

This is about the story behind some of my paintings.

When I started to paint in 1987 -

I had this idea that one should be able to build images by dots, waves and lines and then by putting the title below the image state what I saw it as. Using a marker was excellent for that purpose. However I also discovered after a while that markers were no good. Red dots became brown overnight and yellow disappeared. There was a frame shop behind my restaurant. One of the staff suggested I should use gouache and a more cut brush similar to the tip of a marker. So, I followed her advice and carried on. Now I implanted the waves, lines and with the dots I built images like "*Sunset*", "*Generations*", "*Olympic fire*", "*Supremes*", "*Broken fence*" etc.

The idea of leaving a lot of white around the painting is probably my Swedish heritage and the Scandinavian simplicity with a clean cut design. Besides, the colors become more vibrant this way. Then over the years since I started to paint I have developed my art as all sound business models should do.

Then I have been speaking English on a daily basis since 1968 due to work in countries outside Sweden and then in 1972 I met my first wife. She was Irish – it became natural for me to use English titles.

When I look on my art in the rear mirror, I see many of my pieces as time documents about where I was in life, when the piece was created. Therefore my paintings with stories will come as they were created.

BLUEGRASS

This is the first painting I sold. My father bought it. One could of course think that I should give it to him. But, I had made my pizzeria Viking in Limhamn/Sweden into a gallery for one day and there were quite some visitors. So it was sold. The original was painted with designer markers. I made a print of it later and framed it so my father could display it. As the original was made with markers it had to be kept in a dark space where no sunlight could make the ink vanish.

SUNSET

I remember that special light still today. San Pedro California 1965, I was a deck boy in the Swedish merchant navy. This is one of my very first paintings. It was signed B Padrick. That light still gives me goose bumps.

SUPREMES

Before Michael Jackson, Madonna & Spice Girls; There was The Supremes! Do you remember the MowTown sound out of Detroit with the Supremes, Marwin Gaye and many more?! This is one of my first paintings...

TOGETHER

This is what relations are all about. Sometimes it is great other times it is not so great... or as they say in England. "In for a penny - in for a pound". When you are in, you have to make it work - though I don't agree. You should of course make a serious effort to fix your problems. But, if that doesn't work - I believe everyone is better off separated. "Together" is one of only two computer generated images I have produced in 25 years. The other one; SUN CITY was produced after I had made this one. I used a simple software called Paint. And you know it was simple as it was in 1988 I made them.

MOSAIC

A play with tools; Maybe an unconscious experience from the past. A piece from 1988.

GENERATIONS

You become, you grow up, you live, you get old and ...you are gone.

OLYMPIC FIRE

This also one of my very first paintings. It symbolizes all Olympic games...

During my first two years I signed my paintings with B Padrick. B for Bjorn and Padrick after my son (Patrick) with Irish Isobel. The paintings above were all signed B Padrick

CAN CAN

I once worked at a Wild West Theme Park in Sweden - however not as a stuntman. My job was to capture moments as a photographer. I had fling with this Show Girl... When I painted this, she was not in my conscious mind; still she just surfaced on the paper.

AT SEA

When you like me have lived more or less the major part of your life by the sea - this is a given painting. The sea is a part of my life. I have traveled some Oceans in the merchant navy, I have sailed, I have walked the polluted water with shoes on my feet at the shores of the Irish Sea, I have snorkeled, and I have played. I have crossed waters by ferry and I have skated in the winter. When I moved to rural Wisconsin to the area around Elroy - the rolling fields became my sea and the hills my waves.

THE EGG

So, which came first...?. This painting is one of my first pieces. It was painted with gouache 1989. When I showed this at WardNasse Gallery in New York later the same year they called my art "The Power of Simplicity". I used this painting to pay my rent one year later...

VENUS

During my long and great relation with my Norwegian friend Synnöve - we went traveling in Europe, the USA and around Sweden. This I painted sitting outside the hacienda we rented in Spain. We had just made love...

It was Synnöve who encouraged me to start to paint sooner than later. Synnöve had an eye for new and upcoming artists. Her meager salary as a nurse's aid went many times to make installments on artwork by foreign painters. A couple of very well established galleries in Malmö, Sweden worked with her. Maybe her Norwegian charm and her personality contributed. That way Synnöve was able to gather some serious pieces of European modern art.

