

D.K. Palecek: Explorations toward Abstraction

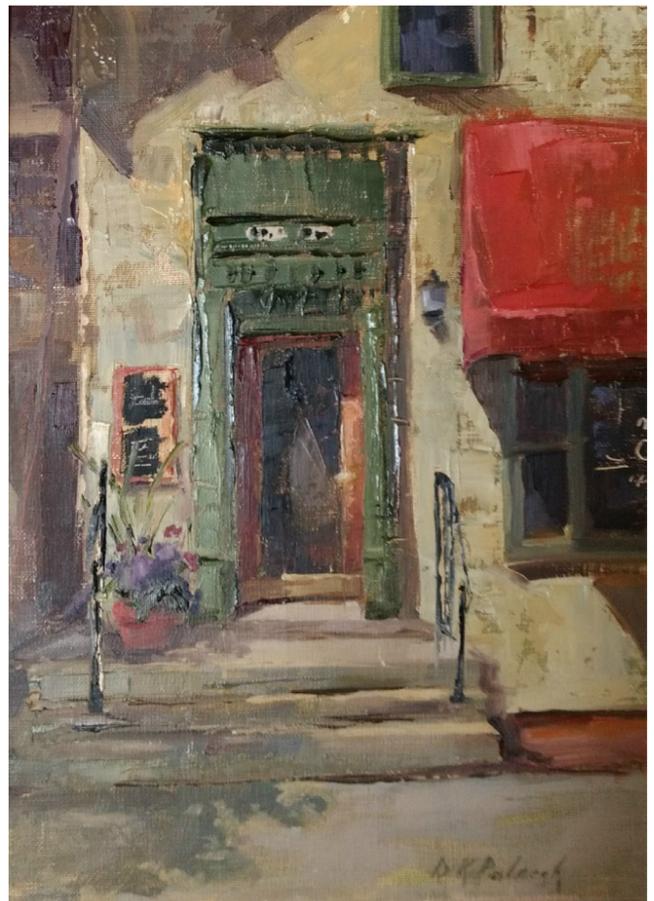


D.K. (Deke) Palecek was a math protégé as a child growing up in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Even though art classes brought joy, creativity and freedom of expression through the years, the road curved toward a math major in college at UW-Madison. Even though D.K. took art courses all throughout her schooling, art was not an option for a career choice in her era. An MBA degree in finance at UC-Berkeley propelled Deke toward her career path as mathematician, investment banker, entrepreneur, and chief operating officer. Financial success allowed her to retire about ten years ago, and she has been painting ever since!

Instruction from artists Dan Gerhartz, CW Mundy, Kim English, Carolyn Anderson, Quang Ho and others set Deke on a path that started with representationalism and more recently has verged toward abstraction. She paints in oil and has recently added cold wax. "I have so much to learn to master this medium and will not let myself be distracted by the others (pastel, watercolor, charcoal), although I would love to explore them. I draw and paint and sketch and think and dream in oil," she states.

Palecek has been in numerous plein air events in recent years and has won eleven awards including three Best of Shows and three First Places. In 2016 her "Fiddleheads" painting (right) won Best of Show at the Cedarburg Plein Air Event. She has also been juried into the National Oil and Acrylic Painters Society, the American Impressionist Society, and the Eastern Regional section of Oil Painters of America.

Deke writes about her road to abstraction: "When I look at a scene I don't see objects, I see shapes. It took a long time to 'see' this way. Then it's a decision process of breaking the shapes down into smaller shapes that provide just enough information to imply



the object. The challenge is not to provide too much information. The challenge is to provide just enough information to imply the scene with enough un-implicit canvas to allow the viewer to imagine."

In this exhibition "Unclenched Explorations," Palecek takes a *plein air* painting and later in the studio simplifies its structure in two other ways to experiment with simplification and to find different aspects to emphasize. D.K. Palecek's interest in the sublime in oil painting can be summed up in the following statement:

"What intrigues me most is the symbolism woven in the human brain that allows one simple stroke to suggest an intricate object or a complicated scene. I will never tire of the thrill of that phenomenon."

Her goal in painting is to help the viewer see the world differently.