



LIFESTYLEART

Kallop

By STERLING BROWN
Photos by BILL HORIN/ARTC

OCEAN CITY ARTIST FRANK KALLOP CONTINUES TO FIND NEW WAYS TO EXPRESS HIMSELF

In this less-is-more world of gastric bypass, downsized jobs and tiny cars, Frank Kallop is growing. Not in pounds, because he keeps himself trim, but in ability. You might say Frank is growing in expression. Or you might say he keeps on the move. You could even say Frank Kallop is on a gallop. Choose your metaphor. “It’s like this—I don’t want to stand still,” he says, standing quite still amidst the walls filled with paintings in his Ocean City house. The 56-year-old adjunct professor of art at Richard Stockton College in Pomona has agreed to discuss his long career, and he mentions his childhood drawing animals, his BFA in painting at the San Francisco Art Institute, his years as a surrealist in California and New Jersey, and his 2001 MFA in painting at the New York Academy of Art. “All the while, I kept moving through different genres,” he says, “and now I feel comfortable painting in each of them. That upsets some people. They want to know, for instance, am I a landscape painter, or a figure painter, or an abstractionist? I say, why limit myself? I do them all. But I do them my own

way, in my own style.”

Whatever he does then, from surrealism to realism, is Kallopiian.

This is apparent in his most recent painting, a striking composition resting on an easel. Despite his saying it was painted in the style of Modigliani, some of Frank comes through. Don’t ask me how. All I can say is that, knowing Frank painted it, it looks as if Frank painted it. It’s a Kallopiian Modigliani. Or a Modiglianian Kallop.

“Last November, a man and wife asked if I would paint her face and figure in the pose of Amedeo Modigliani’s famous La Belle Romaine. The woman had undergone breast cancer surgery, and the painting was to enhance her process of healing.”

The commission came soon after Frank’s studio on the first floor of his house was inundated with four feet of water during Hurricane Sandy. The storm was aptly named, considering that the Jersey shore was covered with water, then sand. Frank lost many paintings and art supplies during

