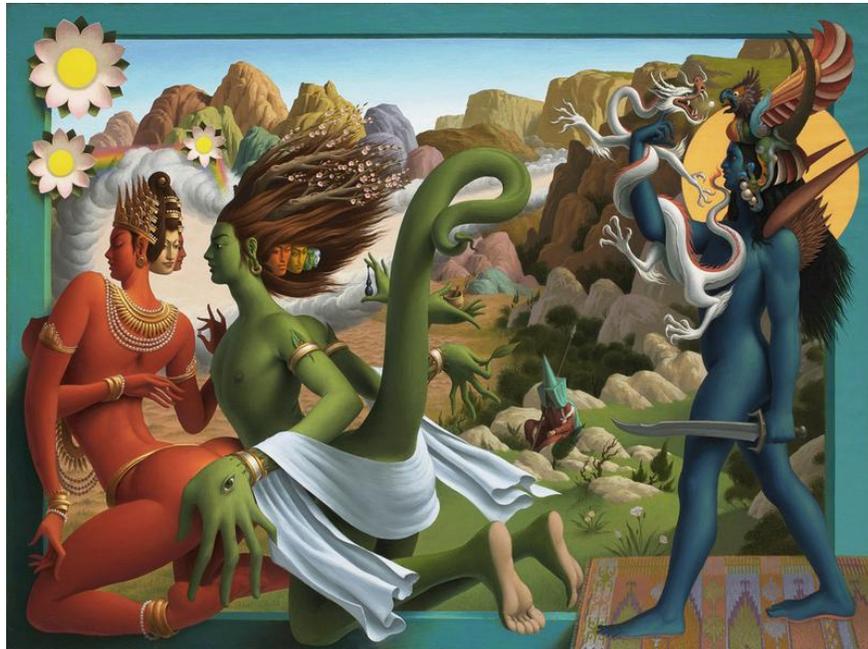


Please accept this personal invitation to attend the opening and continuing showing of this remarkable new exhibit.

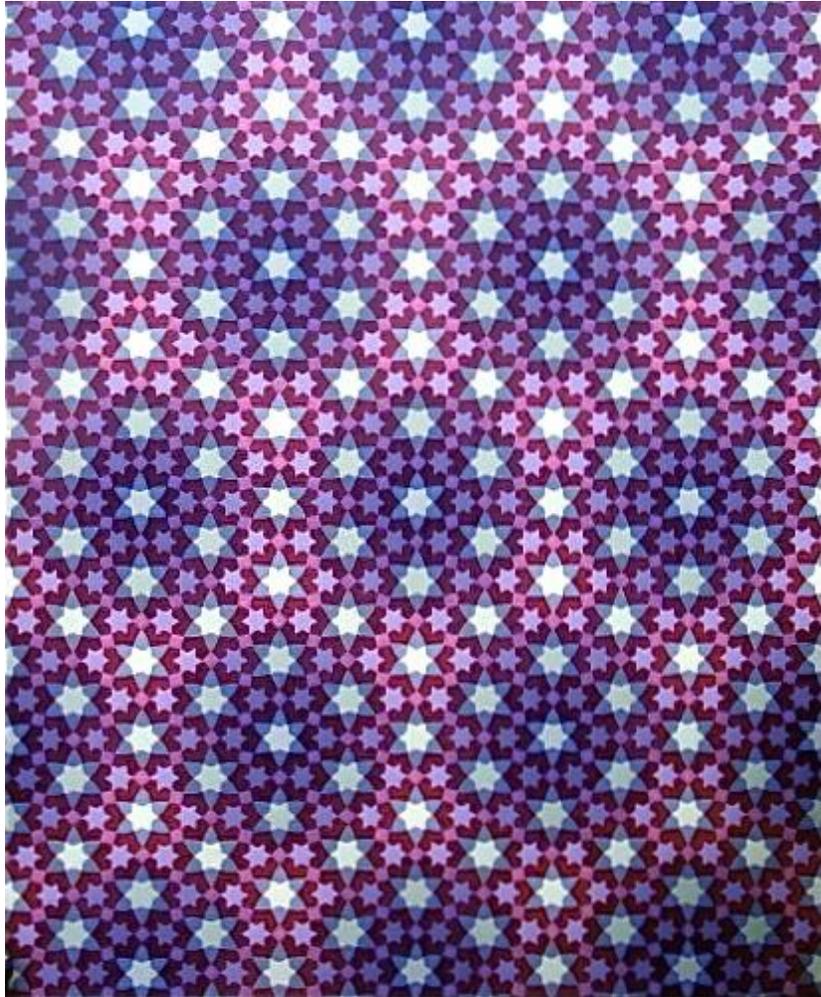
The Paintings of Oliver Benson: Mystic Iconics and Geometrics

