

Coupland Artist

By Way of NYC and France--Part 2

B Y S U S A N G A R R Y

In Part 1 of “Coupland Artist by Way of NYC and France,” we introduced the newest Coupland artist Peter Julian. His career began in New York, and then he began splitting his time between New York and Nuits-Saint-Georges, Burgundy, France. He has now settled down in Coupland in an 1888 house that he is renovating for his home and studio.



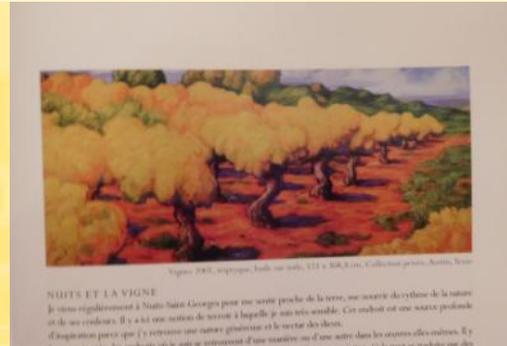
Peter Julian in his Coupland studio discussing his wine Janus, with some of his works in the background.

Wine and Art in Burgundy

While in Burgundy, Peter started his own wine label: “Janus, with two faces, representing the past and the future. Burgundy is about expressing something that nature gives, rather than a taste that has been marketed.”

Also while in Burgundy, his work was published in a beautiful catalog: “A catalog that was published by a friend who became a collector,” Peter says.

Even though he is based in Coupland now, he still spends time in Nuits-Saint-Georges, as he has written in his catalog, “to feel close to and be rooted in its earth and to refresh and replenish myself with its rhythms, sounds, and colors. . . . This place is a profound source of inspiration to me.”



Vignes 2001 from a page of Peter’s catalog that was published in France.

Peter comments, “I like to do portraits of people. If I don’t have a direction, I find it interesting to draw people.” In his catalog, there is a series of beautiful portraits of friends, and he writes: “I like to make portraits of friends—capture a little of their souls so that they seem intensely present when I look at them. It’s also a good way to get centered and find new directions, so I often draw friends between projects.”



Portraits of friends—pages in the catalog of Peter’s works.

Finding Coupland

After seventeen years between New York and France, he says, "I felt I had to return to the States full time. [Coupland artist] Letitia had seen my work on Facebook and a friend had a studio in Austin," so he visited the Austin area, discovering that "Austin was so expensive that I went back to France." Then, another message from Letitia: "The place next door was for sale." So that's how an artist from New York and France ended up in an 1888 house in Coupland. However, he is back in the situation of living and working in the same space. "It is harder to live and work in the same space," as opposed to Burgundy, where he had two floors of a 300-year-old building.



Elise 2001

"My focus immediately is getting new work done," he says. "I'm finding inspiration in my surroundings—clouds and the big sky." As he wrote in his catalog, "For me, a direct interaction exists between where I happen to be and the works that I create there. When I work, the place in which I find myself always finds its way into the works themselves."

For painting, he prefers oil and gouache, an opaque water color. He comments, "Oil is a very responsive medium. I don't like acrylic; there is a sameness to it." Lately, he is painting botanical forms.

Since he has been here, he has shown in Dallas and in Austin. Also, there has been a show in Granville, Normandy, France.

So an artist who has lived and worked in New York City and in France is in an 1888 house in Coupland. Peter has done quite a lot of work on the house considering that he is creating his art and exhibiting at the same time. He is working on the interior now, including the original

beadboard, and will do the exterior later. He has had visitors from France and has taken them to the Old Coupland Inn and Dancehall, which they enjoyed very much.

Expanding the Art Community in Coupland

Both Peter and Letitia have visitors who come from out of town to see their artwork. Right now, their art is displayed in the limited space in their houses. A desirable addition to Coupland would be exhibit space to showcase the artists that we have; such an amenity might draw more artists here, possibly resulting in an art community, to the benefit of Coupland.

Peter's website is under construction at peter-julian.com. Interestingly, he and designer/sculptor Wells Mason are the Coupland residents who have entries in Wikipedia.



At its March 2015 meeting, the Coupland Civic Organization hosted local artists. Here, Peter is showing his work to Coupland artist Letitia Eldredge and Ann Miller from Taylor.

Perhaps Letitia says it best: "Central Texas is the beneficiary of having such a notable world artist returning to our fold. Welcome Home, Mr. Julian."

Part 1 of "Coupland Artist By Way of NYC and France" appeared in the February Coupland Herald.