

# SHAUN ROBERTS biography

Shaun Roberts lives and works in Nacogdoches, TX.

## EDUCATION

- 2012 MFA Painting and Drawing, The University of Washington, Seattle, WA  
2010 BFA Painting and Drawing, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, TX

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- Present Assistant Professor of Art, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, TX (Since 2013)  
2011-12 Instructor of Record, Introduction to Drawing and Color Theory, The University of Washington, Seattle, WA

## SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

- 2018 *Rebels and Renegades*, Art Museum of Southeast Texas, Beaumont, TX (solo)  
2017 *Small Works Big Talent*, Las Laguna Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA  
*A Sense of Place 2017*, Gertrude Herbert Institute of Art, Augusta, GA  
*Reflections on 2016*, Kelwood Contemporary Art Gallery, Baton Rouge, LA  
2016 *31st Annual No Big Heads*, The University of Alaska Anchorage Student Union Gallery, Anchorage, AK  
*11th Annual Emerald Art Center: Emerald Spring Exhibition 2016*, Emerald Art Center, Springfield, OR  
*2nd Annual at the Walker, Open Exhibition*, The Walker Art Committee, Garnett, KS  
*Painting and Seeing*, Department of Art and Art History, UNCW, Wilmington, NC  
2015 *Questioning Beauty: Idea vs. Quality*, Cade Art Gallery, Anne Arundel Community College, Arnold, MD  
*Place and Identity*, deadWEST Studio Gallery, Dallas, TX  
*Strange Paradise 2015 Juried Exhibition*, First Street Gallery, New York, NY  
2014 *Mirrored and Obscured: Contemporary Texas Self-Portraits*, Art Museum of Southeast Texas, Beaumont, TX  
*Hunting Art Prize*, Finalist, Houston, TX  
2012 *MFA Exhibition*, Henry Art Gallery, Seattle WA  
*MFA Exhibition*, Sandpoint Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

- 2011 *Art for Clearwater, Invitational Group Exhibition*, First Street Gallery, New York, NY  
2010 *Summer Student Show*, Jacob Laurence Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

## SELECTED AWARDS & GRANTS

- 2012 Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant  
2011 Jane and David Davis Endowed Fellowship in Art, University of Washington, Seattle, WA  
2010 Recruitment Fellowship, School of Art, University of Washington, Seattle, WA  
Dean's Circle Scholarship, College of Arts and Letters, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, TX



*Come and Take It*, 2014, oil on canvas, 24 1/2 x 24 1/2 in.  
Loan Courtesy of the Artist

Front: *George Lands a Hoss*, 2017, oil on canvas, 83 x 83 in.  
Collection of Dr. Matt Bateman, Nacogdoches, Texas

Photography by Bill Nieberding



SHAUN ROBERTS • REBELS & RENEGADES

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# SHAUN ROBERTS REBELS & RENEGADES

On view March 17 - June 3, 2018

Shaun Roberts creates studies, finished drawings and paintings that depict narratives that take place in rural, working-class East Texas, while at the same time employing motifs and compositions of Old Master paintings. The works also project an aura of danger, which may cause viewers discomfort or recognition of familiar situations. To balance the unease, he employs humorous details, such as the decals on the truck that read "Rig Trash" and "Chubby Chaser" in *Charging Chasseur*.

Roberts draws from imagery familiar to him from growing up in the East Texas countryside. This choice of subject matter comes from his affinity for the attitudes of the characters in Western narrative paintings he has viewed. He also identifies with the characters that at first appear down to earth, yet soon exhibit odd behavior found in short stories by the southern Gothic writers Flannery O'Connor and Eudora Welty. The characters in the stories seem to Roberts like family members. Roberts explains that some of his relatives are con artists or outlaws who are not bad people but have made potentially dangerous choices out of naiveté or desperation.

Roberts' admiration for the characters and techniques of the Old Masters was stimulated by a trip to Italy. Exposure to Old Master paintings shapes many elements of Roberts' work. Caravaggio is his favorite artist, evidenced by his painting the *Card Sharps* that bears the title of



*Charging Chasseur*, 2016, oil on canvas, 94 x 87 1/2 in.  
Loan Courtesy of the Artist

Caravaggio's painting in the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, and incorporates compositional devices and poses by the master. Roberts also borrows from Peter-Paul Rubens, Frans Hals, Diego Velazquez, Theodore Gericault and living artists Antonio Lopez-Garcia and Kehinde Wiley, among others.

Roberts creative process is critical to his artistic practice. A selection of small, rough drawings he employs to work out poses, and loosely rendered color studies exploring tonality and color combinations are included to demonstrate his working method. He uses photographs and numerous studies to resolve the composition before starting to paint.

Roberts first photographs friends and family to serve as characters. He often selects models that have experienced the situations of the characters, making their poses more natural and true. Frequently, he will also paint himself into the composition. He also photographs still-life elements and locales and re-photographs the models to see new poses. Using Photoshop, he melds his original photos and stock images to create an initial compositional study. Next, he creates small sketches and color studies. Roberts draws a larger, detailed value study to develop his ideas and tonality, as seen in the *Value Study*



*Night Watch*, 2015, oil on canvas, 60 x 49 in.  
Loan Courtesy of the Artist



*Card Sharps*, 2015, oil on canvas, 67 x 84 1/2 in.  
Loan Courtesy of the Artist

for *George Lands a Hoss*. Once every element is set, he lightly draws the main parts on the canvas and washes in the warm and cool tones. He then adds thicker paint, developing the work as a whole before undertaking details.

Roberts' ambitious paintings, as well as the finished drawings, impress in their scale. Using dramatic narratives and masterful technique to produce reactions in viewers, they can be at times both threatening and humorous. He may just inherit the mantle of the Old Masters he admires and emulates.

Dr. Jill Carrington

Professor of Art History  
Stephen F. Austin State University  
Nacogdoches, Texas