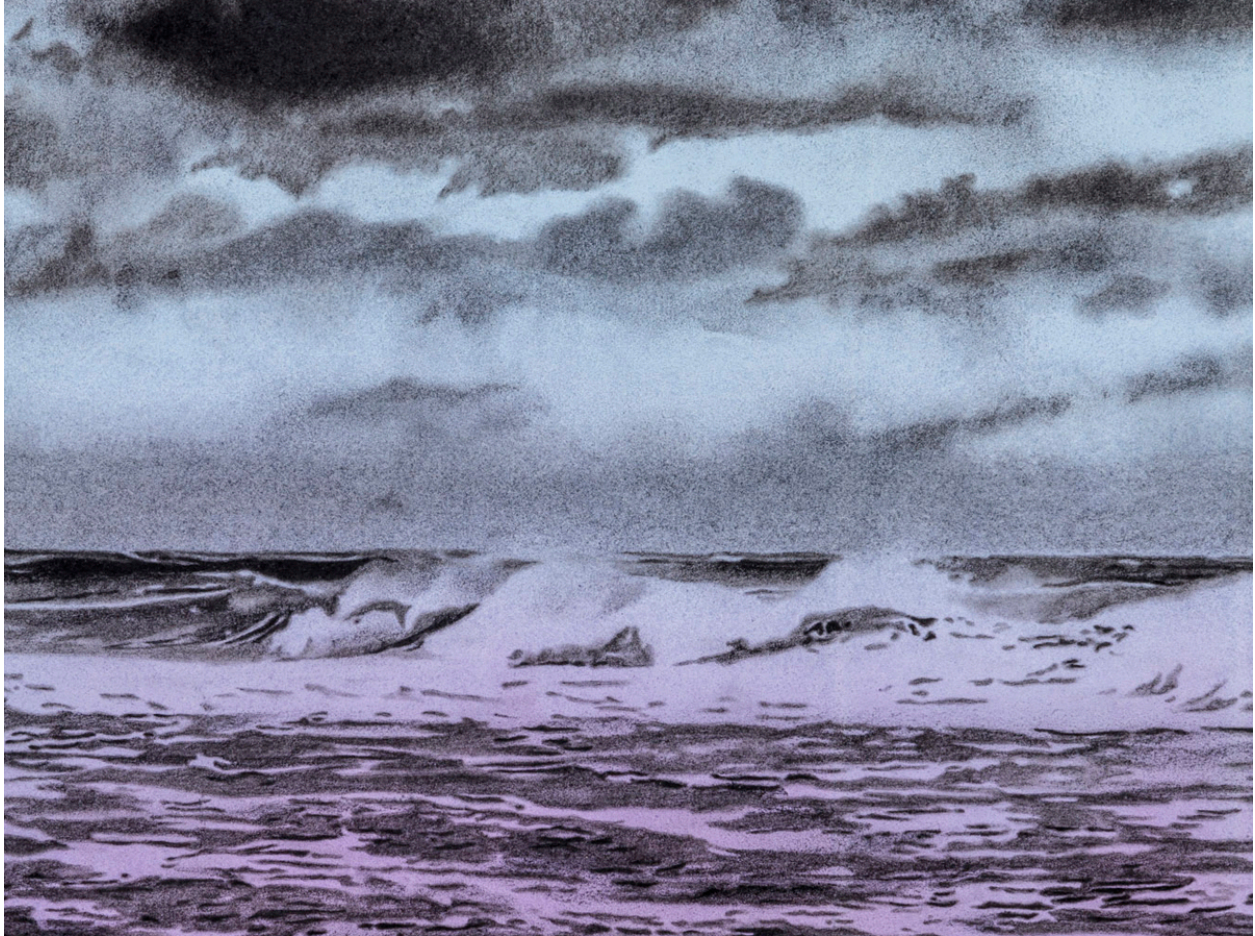


LOWELL RYAN PROJECTS

MONSTER CHILDREN



The Talented Mr. Mister

By Crom

July 14, 2022

Andy Mister is a very talented and very serious artist.

I don't mean he's all grave and solemn, I mean making art is his life and his job, and he takes it very seriously. And I respectfully observed this seriousness when I forwent the opportunity to point out that his name is Mr. Mister, and how there was also a popular band called Mr. Mister in the 80s and, gosh, isn't that funny? Instead, I asked Andy

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Mister about his process, his influences, and how often he gets to the movies these days.

First question: How did a dude with degrees in English Literature, Philosophy, and Creative Writing, end up an artist?

