

*BMcElhanev*

## **PORTFOLIO**

PLEIN AIR PAINTING CATALOG • SELECTED WORKS



**BRENNEN McELHANEV**

Fine Art | Landscapes | Portraits

## A Brief History of Plein Air Painting



By the mid 1800s, with photography becoming mainstream, many artists used photographic techniques to assist in producing (realistic) paintings.

The *Plein Air* Movement (which was linked to the Impressionist Movement) was in part a reaction against the limited mechanical nature of images produced by the camera. Also, the Impressionists had a particular fascination with color (which photography was not yet able to reproduce.)

With a bent toward romanticism, Impressionist artists who painted *en plein air* sought to put the artist (back) in contact with Nature through direct observation. *Plein air* painting gained popularity during late 1800s and early 1900s with hot-spots in Europe and the United States (with both East Coast and West Coast schools.)

In contrast to studio paintings, *plein air* paintings tend to be more direct and vibrant, with energetic brush strokes. The changing light and scenery often results in artwork that is gestural and impressionistic.

My goal in my artwork is to create and convey a sense of place, an impression or an essential experience of the landscape. In my work I value draftsmanship, spontaneity and keen observation of scenes that capture my attention and imagination. Hopefully you will connect with them too.

Thank you for joining me on this adventure.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "BMcElhaneey". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized, with a mix of uppercase and lowercase letters.



**Warren Wilson Farms**  
Acrylic on Canvas  
11 x 14 inches

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**Bearwallow Vista**  
Acrylic on Canvas  
12 x 24 inches

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**Circa 1910**  
Acrylic on Canvas  
16 x 12 inches

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**Path at French Broad River Park**  
Acrylic on Canvas  
11 x 14 inches

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**Jackson Building**  
Acrylic on Canvas  
16 x 12 inches

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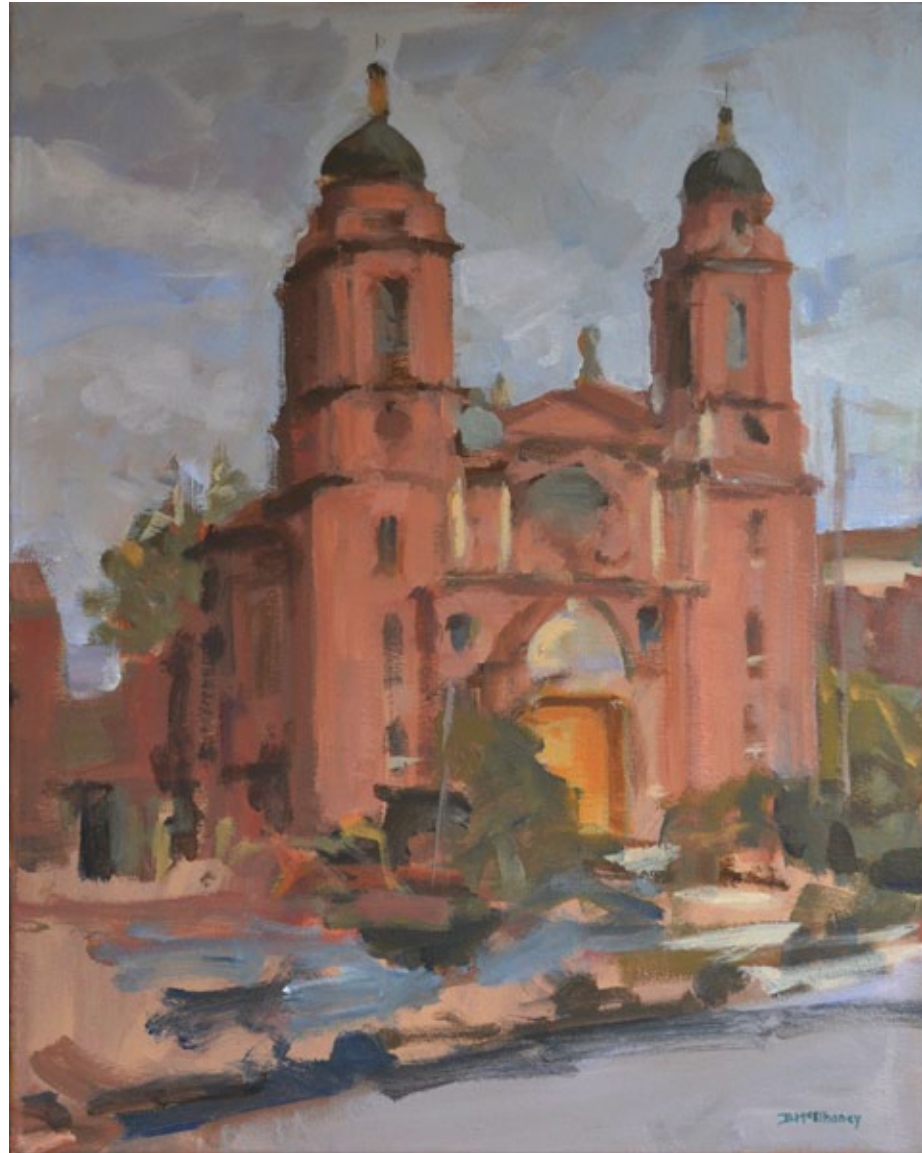


