

# Orange County Virginia MAGAZINE

*Happy Thanksgiving*

October 28–November 24, 2016 • One Copy FREE

## Local Artist Kelly Lonergan Creates



## A Fury Painting Experience

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to New Location....Page 2



Local Organizations Assist in Spirit  
of Thanksgiving...Page 12



The Montpelier Hunt Races  
Saturday, November 5th...Page 9



Kelly Lonergan's *Hypnotica* painting is an oil on canvas, 56 x 71."

# The Rush of Fury Painting

By Julia Travers  
Correspondent

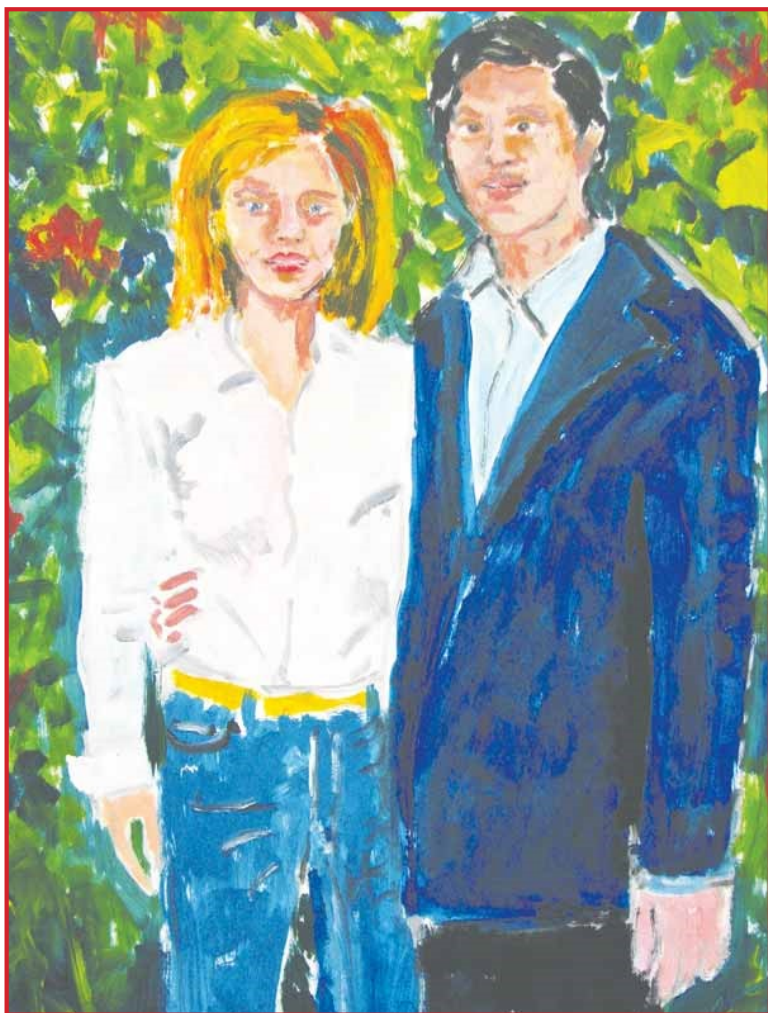
**K**elly Lonergan is a local artist, art teacher, and graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University's MFA program in painting and printmaking. He has taught art at Germanna Community College and Piedmont VA Community College and currently teaches studio art and art history at Woodberry Forest School. Lonergan's e-portfolio artist statement on the Woodberry Forest site explains that in his early works, he "was enthralled by the 'magic' of creating the picture, of being able to leave this world and enter a new one of [his] own making ([woodberry.digication.com](http://woodberry.digication.com))."

Lonergan has exhibited his paintings extensively throughout the state and previously held a studio at The McGuffey Art Center in Charlottesville. Along with creating several large bodies of works, he developed a quick style of painting as

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an art teacher called "fury painting," which he describes in greater detail below. On October 1, a Pop-Up one-night display of Lonergan's own fury paintings were displayed at The Morin Gallery of The Arts Center in Orange.

