

HISTORY OF THE BLUES PROJECT PROPOSAL

I would like to execute a term project that will integrate audio art and visual art in the form of a completed triptych painting for History of the Blues. The primary motivation behind my triptych painting project is an exploration of the underlying economic influences found in Blues music. When Big Mama Thornton sings in “Hard Times”

“Times getting’ hard in the city...I’m goin’ down the road...
With this money that I’m makin’...I can’t pull this heavy load”

It’s clear here that the reason she has to leave is because she can’t economically afford to stay – her paycheck is too small to support her life as she knows it.

These lyrics of “Hellhound On My Trail” by Robert Johnson has him leaving too –

“I got to keep movin’...blues fallin’ down like hail...
And the days keeps on worryin’ me...There’s a hellhound on my trail”

The reason he needs to leave is a bit murkier, but most likely has an economic element.

When you have to leave behind a house or home you can no longer afford to keep or keep up, you find yourself in the same situation millions of post sub- prime mortgage disaster Americans deal with everyday, these days in particular; the economic reality of losing your home to the bank, or apartment to the landlord, and becoming homeless yourself.

Talk about a reason to sing The Blues! Abandoned housing then becomes, in many cases, now refuge for the homeless.

I began work on these three canvases a couple of weeks ago, while listening to the two versions of “Trouble In Mind” in my home studio. I have to say that as a painter I am in awe of the inspiration I have received while doing my listening work for this class. I believe this is part of the story too – the way The Blues inspire creative thinkers! I have to mention here that I did not intentionally begin this painting with the idea of using it for a term project; it presented itself that way to me at some point.

My work in progress is a depiction of abandoned, broken down, derelict, row housing. I have mentioned working on this particular painting several times in my class blog. I would like to keep updating my progress in this way on this work as I go along, and to have that writing serve as a record of my project.

I would like to bring the completed project to the May 11 class. I will write an accompanying essay explaining my process, and also include a photo image of the paintings for grading purposes. Thank you for your consideration.