

Daniel Bilodeau
Artist Statement

My work explores the human sense of self and points to the feeling of wonder and universality of life that too often can lie dormant under the pressures of our daily routine and the political and corporate influence on our sense of who we are and who we should be. My imagery proposes that sometimes we live ideas and opinions instead of living life. Is it possible to see a moment clearly; free of the filters of conditioning and agenda? What would be the value of this sort of transcendence?

United conceptually by this idea of limitation and freedom in identity, my paintings take two visual tracks. The "Body English" series deals more with the individual. In this group of contemporary realistic tableaus the painted figures themselves take up the paint and work with liquid color. Sometimes much larger than life size, these subjects are frozen in a moment of creation. Through their act of painting as metaphor, they define themselves and affect the world around them. According to our individuality, we are always actively painting ourselves and our world; and these works are reminders of that dynamic responsibility.

The "Mandala" series is a group of paintings being developed concurrently. It deals more with the universal as opposed to the individual. These works serve to act functionally in support of their theme. The mandala is a sacred symbol that has been employed by cultures the world over to unify and focus attention, to harmonize a fragmented mind and to express aspects of life that transcend words and letters. In my take on the mandala the flat graphic shapes are composed of realistically rendered figures mirroring and repeating themselves.

Fusing the function and visual scheme of a mandala with the realism of western figurative academia produces an image in which shape and depth are viewed in two different ways simultaneously. It's somewhat reminiscent of Rubin's Goblet in which the image appears to be either a goblet or two faces depending on how one looks at it. Two different perceptions resulting from the same stimulus points back to the theme of the work: the wave realizing it's the ocean.