

Night Journey 68: *Shelter from the Storm: Matisse Reigning in My Head*

Soren Kierkegaard asserts, “It is one thing to think and another to exist in the thought.” This aptly describes the cognitive action that I am trying to project in my current painting series, *Shelter from the Storm*. Creating art requires the action of projecting thoughts from one’s own existence into an alternate state of being, which resides within the reality of the artwork. This action, which transpires in thought, becomes an escape from the man-made chaos of the world in which we live. This painting and those in its series are meant to be, as in the Dylan song title, a *Shelter from the Storm*.

The title of Night Journey 68 is a word play on the phonetic sounds of “rain” and “reign.” My escapism places me in Matisse’s painting, *Interior with Goldfish Bowl*. The view through the window exhibits Matisse’s papercut acrobat raining down from the sky. Symbolically, Matisse’s room serves as a shelter, with the acrobats representing the outside world tumbling around me. I have always greatly admired the aesthetic calm Matisse creates in his paintings through the reductionism, linear lyricism and rhythmic patterns of his work, and in my mind he reigns supreme in the pantheon of great artists.

I am not immune to the calamities of this world’s reality, but through painting I can seek a reprieve from its insanities. Like many artists, I project into my work, and in doing so leave the external world behind. It is in this state of altered reality that I feel most at home and best able to find and project my voice back into the deeply troubled reality of the day to day world in which we live.