

# Inspired by the Ancient Allure of Europe, Michael Carson's Exhibition Stuck in Italy opens at Bonner David Scottsdale

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(Scottsdale, AZ) Bonner David Galleries Scottsdale presents *Stuck in Italy*, the latest solo exhibition from renown figurative painter Michael Carson, on view February 12–28 in Old Town Scottsdale, celebrating over twenty years of Carson's career and his ongoing dedication to creative exploration and the joy of painting.

For Carson, longevity as an artist depends on keeping the process alive. "If it's not fun," he notes, "it comes across in the work." After two decades of painting, Carson became increasingly aware that repetition and routine could dull the vitality of his art. *Stuck in Italy* emerges from a conscious effort to slow down, step back, and rediscover the sense of play that first drew him to painting.

Much of the inspiration for *Stuck in Italy* traces back to Carson's most recent European travels. Rather than literal depictions, the influence appears through atmosphere and surface—ancient plaster walls, shifting light, and the understated elegance of European architecture. These elements bleed into the paintings as textured grounds, luminous color, and spatial ambiguity, evoking personal memory rather than the place itself.

Carson's approach to painting is intuitive and improvisational. Working on as many as ten canvases at once, he moves from one to another without rigid preplanning, allowing mistakes, revisions, and chance discoveries to remain visible. He likens the process to free jazz—grounded in skill yet open to the unknown.

"You walk up to the canvas with a vague idea and hope for the best," he says.

This looseness is reinforced by Carson's preference for painting in short, focused bursts—often 30 minutes at a time—where natural brushstrokes and painterly gestures emerge without overworking. Leaving imperfections intact preserves the energy of the moment, resulting in work that feels immediate, fresh, and emotionally resonant.

The exhibition will feature approximately fifteen new paintings, primarily figurative works depicting models and musicians, set against abstracted architectural or atmospheric backgrounds. While the subject matter remains familiar, Carson continues to challenge himself by reimagining composition, surface, and pace, keeping the work energized and personal.

"My nondescript surroundings help me create a mood or a story that I am trying to relay through my painting," says Carson. "Inspiration comes from architectural interiors as well as fashion and

my work allows me to explore and explain this side of myself. Seeing how the work evolves, the subtle and the drastic differences, and looking forward to the future is what keeps me painting."

Bonner David Galleries has locations in both New York City and Scottsdale. The Scottsdale location is at 7040 E. Main Street, Scottsdale, AZ 85251. (480) 941-8500, [art@bonnerdavid.com](mailto:art@bonnerdavid.com)