



BRIAN COMBER | Artist Statement

Confronting the Grim

During the Covid isolation period, I found myself noticing the everyday things that surrounded me, and the interaction of form, shadow and light they created, more than before. Select items in that collection of objects – vases, baskets, bouquets – became the subjects of the watercolors in my latest collection “Confronting the Grim”.

I have spent my career alternating between painting and printmaking, incorporating techniques and traditions of one to inform my work in the other. Gigantic, colorful oil portraits and landscapes would display aspects of etchings, with layered overlays. It was only recently I added watercolor to my arsenal. I was scared to death of watercolor when I was younger, it's so permanent—the minute you lay down the paint. There's no adjustment allowed, like there is with oils.

Watercolor has recently become my preferred medium, if the newest work is any indication, although still with a “Comber-esque” twist. Influenced by my circumstances, these recent watercolors have taken on decidedly non-watercolor hues of black and gray. That's where my printmaking background comes in. Gray is as important a 'color' as any other, to my eye.

In contrast to much of my earlier work, the paintings are smaller, several grouped in themed grids. I've always liked doing series, where images communicate with each other. Smaller sizes have allowed me to group the work in aesthetic clusters on the walls of the gallery.