes part of the learning process. Thus the role of the teacher becomes a sharing rather than a pouring forth of ideas that the student must reproduce in order to prove that he has learned. Art here, becomes a living, learning thing. Art becomes transposed into every aspect of one's life.