I always drew a lot as a kid and I went to a public arts high school in New Orleans, so art was really my thing most of my life. In high school, I started reading more and got really into film, and when I went



'NEPAL 2', 2022, CARBON PENCIL, CHARCOAL, AND ACRYLIC ON PAPER MOUNTED ON PANEL

to apply to colleges, I applied mostly to art schools. I didn't really have great grades, but I wound up getting a scholarship to Loyola University in New Orleans, so it was just so much cheaper than any of the art schools I got accepted to. And my parents didn't have a lot of money, so I just went there.

And did English Lit.

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Yeah, I studied English Lit. I really enjoyed taking philosophy classes, too, so I wound up taking enough of them to get a double major in Philosophy. Then I went to grad school in Montana and got my MFA in Creative Writing with an emphasis on Poetry. All that time I was still



'DEPENDING ON THE WEATHER', 2022,
CARBON PENCIL, CHARCOAL, AND ACRYLIC ON PAPER MOUNTED ON PANEL

making art, but I was more serious about writing, like trying to get published and stuff like that. It wasn't until I moved to New York that I decided to focus on making visual art, and I had to pretty much stop writing to focus on that.

How did your opening go at Lowell Ryan Projects last week?

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It went really great. The gallery looked awesome and all the work seemed to really come together in the space.

That's cool.

Yeah, and I got to see a lot of friends from LA and California and meet a bunch of new people. It was a total blast.



'AN INVISIBLE TERRAIN 3', 2021
CARBON PENCIL, CHARCOAL, AND ACRYLIC ON PAPER MOUNTED ON PANEL

Oh, you're not based in LA?

No, I lived in San Francisco for a little while in the mid-2000s, but I've lived in New York State for the last 16 years or so.

Where in NY?

I lived in Brooklyn for about 11 years, and about 5 years ago I moved

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to Beacon, NY, which is about an hour and a half north of New York City.

The new work looks rad. Congrats. How are you doing what you're doing, though? Like, you're using carbon pencil, charcoal, and acrylic on paper mounted on a panel... but how? What's the process?

Essentially what I do is I use large sheets of watercolor paper, which I stretch by immersing them in water and then stapling them to a board and letting them dry, which gets the paper really stiff and tight. Then I



'AN INVISIBLE TERRAIN 1', 2021
CARBON PENCIL, CHARCOAL, AND ACRYLIC ON PAPER MOUNTED ON PANEL

apply multiple washes of watered-down liquid acrylic paint, tinting the paper to whatever color or combination of colors I want. Then I draw over that with carbon pencils—which look a lot like charcoal pencils

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but are a little waxier—and vine charcoal. After that, the drawing is mounted to a wooden panel, so it can hang on the wall like a painting. For smaller pieces sometimes I mount the paper first and then draw on it that way.



'FROM THE SUSTAINING AIR II', 2022
CARBON PENCIL, CHARCOAL, AND ACRYLIC ON PAPER MOUNTED ON PANEL

Right, so it's pretty involved.

Yeah. It's taken me a little while to come to this way of making my work.

The colors remind me of those black crayon etching pictures we used to do in school. Do you know the ones?

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Do you mean the ones where you'd put a bunch of colors down on a sheet of paper and then color black over them, and then kind of etch the black away to see the colors beneath?



'UNDERWATER MOONLIGHT', 2022
CARBON PENCIL, CHARCOAL, AND ACRYLIC ON PAPER MOUNTED ON PANEL

Yeah, I don't know what's it called, but that's what I'm talking about.

I kind of *vaguely* remember doing that, but can't remember the exact process.

Wait, so you're a self-taught artist, right? Like, you have degrees in everything but art.

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I took a lot of art classes in high school. I even took some painting and drawing classes after school, but once I got to college, I didn't really take any art classes because my college didn't have a great department and I was really interested in learning more about poetry and



ANDY MISTER WORKING IN HIS STUDIO IN BEACON, NY

philosophy—go figure. Later on, when I moved to New York, I worked as an assistant to the artist Adam Helms, and I learned a lot about drawing and using different media from that job. It was a lot of hands-on experience that was really invaluable.

