



MYTHOLOGIES

DANNY GALIEOTE ARABESQUE POP

Danny Galieote's paintings, which offer a reimagined view of the American dream, unabashedly reference his upbringing in sunny Southern California. He recalls that his family's countrylike property, home to a menagerie of livestock, provided an inspired setting from which to draw and paint. This early and prodigious output was recognized by his family, and by the age of 8, Galieote was attending art classes at a local artist's studio. This initial tutorial experience informed his subsequent artistic training. Rather than enroll in one art school, the budding artist took classes at several schools in the area.

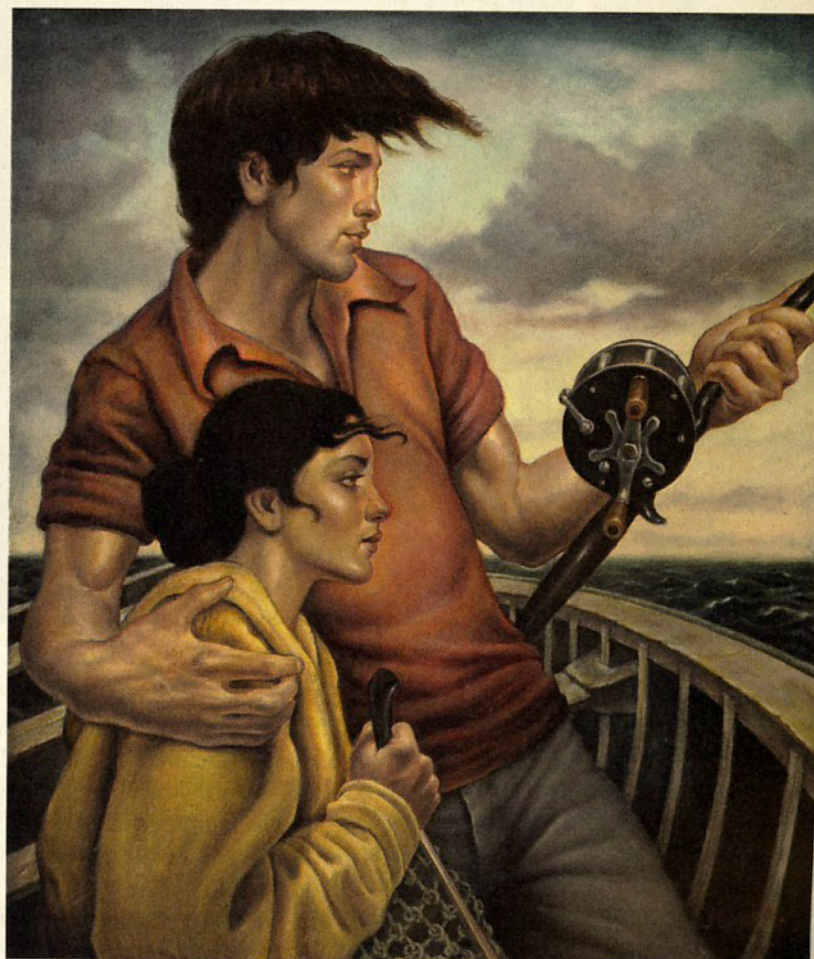
After earning his B.A., Galieote began working at Walt Disney Studios as an animator. "Although I was animating, I was learning how to become a better painter," he says. "The studio had a great learning atmosphere; artists that worked there in the 1990s now say they attended the Disney University School of Art. At Disney I learned to become an acute observer of people. Since I was animating people, I needed to study their movements and attitudes. I had to be able to visualize what the body positions would look like in a series of well-designed drawings that, once filmed in sequence, would



OPPOSITE PAGE
The Gang
2010, oil on
panel,
10 x 18.
Private
collection.

LEFT
Duty Calls
2010, oil,
48 x 36.
Collection
Ignacio
Darbaude and
Jay Jacobson.

BELOW
Teamwork
2011, oil,
28 x 24.
Private
collection.



imply movement and the passage of time. Later on I discovered that the Old Masters had employed this idea—Tintoretto, for example, would compose his multigure works by grouping figures near each other and paint each figure enacting an arrested stage in a gesture sequence such as the pivoting of a torso or the turning of a head.”

This rhythmic movement, which animates Galieote’s complex figural groupings, can be seen in *The Gang* and *Saturday Afternoon in Newport*, which pays due homage to Seurat’s *Bathers at Asnières*. In *The Gang*, Galieote groups his female figures



ABOVE

**Saturday Afternoon
in Newport**

2011, oil, 48 x 48. Courtesy
Michael Hollis Fine Art, South
Pasadena, California.