STARS NO STRIPES

Another of the early ones. I discovered when the painting was nearly done that one blue stars was missing...but I managed to get it in somehow. It is probably not accurate when it comes to the "lines". But, it is a painting, not an illustration...

FAREWELL VIETNAM

I was at a nightclub in Malmo, Sweden a warm summer night. I guess the time was about 3.30 am - when four smart looking Asian women come into my view. I was not in my best shape, but I know when I see class. Besides, I liked their kind of "uniforms". Maybe they were air hostesses - I have no clue. I just knew that I wanted to put the impression on paper. I left shortly afterwards and walked to my studio. An hour later or so, (it was a long walk and I needed that) I took out this 30" x 20" Hahnemueller paper, picked a brush and the colors and created this piece. The name however was not a given one. It took me some time to get the right feeling for it.

ÖSTERLEN

In Sweden we have Österlen, in Wisconsin there is Door County. With hills, lakes, woods, the long beaches, grassy fields with wildflowers, cozy restaurants and artists everywhere...

It was in Österlen where I had my first exhibitions. I partnered with another Swedish artist. Agneta Neroth. We talked landlords into letting us use space and then we advertised our presence. It was a fun time...

PEAS ON EARTH

Do I need to say more... But I can add that the original was painted on a circular cardboard dressed with linen. I can also mention that there are so far, four round paintings made. They are: *Earth, Wind & Fire, Sunset Boulevard, Bulls Eye* and this; *Peas on Earth*. Prints are only made from this one and

Bull's eye. The originals are scattered. Two are in Sweden, one in Minneapolis and one in Elroy, Wisconsin.

RELATIONS

My life; close and long distance friends. A buyer of my art once asked me if I do water color paintings. I told her no. A couple of days later I had a go at it by adding a lot of water to the gouache making the image illuminated.

HORIZON

The Horizon is all around us, so close but yet far away...

This painting was created more like an experiment of simplicity. Still you can let your fantasy fly. Check the uneven horizontal line and start the travel in your mind...

DISTORTION

When I put the name Distortion on it, I didn't look in a dictionary beforehand. For me this was Distortion...and it still is. I have put subtitles in English on all my artwork, already at my very first painting in 1987. Kind of strange perhaps, as after all I am Swedish...

DISCO

I painted this a summer evening in Sweden. I was at a disco and I got this feeling that I wanted to paint the pulsing of lights and people. So I went back to my studio.

But before I went about it, I painted **TULIPS**. Sometimes when I have an image in mind I would like to paint, (it doesn't happen often – but it happens) I need to flex my creativity beforehand. **Tulips** became the result.

Another of these rare occasions was when I wanted to paint **Teamwork**. I flexed my creativity and created **The Web**.

The mind works strange sometimes. But still there might have been an underlying meaning with it. As at the time I had my son employed as he was out of work.

I called some people and suddenly we were making websites. I did the creative part and Patrick the technical.

TEAMWORK

While there is no story behind **Tulips**, there is one behind **Teamwork**. I was walking my dog Skutt an early Sunday morning in Sweden. When we came around a corner we run into an ice hockey team out exercising. I liked the colors they had on their dresses. The distinct, red, black and blue - made a nice color combination. We passed each other. Skutt and I walked one way and the team crossed the street.

The dog stopped to pee. IF that hadn't happened this painting would never been. Nor would **The web**. While Skutt was taking care of business, I looked after the team. They had started to jump up and down on the spot. It looked cool. I memorized the image and I told my self, I am going to paint that.

A couple of Sundays later I went down to my studio by the sea and went about it. Some time later **THE WEB** was created and soon after **TEAMWORK** became a part of my works.

BRICKS OF LIFE

Bricks of life is what life is all about. Sometimes there is happiness and joy, other times there is sadness and grief. The silver lining between the bricks is the oil which makes it work anyway...

The year was late 1996 and my first wife, Isobel from Ireland - was diagnosed with breast cancer and was given one year to live. The summer of -97 I was painting in my studio. But I was not happy with the piece I was working on, so I cut it in half and started to paint on the back. One after one, the bricks came out...and **Bricks of life** was created. The size of the original is only 7" x 9". I gave it to our son Patrick. Isobel passed January 10, 1998.

