



Still Life with Hydrangea, oil, 18" by 24"

"Sometimes you just have to stick to your guns and paint what interests you. I will admit this is an odd conglomeration of objects, but sometimes I find that appealing to paint. For me, still life is an opportunity to explore color harmonies, patinas, and technique. If I can capture the harmony of the objects, regardless of their relationships to one another intellectually, the painting will resonate with viewers and, to me, that will mean a successful effort."

JEFFREY WATTS

I'm Just a Guy Who Likes to Paint'

By Sara Gilbert

Jeffery Watts planned to become a professional cyclist. He was so committed to achieving that goal that, even as a teenager, he devoted up to eight hours a day to training. Then, abruptly, during his senior year in high school, he had to shift gears. The intense training had taken an unexpected toll on Watts' young body, resulting in an injury that took him out of contention for a road-racing career. So, instead of signing up for the Tour de France, he enrolled at the California Art Institute in Los Angeles.

"I think that injury was meant to be," says Watts, now 35. "Because of it, I looked into art schools." Art had always been on Watts' horizon. He grew up learning to draw and paint with his father, a traditionally trained illustrator. By the time he was 13, Watts and his father were painting together en plein air. "I was always skilled as a kid," he says. "I always doodled and drew and was always strong artistically. But I wanted to be a professional athlete. After the injury, I