



## FRANK KALLOP, painter

*story by Sterling Brown*

*photos by Bill Horin*

Frank Kallop is on a gallop. Some people never slow down.

“What’s Frank doing now?” you might ask, and the answer could be:

“Oh, he’s surfing in Morocco.”

Or: “Last I heard, he was in Thailand.”

Or: “Or was it New Zealand? No, maybe Europe.” Wherever he is, he keeps busy. During the scholastic year he’s an adjunct professor of art at Stockton college in Pomona. In his off hours he practices his Stratocaster guitar, reads fine literature, rides his bike, works out, and of course paints. After hurricane Sandy soaked his Ocean City studio, he set up his easel in a friend’s barn, where his current effort is a commissioned “major” figure painting. Of whom? That’s a secret. But it’s no secret that the painting may be unusual, considering that Frank has done full-figure renditions of himself as:

1. A tree.
2. Dead.
3. Quite alive, flying through a woman’s belly.

By the way, he looked best as a tree. We should all spend time in bloom.

Those wishing to see and buy Frank’s artwork can do so at the William Ris Gallery in Stone Harbor. He is in good company there. Some of the finest contemporary art is on display.

Sometimes, doers aren’t thinkers. Frank, though, could be called a thinking doer. Or a doing thinker. One of his ideas is that artists shouldn’t jettison the past. “In every profession, people take what’s gone before and build on it. Artists often want to throw out our rich history. I think we should preserve it, learn from it. That doesn’t mean I want to create old-looking paintings. I want to create paintings for the present that lead to further art, and yet transcend time.” Some of his most transcendent paintings are surrealistic. Their timelessness is partly the result of his heightened activity. Sort of Frank galloping into stillness. “I would take a canvas, cover it with gesso, and press it against something significant to me, like the bulkhead at a surfing beach in Strathmere. I’d rub the canvas with charcoal, take it to my studio, lay it on the floor, and splatter it with paint. I would build up a miasma of paint and texture until I had something totally abstract. This abstraction would speak to me. Forms and movement would appear, and I would bring out those elements.”

The elements of a Frank Kallop painting can be startling. You ask—when we look at one, what is it supposed to mean? “Whatever you want it to mean.” All right, then. Frank lying dead is Frank very much alive. Not prostrate on the floor, but standing on a surfboard in the curl of a Moroccan wave.