Isobel and I had been divorced 15 years by then, but we had Patrick - so I stayed in the same city while he was growing up.

CARPE DIEM

I really wanted to seize the day when I painted this piece! When I had the original painting at the last show I did in Sweden, in the spring of 2001 - a Swedish painter in his late 80ties approached me and said "Björn, I thought I would never see it in my lifetime. But you have created depth in a painting with use of only one color". Maybe he was pulling my leg. Maybe he thought it was too much blue. I didn't ask. I was just soaking it up.

ANOTHER DAY IN FUCKING PARADISE

I painted this one 1999. It is a time document more than anything. All these hyped up internet companies with no substance at all. They were everywhere. *Go for it! Just do it, Free yourself* etc... **Another day in Fucking Paradise...** This one was together with **Bricks of Life** on the front page in a Swedish newspaper.

Everyone wants it, but few dare to hang it....Though that was more like that in Wisconsin. In Texas they like it and they buy it (a lot)

REFUGEE

I was watching a TV program about refugees from former Yugoslavia, when this old lady appeared on the screen. Her face was covered by wrinkles. It made such an impact on me so I couldn't concentrate. Finally I had to paint it - then the spell released.

ICON

The year before moving to the USA, I went deep into Russia. It was a great experience. In the old churches the history of icons was very present...

BUT I LOVE YOU

Her name was Marina. I met her online. She was from Saratov.

FAMINE

I was traveling by train in the south of Russia in the summer of 2000. The train went very slow and along the train poorly dressed people were walking. I asked my fellow passengers, who were these people and why were they walking along the railway. I was told that it was very poor people and they were probably walking to some ones "dacha" - a summer residence - to pick fruits and then sell it on the market. And sure they had a bucket in each hand. What are they picking and how much do they get when they (hopefully) sell it - was my next question? Again I was told that they were normally picking prunes at this time of the year and that one bucket normally sold for \$1.00. They walked two hours in one direction, picked the fruit and walked back. At the same time one liter (1 quart) water cost roughly one dollar at the same market.

BEHIND BARS

No, I was not behind bars, but I felt I needed a change. I was running a creative specialty paper company and I made some decent money. However, I had worked it all up during ten years and I didn't really care to take it further. I was bored. I wanted more out of life. I put up my profile on a dating site and was ready to go anywhere...

USA 2001 –

MANHATTAN TRANSFER

September 2001, the Manhattan skyline changed forever. I was working in my office in Sweden installing TV on my computer, when a friend of mine called. Put on the TV he said. I just had got it to work and saw the second plane hitting the tower...

I moved to the USA in November 2001

ZAFARI

Before I got my resident visa and work permit for USA, in 2002 I went with some friends of my wife (to be) to the African inspired Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells. My "friends" were working different vendor jobs in the lobby area. When I a month later or so picked up my brushes I painted "ZAFARI"... which became the first painting I created in USA.

TALKING, WALKING

Everywhere people are using cell phones. Look around you. How many can you see using it?! Has our life become any better for it? How did we manage before??

I do sincerely hope - that at least it will be a National ban for using it while you drive. Concentrate!

BRAINSTORM

When you are new to a place; In this case a new country, new friends, new job etc.

You have to do a lot of thinking trying to figure out the way to go. During this process I discovered finally, perhaps the obvious, but it doesn't need much to get a different angle on it all. Something to keep in mind if you have lost your job or don't know what do next.

BACKYARDS' BLUES

The writer, Peter Egan, has a theory why there are so many cars sitting in the nature in Wisconsin... "The farmer puts the car there for spares instead of trading it in. Then, when the kids are off to college, they take it and return it when they are done...".

I don't necessary agree, cause there are far too many cars just sitting there.

Having seen these ugly sites I just had to paint it and get it off my chest...

Then, some eight years later the steel prices spiked and most of the cars were bought up by cruising entrepreneurs.

PATCHWORK

I have had three employments during 34 years of self employment. These three times have all been here in the USA. Two in Wisconsin Dells and one time at Luby's in San Antonio. The total time of employed work has been about two years. That said, now you know where I am coming from.

Going to work in Wisconsin I was driving on these patched roads...

