

#artinthetimeofcorona interview with Bob Nugent



This is a one of a series of interviews with our customers to see how they are adapting to the COVID-19 world.

Bob Nugent lives in Healdsburg, CA and has been a customer for over 20 years. Brazil and the Amazon River Basin are the subject and inspiration for his work.

This is his **#artinthetimeofcorona** story.



bobnugentstudio.com

How was Healdsburg and northern California affected by the COVID-19 virus? How have you been affected personally?

The virus is here, but we live outside the small town of Healdsburg among the vines. When I go into town it seems the locals have adapted very well and they are all wearing masks. Most of the fatalities here in wine country have been in senior facilities. Normally there would be many tourists in town, but of course most are not traveling these days, myself included. I am normally in Brazil at this time of year, doing research for my work. I travel a lot during the year and have cancelled four trips this year myself. And we have the fires to contend with again this year. We were lucky to make it through the first round, but there are still two more months to go. Don't let anyone tell you there is no climate change. The whole country is feeling it and will continue to suffer

from it.

Professionally not much has changed for me. We are fortunate to live in the wine country and my studio is at the back of our property. I work everyday, even when I don't feel like painting I go to the studio and clean-up, sweep and look at the work, absorbing it while I am doing other things. I also have a 1947 Chevy Fleetmaster Woodie I am restoring which is a good diversion.

Do you have a daily routine that keeps you grounded these days?

My routine has managed to stay the same. I get up, drink coffee, read two newspapers, and then answer emails. I must have all of that out of the way before I cross the garden to the studio. My assistant Kara comes into her office at 10 am and we discuss the chores for the day. She keeps track of inventories with dealers, correspondence and helps me when I need her for other things. Her office is in the studio, but we are still social distancing. I paint until about 4pm when Kara goes home. It is a routine I have had for many years.

Are you reading, cooking, streaming, or doing any activity that is helping you cope?

I am doing much more reading about the Amazon and keeping up with current articles about the situation there since I cannot be there myself. I have been working with friends and trying to protect the indigenous people throughout the region for the last 35 years. I make paintings about the destruction going on with the strip mining and deforestation. To unwind I cook dinner almost every night. My wife cleans up. It is a good arrangement.

With museums and galleries closed are you seeing a shift to the internet for viewing/selling art? How is this affecting you?

This year I was to have two major solo shows of my work; one in Santa Clara, California at the **Triton Museum of Art** and the other in Brazil at the **Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Sorocaba**. A new publication was produced in conjunction with these planned shows. Both exhibitions have been postponed until next year. In addition, all my dealers are closed so there are no sales. I've never tried selling my work online. I have found that if someone wants a painting with a fairly healthy price tag they want to see it in person, not on a small screen. In my early years I learned to budget my sales over a five year period buying supplies and frames with extra cash, so that when times are lean I can continue to live and work. It has served me well. I now have enough supplies to continue to paint for five years without any sales. It also helps to have a patron or two that continue to support you during these times.

Do you see any positive changes for artists in a post pandemic world?

Artists are always the first to go into a recession and the last to come out. I believe we must just keep working and painting about things that cannot be expressed in words. And when the world gets rid of this virus, people will celebrate with us again.