Dead Painter





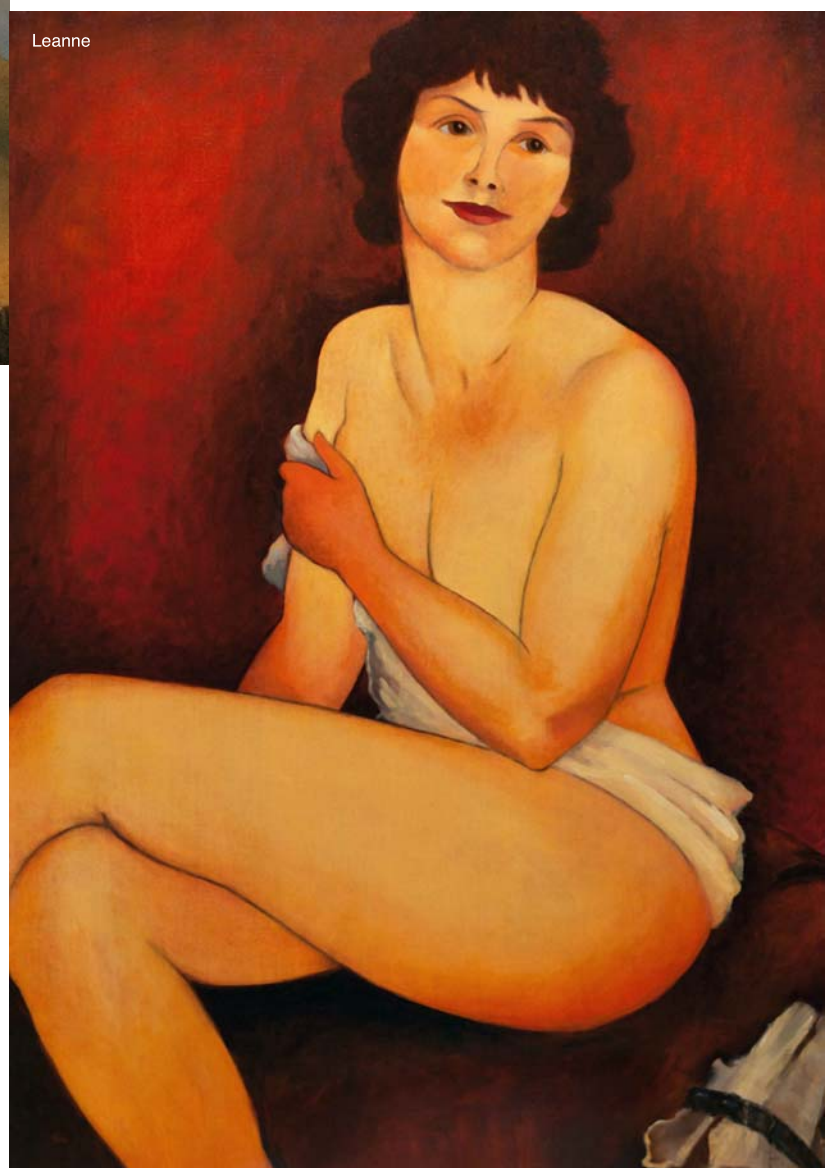
End of Mythology

else is within the frame, exude silence.

An example is Frank's *The Yellow Pitcher*. A pitcher sits on a marble block beside three small flowers and a glass vial. Beneath them are two nuts and an upturned bowl holding a cake of soap. Since the most conspicuous attribute I bring to any discussion of art is my ignorance of the subject, we'll let Frank comment:

"I wanted the painting to be almost colorless. It's entirely in tones of beige and white, except for the yellow pitcher and the tiny flowers. I tried to project stillness, quiet and mystery."

After listening, I ask: how does he teach his students to do this—transfer paint into silence? "By encouraging them to study composition, line, form, perspective and the relationship of light to dark," he says. Before I can seek further explanation he's bringing out something quite the opposite of the pitcher painting, an abstract thrash of color called *The Perfect Way*, which may be perfect but is far from serene, and *Reservoir*, a work of abstraction that earned its name by its containment of commingled thought and image.



Leanne

that confluence of wind and tide. Afterward he was sick from mold contamination, and so he himself was in need of healing. After reading books on Modigliani's life and artistic approach, Frank went to work at a borrowed studio in Linwood, and now, on a cold and damp February afternoon he is showing his beautiful painting of the cancer survivor—a painting he calls *La Belle Leanne*.

He says: "I would be willing to do this for other women who have lived through cancer. If she has a favorite figure painting, I would recreate it in her image. Or I could create a figure painting in my own style."

Had he painted *Leanne* entirely in his style, he said, he would have rendered her more realistically. Her image would have had more depth, light and shadow. As he explained it, her form would have more . . . form.

This is coming from a man who, when asked years ago to explain how he makes a still life painting look so still, said he seeks to express a sense of quietude. Think about it: you want to paint a flower, so you mix some paint, lift it with a brush, and stroke it on a canvas in such a way that the flower looks quiet. Easier said than done, but if you have the talent, you succeed: the flower, its background, and whatever

On a nearby wall is a painting done in what he calls the format of *plein air*, a French term meaning it was painted outside. Frank said he painted 6th Street, Ocean City, Facing East, in the rain. Explaining how, he said: "When you paint rain, you don't worry about inserting every drop. You think of how the edges of objects are less delineated, and observe the alterations of light and color. For instance, you won't have a clear blue sky."