LIVING TOGETHER

This image is what United States is all about. With all these people, of different cultures, races, colors, and backgrounds. All living together...

With this painting I started to use more yellow then I had done before. The reason is kind of strange. The last time I returned home from Sweden; I was sitting beside a charming lady from the Philippines. As it is a nine hour flight between Copenhagen and Chicago, there is plenty of time for different topics. Eventually I told her that I was a painter. Just before getting off the plane in Chicago, She told me that I should use more yellow in my paintings. She had never seen any of my paintings...

FRAGRANCE

Painted a dark night in the middle of February. It was cold and hostile outside and the Wisconsin winter kept up its traditions. I just wanted to smell the summer...

TEQUILA SUNRISE

Many of us have been there and experienced just that – Tequila Sunrise. The morning after the night before...

KIMONO

As I most of the time let my inner feelings do the painting, the name of this piece is KIMONO. My wife was preparing for a longer trip to China. The light strokes in the lower half of the painting was for me the elegance connected with a Kimono dress. Now it might be like that Kimono is more Japanese than Chinese... but this is not about facts, this is art.

WILDLIFE

When you live in rural Wisconsin. The wildlife is just outside the door. Wildlife can take many shapes. I let you create your own image of wildlife...

IN THE VALLEY

The neighboring kids playing in the tall grass, going for a swim in the pond, fishing in the streams. Those were the good times...

MORNING GLORY

You look over the hills or just out through the window an early summer morning.
It's there...

WALL FLOWERS

They just stand there, leaning against a sun drenched barn...

MARDI GRAS

New Orleans is dancing again

PRAIRIE

I took our animals - three dogs and some cats on a walk every morning for six years. I was married and we lived in the beautiful hills surrounding Elroy, Wisconsin. One summer the prairie grass was higher than before. I walked barefoot through the big field with the grass up to my chest. I am 6.7 and it was a great feeling being all surrounded by this beauty.

I'M LEAVING

After about seven years of marriage in Wisconsin I couldn't go on with it. I had everything, a wife, lived in a beautiful house, countryside outside the door, dogs, cats, bird. But the restaurant I had was not working as I had hoped. There was not enough people to support it and maybe my attitude didn't help. No life, no free weekends. Life was no fun anymore. At least I felt

so. So on the way to Phoenix for an art show in 2008, I told my wife, who was along that I wanted a divorce. I'm leaving...

TRANSITION

Did I get a better life after that? No, I did not. Matter of fact it got worse. I became financially broke*. But I had taken a decision and I lived with that. Finally, I gathered enough funds so I could get out of the depressing Elroy area. I moved to the friendly and warm San Antonio in Texas. I have been here eight months now and life is shaping up again.

*That I got broke had nothing to do with the divorce. We separated more or less as friends. What broke me was that I tried to help the community where I lived and communities around to get more tourists. I organized a motorcycle event. I don't ride myself but I can create and I had a vision. So I made a website, brochures, maps, planned rides etc. The locals told me I should be happy if it came 50 people for a first time event. The first time, in 2007 it came 550 bikers from four states. Cycle World the largest motorcycle magazine on the planet wrote 1/1 page editorial text on how well run the event had been and the beautiful ride I had organized.

Second year it came tornado, flooding etc. Everything bad which could happen, happened. We also had a bike raffle. I could of course paid back the money to the people buying tickets due to the weather disaster. But I was thinking that in the long run the money will eventually come back. Besides, I walk my talk! Long story short, after three years the city of Elroy didn't want my help anymore. They did prefer to go back to the bake & garage sales – turning around the same money all the time. The idea with The Elroy Bike Meet "A Rural Hill & Valley Experience" was to attract very much needed fresh money to the community.

I became flat broke. Not even money for gas. I had food stamps. My landlord - I paid with paintings. That went on for two years.

DESPITE

I will end this history with an image I painted the day I got the one month notice to leave my apartment/studio above my restaurant. It was November 2010. I had no money, no nothing but I managed despite everything – to get back on my feet (eventually)

I put a nail through the top of this painting, pinning it to a two by four visible beam in my studio. I

I understood my serious predicament, but I also saw it as an opportunity for change.