In the tradition of old masters, these stirring paintings search mythic and mystic realms to find the absolute beyond time and place. Paired with select European old master and 19th-21st century paintings from the gallery collection, this is a “don’t miss it” exhibit.



The Exhiles

23 x 32" oil and gouache on paper lined panel



The Hidden Palace

56 x 78" acrylic on cotton

Gallery Night and Day

Friday October 18, 10-9

Saturday October 19, 10-5.

Continuing through November 16.

More info below

Timothy Cobb Fine Arts
The Historic Marshall Building Lobby
207 E. Buffalo Street (corner of Water St., enter on Buffalo)
Milwaukee's Third Ward

tim@timothycobbfinearts.com

gallery 414.255.8166

cell414.271.4150

Oliver and me hope to see you you there.

OLIVER BENSON

Oliver Benson was born in Rhode Island to artistic parents and grew up in a climate in which the cultural sphere of life was considered vital. His extended family has been involved in sculpture, music, dance, calligraphy, stonecutting, photography, printing, craft, and the preservation of architecture and antiques. His mother and grandmother demonstrated to him the practical value of spiritual cultivation for artistic work. These influences were integral in the formation of his method and style of painting.

He developed individualistic and self-reliant tendencies early, molding the unique educational path that followed. After a year at The University of Michigan he left to train at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia, but did not find the opportunities he had hoped for. Again he turned from academia and began painting on his own and has since continued on that path. Luckily for him in the two decades that followed he encountered three excellent teachers under each of whom he spent three months of intensive study: Pema Wangyal, a now deceased master of Tibetan Thangka painting, Drajan Dupor, a master in the Byzantine style of Iconography, and Anthony Ryder, a master in painting from life in the Beaux-Arts tradition. He also spent some very helpful months painting copies after old masters in the Philadelphia Museum.

Benson had his first showings in Philadelphia, and subsequently in Portland Oregon, Los Angeles, Milwaukee and Albuquerque. He has been published in underground magazines and done illustrations for books about Taoism and Qigong. His commissions include Murals, Byzantine Icons, Taoist and Buddhist religious paintings and portraiture. He has also been given residencies in Milwaukee, Santa Fe and Lindsborg, Kansas.

The Paintings

The paintings presented here can be divided easily into two groups. The first group may be called mythological or iconographic. The second group may be called geometric. The mythological paintings were painted somewhat earlier (between 1993 and 2011). The geometric paintings have all been executed since 2008, most of them were painted in the last year.

The artist takes the position that the paintings are meant simply to be viewed without any explanation. He wishes to give the viewer experiences rather than to tell any stories or convey ideas. But perhaps it is good to say a little bit beyond this.

The Mythological paintings are reminiscent of paintings made in earlier eras in Europe and Asia. They are really part of a tradition reaching back to ancient Athens and to even earlier times. A difference or novelty is their syncretic content. While one can clearly observe suggestions of this or that culture, a little examination will show that there is no fixed or traditional iconography here. They seem perhaps vaguely oriental, but really if one takes a view of the world as a whole they might fall somewhere near a cultural midland.

The geometrics do not contain any narrative forms. Are they purely abstract? Maybe not, there is an optical quality in them that might suggest pictorial representation, but then what is represented? The surface of the paintings are made of two- dimensional interlocking shapes and colors but these elements also create the illusion of a third dimension and suggest something even beyond that. Each color acts in relationship to the colors that surround it, behaving differently with each partner. All the shapes and colors are related in varying degrees to each other.

As was stated above the paintings are more than anything intended to give the viewer an experience. But then it might be asked, what experience? An experience of Beauty, an experience of Self, an experience of the Inner Life. Yes to all those things. Maybe it is simplest and truest just to say the artist hopes the viewer looking will find enjoyment.