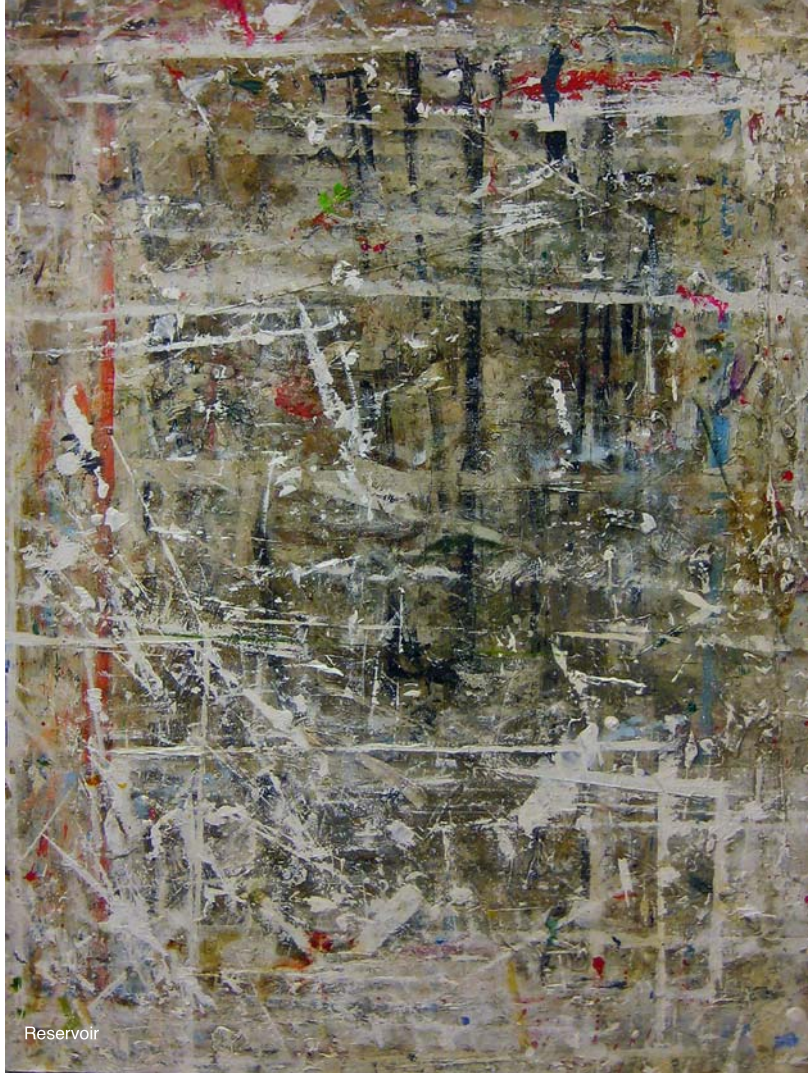
When Frank says he's growing as an artist, or changing as an artist, he means that in more than one way. It's not just the paintings that have changed. Frank himself in the paintings has shown that change. He says he doesn't want to stand still, but one of his most impressive paintings is of himself lying quite still. It's called *Dead Painter*, and it is Frank unquestioningly looking very dead. If *The Yellow Pitcher* is a still life, *Dead Painter* is a still unlife. Another unique painting, *The Luminous Pause*, is of Frank flying through a woman's belly. The woman, evidently an easygoing sort, seems not to mind.

And then there's Frank as a surreal tree. His leg bones rise from a sturdy trunk. His skeleton takes on flesh at his chest. His arms, extended, become branches. One limb blooms, the other burns. *The End of Mythology* presents a firmly-planted artist—an artist who, despite the ravages of life, continues to grow.