I recognized for myself I was better than ending up in this community. I raised funds by painting and selling smaller paintings to friends and family in Sweden. Gathered in all \$1800 and contacted a friend I had in San Antonio. I asked if I could stay with him for a couple of weeks. Just after Thanksgiving 2011, I loaded up my car with art and hit the road. After two weeks I found an apartment where I could wait to pay the first rent until February 1st. The same day I got a job as a pastry maker with Luby's. I told them I will be here three months.

In the end of March I left my job at Luby's. My plan was to work 100% with my art.

NOW IT IS 10 YEARS LATER

So far that has worked just fine...Here I made a pause writing down the stories, and now about ten years later October 2022 and now living in Mexico I have decided to write the stories up to date. Not all works have a story. So, if you can't find a story about your painting - rest assure your piece of art is a part of my life.

DESPITE became one of only four paintings I created during my hardship in Elroy. The others were **STEP BY STEP, THE SPIRIT** and last but not least **A NEW BEGINNING**. So, DESPITE everything, I will get out of this. STEP BY STEP with the help of THE SPIRIT and find a way to A NEW BEGINNING. Keep in mind that I don't set out to paint anything special or anything in my mind when I paint. AND more importantly I ONLY paint when I feel like painting. And that is not every day, week, month or as here in Mexico not even every year. Halfway into the creation I see where it is going and the title pops up in my head. I balance the painting and I am done. So, with these words you have also got a story or stories within in the DESPITE.

DESERT STARS became the first painting I created in San Antonio, Texas. Many artists paint their misery in dull colors, I only paint when I am happy or at least content. I did a lot of walking my first months in San Antonio. It was a new year, 2012 and it was January, February, March and so on, I felt like painting and DESERT STARS was created. At that time I saw a lot of cactus around. There were no flowers and for some reason I thought the flowers were going to be red...

CONSTRUCTION was another painting created that Spring... Maybe the inner thought was about starting to build a new life from nothing

THE RIVER was a painting I started, but didn't finish until years after I had left Texas in 2018.

The first years in Texas were extremely difficult. But when I heard about the Market Days around San Antonio I got hope. I was very lucky to have chosen San Antonio. Because the concept of Market Days were not in Wisconsin. And in Texas in no other city than SA. So, even if the Market Days at that time were only for Craft vendors (I changed that) because I decided to make Helotes, Boerne, Gruene and Kerrville Market Day(s) my gallery presentation in each and every one on designated weekends. And I was persistent and it paid off.

RIVER WALK I had heard about the famous River Walk. I had not yet visited it. But in my imagination I first created maybe eight small paintings - which I later gave away to people who bought more than one large of my prints at the Market Days.

At a later occasion I for some reason had bought three square canvases and out of those I created the triptych RIVER WALK.

SHADES OF LOVE You can hardly go through life without noticing that love has to be nurtured, taken care of, developed and occasionally defended if challenged. I sold this at a street event in Austin, to a couple from Canada.

TRAFFIC Going on the freeways in and around the major cities in Texas is nothing for them with a weak heart. The pace is fast and intense, but still there is a friendly streak and they let you in...

CITYLIFE I travel a lot in through down towns in early mornings finding the place for the show. Then back many times on the road at the time the city changes in order to entertain....

TEQUILA SUNRISE The morning after the night before...

THE TEXAS COLLECTION As I have mentioned before, I don't set out to paint anything specific. I let my inner self do the painting. So, during my time in Texas I created 30 some paintings plus a couple of triptychs. Making the total works about 54. Out of those 54 creations only 7 turned out to be Texas related. I decided to call them THE TEXAS COLLECTION and they were painted over a period of six years.

They are **DESERT STARS; THE STATE OF TEXAS; ROCK SPRING: TEXAS ROADSIDE: BLUEBONNETS: WILDFLOWERS & SPRING IN TEXAS.**

I have been represented by an exclusive art glass gallery in downtown San Antonio since 2013. I was showing my art at King William Art Festival in San Antonio and I was approached by the owner of that gallery. Though I didn't know at the time. He had bought some of my Limited Edition prints.

He asked me if I could be interested in showing my art in his gallery, Gallery Vetro. A art glass gallery extra ordinair!! I told him I had to check it out. Two weeks later I went to his gallery, Since then I have been his only painter.