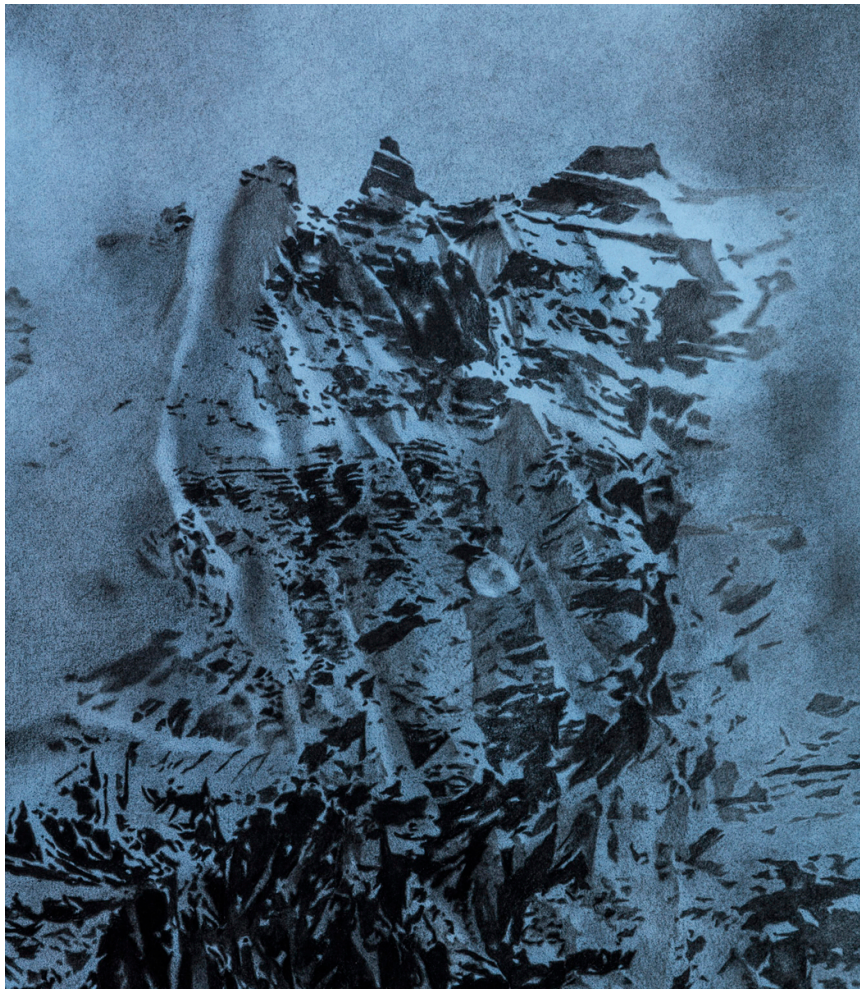
Did you draw a lot as a kid?

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That's pretty much all I did! I don't think I actually read an entire book until I was, like, 15. I just drew and watched TV.

What was your go-to drawing when you were in elementary school?

One of the first artists I was really drawn to was Andrew Wyeth, I really loved how parts of his drawings would be really detailed and precise and others would be loose and gestural. Later on, I



DETAIL 'NEPAL 2', 2022
CARBON PENCIL, CHARCOAL, AND ACRYLIC ON PAPER MOUNTED ON PANEL

found Raymond Pettibon through punk rock music and his work really opened up what drawing could be for me both in terms of subject matter and aesthetically. Seeing a Vija Celmins ocean drawing in person for the first time—I think at the Art Institute of Chicago—also

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made a big impact on me, but that was in high school. I think in elementary school, I was mostly just drawing in pencil on loose-leaf paper, like in my notebooks where I was supposed to be doing my homework.

What other artists and or things inspire you?

I used to get really inspired by movies and cinematography, like Kubrick or Terrance Malick films. When I was in LA for my show I was able to see *Barry Lyndon* at Brain Dead Studios.



DETAIL 'AN INVISIBLE TERRAIN 1', 2021, CARBON PENCIL, CHARCOAL, AND ACRYLIC ON PAPER MOUNTED ON PANEL

I haven't seen that.

It's really cool. Having kids—and especially since Covid—I don't get to see a ton of movies.

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What about artists that influence you?

Probably the biggest artistic influences on my own work are Vija Celmins and Gerhard Richter. I've got a few artist friends whose work and work ethic really inspire me: Nathan Ritterpusch, Ted Gahl, and Daniel Albrigo. Those three guys will always talk to me on the phone and help me work through what I'm doing with my work.

They're your dudes.

They are really my dudes.



'AN INVISIBLE TERRAIN 4', 2022
CARBON PENCIL, CHARCOAL AND ACRYLIC ON PAPER MOUNTED ON PANEL

Who do you wish you were friends with?

Ah... I wish that Claire Denis was my friend or maybe Westside Gunn.

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Your stuff has a real sort of perfection to it, like, it's very *clean*.

What's your studio like? I'll bet it's spotless.

Yeah, you're right. I think working with paper the way I do I've always kept a pretty tidy studio. During Covid, we converted a one-car garage at our house into a studio that I share with my wife, Alex McQuilkin, her work is maybe even more meticulous than mine, so now I really have to make sure that my mess doesn't take over the space. But generally, I've always been able to think better in a clean, organized space.



**Okay, last question:
What's next for Andy
Mister?**

Right now I'm just resting after the Lowell Ryan show and enjoying the summer with my kids. But I'll have my second solo show at Turn Gallery in New York in early 2023, so I'm in the planning stages for that and I'm really excited to do a show in their new space uptown.

Rad. Thanks, Andy!
Thank you.