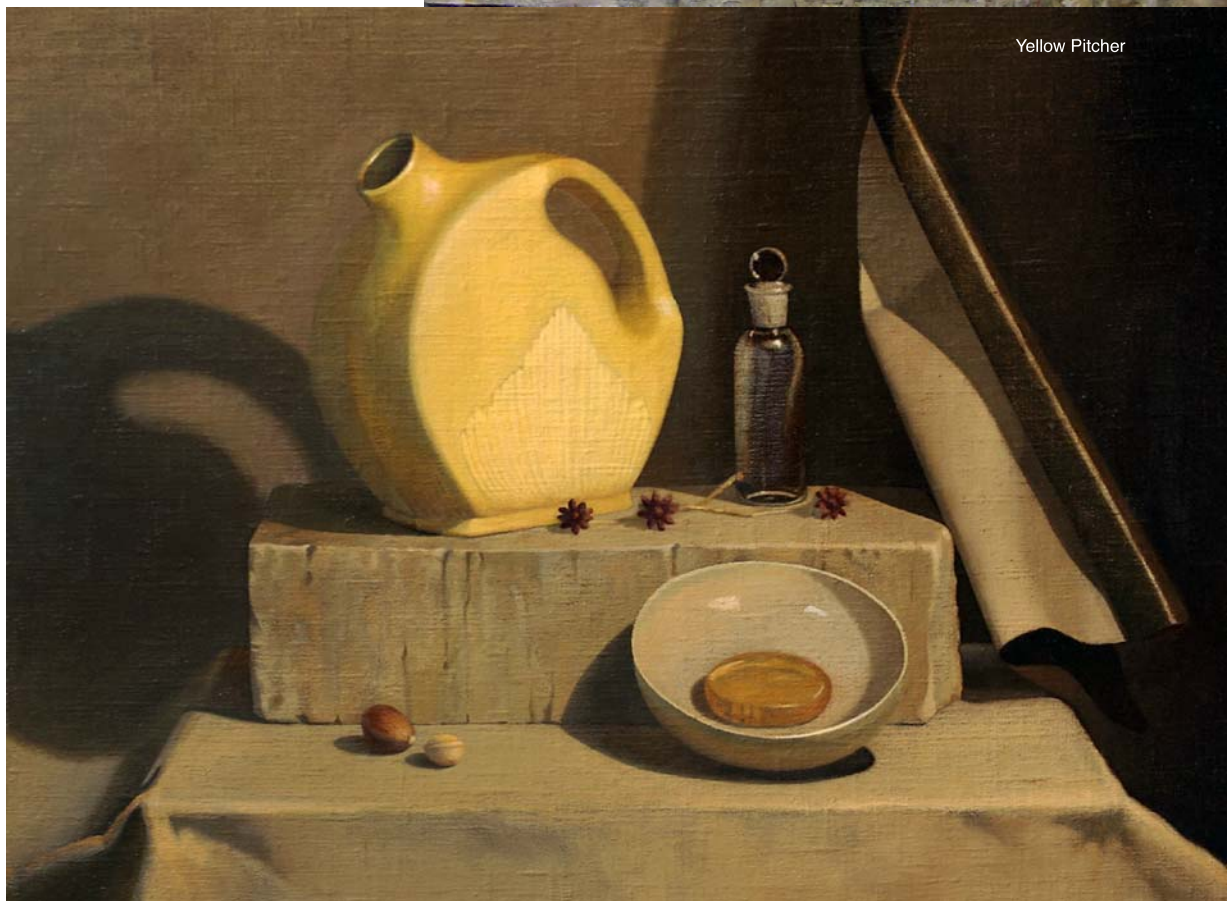
He works every day. He gets up each morning and puts in his hours. They are very productive, as is evident from the paintings on display. "Art for me is serious work," he says. "It's a job." What an excellent job—to pick up a paintbrush and let your mind and talent expand. To transpose a cancer survivor into a Modigliani nude, to present yourself as a tree, to express the absolute silence of a flower. How wonderful if all our work had some small measure of this. How wonderful if in all we did we could be artists. ■

Frank Kallop, whose artwork is exhibited at the William Ris Gallery in Stone Harbor, can be reached at his website: www.frankkallop.com. By the way, he's looking for a new studio.

Frank is endorsed by ArtC — promoting the arts in southern New Jersey. www.artcnw.com



Reservoir



Yellow Pitcher