BLUEBONNETS It was the owner of the gallery who wanted me to paint the painting. I told him I don't paint any bluebonnets. There are thousands of Texas artists doing that. Besides that, it is not how I work. Phillip, the owner responded do it your way, but do it better than it has ever been done before...That was created in 2014.

That year, 2014 became a busy year, I showed my art at The Swedish American Museum in Chicago during three months. I also showed my art for the first time in my hometown in Sweden. The gallery owner there had seen the triptych I had done for san Antonio River Walk. The owner of Galleri Fargladan in Karlskrona wanted me to create something similar for his gallery. So, I created ...

TROSSO I & TROSSO II, Karlskrona A Naval World Heritage Site

Upon request of a gallery owner in my hometown of Karlskrona, Sweden, I created this triptych of my hometown seen from above as I remember the layout. Karlskrona was founded in 1680 when King Karl XI decided to establish the country's new naval base there. The City was built according to King Karl XI's will and vision. In 1998 Karlskrona was appointed A World Heritage Site due to the way the city was planned and how well everything is still preserved as today.

A TROSSO I was created before TROSSO II. I made a compilation of both triptychs as signal flags to be sold as posters and postcards. But they didn't see the benefits of that

STREETS, BLOCKS & NEIGHBORHOOD (SBN 1-7)

Then during the same year and the following I created a very large painting. It was about 262 inches high and 84 inches wide, I called it Streets, Blocks and Neighborhood. Three paintings wide and 7 high, All connected but sold in three horizontal pieces wide.

ROAD TRIP & NATIVE My non-conscious inspiration is most likely from a road trip with my brother from San Diego to San Antonio. Passing through Big Sur on A1, San Francisco, Lake Tahoe, Yellowstone, Las Vegas, Grand Canyon, Monument Valley, Santa Fe and home to Texas. Driving through Monument Valley we took a break at a Native site...

CRESCENDO In 2009 while I still lived in Wisconsin, but at the time I had not the pizzeria there anymore. Instead I worked and stayed at a small restaurant in Wilton at an old school house. My reputation as a good pizza maker had given me the possibility to introduce pizza at that restaurant. I was broke. The motorcycle event I had organized could probably become a national event if the city of Elroy had had the guts and a vision.

Instead they pulled the rug out under me and I became broke. Food stamps for two years. The owner of the restaurant was kind and helped me out. One of our regular Sunday guests was Matt McPherson the founder of Mathews composite bows. I asked Matt if I could borrow 1,500. I told him I don't know when I can pay it back. So, during the coming years I updated him and his wife Sherri about where I was and what I was doing. Then in perhaps 2015 I created this painting. I made it specially for Matt. And while I mentioned the composite bows, Matt also makes McPherson Guitars. Brad Paisley, Amy Grant, Vince Gill and members of Carrie Underwood's band are all using his guitars. The colors I chose, I took from the colors on a piece of the guitars. The title Crescendo is about music. I paid back the loan the following year and received a letter from Matt thanking me and saying that I am a man of my word...

FRUSTRATIONS My time in San Antonio was frustrating once in a while. I was in my studio and I wanted desperately to paint, but I had no empty canvases. But there was one large piece called Sierras. I took it down and painted over it. It now hangs in my bedroom in Santiago de Queretaro. That way I can look at it every morning!

MEXICO 2018 -

I was fortunate to sell a lot of art in San Antonio and around. But also when I traveled outside the State of Texas. In 2016 the oil business tanked in Texas. Oil is the main business in Texas. That year 10,000 people in middle management were let go. Those were the people making 100,000 dollars a year. That kind of salary was never going to come back. And the people having those salaries were the people supporting creative businesses like mine, remodeling, landscape designs, new cars etc etc. So, when you have been self-employed the most part of your life you have to look ahead. I also had started to hear many people telling me they have my art in their home. Which of course was a great feeling.

Moving back to Sweden I didn't see as an alternative. I had got used to nice weather in Texas. And moving to Canada was like Sweden. So, I moved to Mexico. In hindsight not the smartest thing I have done so far...Because here the interest for art is certainly not as in the USA

But, I will get it together eventually.

At least I have my art in Polanco in Mexico City and at a gallery in Fabrica Aurora in San Miguel de Allende

If you want to learn more I recommend reading my biography.
You will find the link under BOOKS