OPPOSITE PAGE

The Blush

2011, oil, 44 x 20. Courtesy
Arcadia Fine Art, New York,
New York.

into a classical frieze. The subtle shifts in their gestures and the linear patterning of their bathing suits offer both opposing rhythms and flowing lines, which animate the figural grouping and guide the viewer's eye across the canvas.

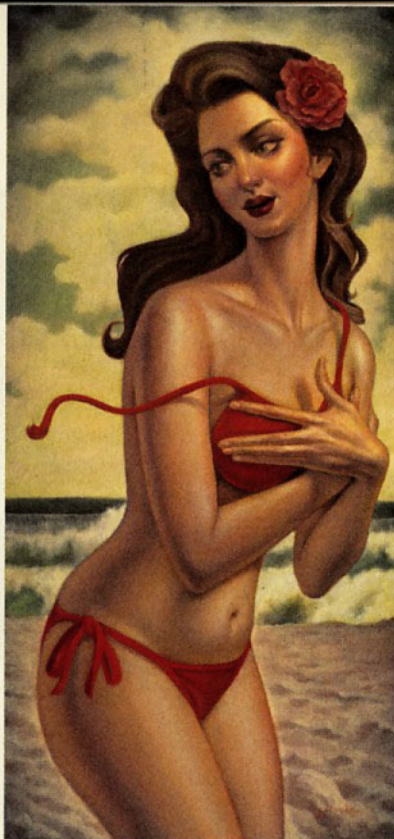
Employing a production motive that dates back to the Florentine masters

Botticelli and Pontormo and to the illustrators Norman Rockwell and J. C. Leyendecker, Galieote sacrifices verisimilitude for the sake of overall compositional design and narrative intent. His figures and spaces are bounded by beautiful lines that form abstract shapes that wedge together like puzzle pieces. His color, although

rich, is used primarily to reinforce this arabesque design pattern.

Galieote's paintings derive from quick pen or charcoal sketches. Ideas for these sketches come from a variety of sources—personal experiences, dreams, antiques, books, magazines, and movies from the past and present. These initial sketches aim to exaggerate shapes, rhythms, and other elements that are not seen in real life or in photographic references. Next, the artist completes a fully realized charcoal study detailing the whole composition, which he grids off and uses as a guide for the painting.

The artist dreads the blank whiteness of an untuned canvas, so he begins painting on a ground stained with a middle tone. He uses an initial lay-in of tone to help keep the painting unified, and then blocks out all major shapes and compositional elements using a darker sepia tone. He establishes tonal passages before introducing full color. In the final stages of the painting, Galieote applies transparent color glazes that further aid in unifying the painting's value



structure. For large works, Galieote uses primed, heavy canvas. He completes smaller works on gessoed wood panels that are sanded for a smoother surface, which allows finer details. The artist uses Gamblin and Old Holland oils and adds Gamsol when needed to thin his paint. He applies paint glazes using Liquin or a mixture of Galkyd and linseed oil.

For more information, visit www.dannygalieote.com.

Written by Michael Gormley, the editorial director of American Artist.

MICHAEL GORMLEY ON DANNY GALIEOTE



“ Danny Galieote's work stood out to me at a group show this summer at Arcadia Gallery, in New York City. His romanticized approach to realism and figurative representation, although it clearly references historical sources, is playfully modern. He offers a pumped-up, populist view of the good life. This view, albeit tinged with a hint of nostalgia, is a heroic and welcome call to live joyfully.”

Danny Galieote: Studio Tips

- Don't depend on one art school to give you everything. Search for art instructors who are teaching what you are interested in learning.
- Focus on rhythm, movement, and structure when rendering the figure. This helps inject feeling and movement into one's paintings. Anatomy is important, but it is secondary to rhythm and movement.
- Use large-bristle flat or filbert brushes when starting a painting. For fine detail work, use softer, smaller rounds.
- Take on a student or offer a workshop. Teaching forces you to organize and articulate all the things you have learned up to the present time. It also feels great to see your students progress.
- Get your ideas down on paper as thumbnails. Thumbnails are a personal shorthand, often very loosely drawn, that help recall a mood, a memory, a specific scene, or a story. As a general practice, I keep a notebook next to my bed to jot down ideas as they come to me when I'm half asleep.