



www.pacificbookreview.com

Pacific Book Review

helping authors succeed!

Title: Art with a Story III
Author: John Nieman
Publisher: XlibrisUS
ISBN: 978-1-5434-5531-1
Pages: 142
Genre: Art / Techniques / Painting
Reviewed by: Beth Adams

Pacific Book Review Star

Awarded to Books of Excellent Merit



Pacific Book Review

Art with a Story III has more creativity, inspiration and enjoyment; beautifully packaged and fitted into a mere 139 pages of mind-altering originality, than just about anything I have read. Yes, it is Creative (with a capital “C”) as author and artist John Nieman uses the genre of Flash-Fiction; writing a short one-page story about each picture, having a beginning, middle and end, to convey a story somewhat related to the painting’s theme or image. Most of the Flash-Fiction I have previously read begins with a photograph to spark the imagination of the author. Yet in this work by John Nieman, it is his own original watercolor paintings which he uses to captivate the attention of his audience. I

must add his frequent use of words superimposed over his paintings further heighten the creativity of the readers' emotional reactions, thus it would be correct to describe his talent as a painter, writer and poet. Sometimes people are blessed with so much inspiration to reveal to others – he is a virtuoso of originality.

As the juxtaposition of the story to his paintings begins to sink in, one after another, it makes the readers' appreciation ponder so many aspects of his layering for impactful reactions. On the artist side, his impeccable use of color and imagery, even tapping into the *Trompe-l'œil* techniques of depth and dimension, will bring a raised eyebrow to the art-critic within all of us. The wordsmithing of each story; starting as if a drag-racer was given the green light to engage its creative clutch will send a reader's mind back in their heads with a G-Force. The lure of the poetic words often superimposed over the painting will toy with most readers' inherent encyclopedia of knowledge, finding much common ground, overlapping and interleaving thoughts, stirring the reveal of creativity to deepen to a more personal experience.

It's impossible to pick a favorite one of his three score or so entries, but I am haunted by *The Not-So-Little Libation*. Viewing a watercolor painting of drunk sitting on a city sidewalk (with excellent use of symmetry in the lines of the building and ground within the painting), we learn of the ill-fated evening of Marcel Sardou. After having a lovely evening and a bit too much to drink, a fatal single-car accident on his way home killed his passenger; his wife sitting next to him. All was lost. In the *noir* twist of this one story, I learned from it in a very profound way – and although many of his other stories celebrate life and philosophy, this one – as I said, still haunts me.

Emotionally moving, aesthetically pleasing and laid out in a coffee-table book format, *Art with a Story III* I can be best enjoyed in its printed form. Opening it to any page, it becomes instantly addicting. By that I mean it causes a curiosity of what next will John Neiman present; then a strong desire to explore more; which results in an overall satisfaction once completed. That is the definition of an addiction, as this book is the healthiest addiction a mind can endure.