Lonergan's artist statement also shares that his "interests have always been in the human figure, the psychology of relationships, the absurd, the expressive power of color, in the use of texture to suggest rhythms, the realm of the supernatural, and the meaning of the mark." Here's his reflection on his 1992 piece, "Hypnotica" (oil on canvas, 56 x 71"): "This is part of a series of pictures featuring a man and a woman situated in an urban environment. The turbulence of their relationship is mirrored in the conflagration of the city. The interior gives way to the exterior. In this scene, a woman is casting a spell." Lonergan's rich narrative works and landscapes like



Kelly Lonergan's Hypnotica fury painting of a couple.

"Hypnotica" are full of deep hues, beautiful brushwork, organic figures and familiar symbols from everyday life, magic-realism, and mystery.

In contrast to "Hypnotica," Lonergan came up with the quicker, less developed fury paintings as a means of encouraging his art students to engage fully in a painting experience, even in the limited time frame of an art class. After displaying fury paintings at The Lightwell on East Main St., Lonergan worked with The Arts Center in Orange to put together the October Pop-Up show. In the Pop-Up art opening description, Lonergan explains:

"These paintings evolved in my 40-minute art classes. Forty minutes is not much time for a studio session. Many of my students believed that in order to make a

See Fury Painting Page 6



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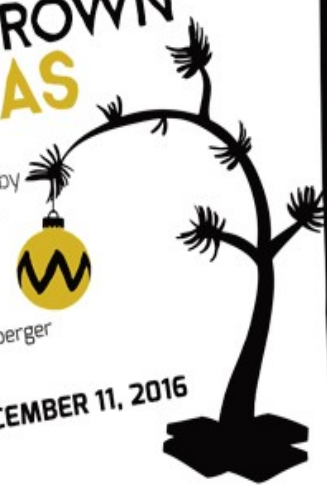
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## Fury Painting from Page 5

good painting, it must take a long time, doing a little bit each class over weeks, with great attention to detail using very tight, precise strokes. In order to teach students that this is not always the case, to alleviate the tedium of extended projects, and to show them that a good painting could actually be done in one class period, I introduced “Brushes of Fury.” In a “fury” painting, we create a painted image on a 24 by 18-inch sheet of paper using acrylic paint. We use photos for sources, usually torn out of magazines and usually of human faces or figures. The time limit is 20 minutes. Within 20 minutes, the entire sheet of paper needs to be covered with paint. Additionally, the end result needs to look as much like the photo as possible. I have created many of these paintings with many different students through the years.”

Loneragan answered some question for me about his fury paintings and other creative pursuits. I asked him to describe how it feels to complete a fury painting.

“Actually completing the painting is just a moment of rest and quick assessment. However, the process of painting one is a rush. It is possible to spend a few minutes in the zone. There is great clarity. There is no place for doubt in a fury painting, so there is also a feeling of confidence.”

I also asked, how does teaching art inspire, complicate, or inform your personal artistic practice? He said that it does all three: “My students inspire me. I experience their creativity and the art they make every day. I marvel at the strange things they come up with and the many different visual forms they create to express their ideas. So I am constantly agitated by these new and different images. Complicated, primarily by the time and energy that teaching takes. Teaching informs my practice [in two ways]: I have to express my ideas clearly so my students can understand; I have to talk about art so that it makes sense to them; this requires me to do a lot of thinking about it. And two, I teach them and my students teach me; in demonstrating a technique, I am always assessing its possibilities every time, I am always going over and over the basics, and there are fresh insights all the time. Also, in their work, the students reveal so many options.”

How does art serve you and help you to live your life?

“I wake up in the morning thinking about art, I go to bed at night thinking about art. Art helps me look at things more closely, it allows me to notice and appreciate lots of little things. So, it makes it possible to like and love lots of things in this world. It preserves wonder. So, each day is full of feeling. When I made my first painting, it felt like magic. I looked at it and couldn't really believe it.”

And finally, here are Lonergan's artistic hopes: “My artistic hopes are being able to make art every day. To continue to do so until my last day. Also, I like to help people through art if I can.”

Loneragan's artistic and teaching talents are a colorful local treasure. The Arts Center in Orange's current exhibition is EQUUS IV: For the Love of Horses, an exhibit on the theme of horses and the people who love them, juried by artist Debby Thomas, which includes paintings, photos, drawings, and leather work, through November 30, 2016.



Kelly Lonergan and his pop up show of fury painted faces.