**French Broad River Park**  
Acrylic on Canvas  
12 x 16 inches

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**Basilica St. Lawrence**  
Acrylic on Canvas  
16 x 20 inches

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**Goat Barn at Highland Lake**  
Acrylic on Canvas  
12 x 16 inches

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**Highland Lake**  
Acrylic on Canvas  
12 x 16 inches

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**Craggy Overlook**  
Acrylic on Canvas  
11 x 14 inches

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**Nolichucky River Gorge**  
Acrylic on Canvas  
11 x 14 inches

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**Across The River**  
Acrylic on Canvas  
16 x 20 inches

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**Parkway Overlook**  
Acrylic on Canvas  
16 x 20 inches

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## Seeing Purposefully An Artist Statement



Brennen McElhane, *Singing Creek Trail*  
Acrylic on canvas, 19 x 24 in.



Brennen McElhane, *Blue Harbor*  
Acrylic on canvas, 18 x 14 in.

My paintings are a personal record, a visual journal of scenes that have caught my eye and held my attention. My goal is to document the beauty that I see in the landscape, and create a record of my impression for others (and myself) to enjoy.

My artistic process relies heavily on observation — that is to say I trust my eyes to "tell" me what to put on the canvas, how to paint it, what is important, and what is not.

For me, painting is an exercise in *active seeing*. I strive to observe carefully and render accurately. I may *accentuate* color relationships, value variations, or contours that I find compelling, but typically I do not "make things up."

Recurring subject matter in my landscapes are mountains, trees, rivers and lakes, cityscapes and architecture. But even more important than the physical scenery, is the light that reveals it. There are wonderful, and sometimes unexpected things that happen when light reflects off of one surface and onto another. I keep a lookout for surprising lighting effects.

While painting, I try to keep in mind that often times one *thinks* that one see something, but in truth does not. Seeing accurately requires focused attention, careful observation, notation, comparison, and reassessment. That essentially is my painting process.

My work, in both my subject matter and color palette, is optimistic, reflecting a sense of contentment with my home in Western North Carolina and my appreciation of the breathtaking scenery of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

*BMcElhane*

## Biography



**email** ► [gallery1@mac.com](mailto:gallery1@mac.com)

**Call** ► (828) 684-3448

**Visit** ► [BMcElhaney.com](http://BMcElhaney.com)

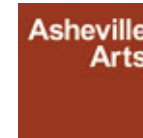
Artist, Brennen McElhaney was born in 1968 in Santa Barbara, California. He studied illustration at the Rhode Island School of Design and graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1990.

Brennen worked as a graphic illustrator for Big Dog Sportswear for 11 years and served a term on the board of directors of the Santa Barbara Art Association. During that time he had one-man art shows at a number of art galleries in Santa Barbara and the Central Coast.

In 2005, Brennen and his family, relocated from California to Asheville, North Carolina. Brennen works as a freelance illustrator and art director, his main client being Oodles World, a family entertainment company, based in Asheville. Other clients include Nike, Kinkos/FedEx, University of Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Royal Caribbean Cruiselines and City Commerce Bank.

Brennen is a signature member and president of the Western North Carolina *Plein Air* Painters an outdoor painting club. He is also a strong advocate of the arts in the Asheville creative community.

*Featured in*



### BRENNEN McELHANEY

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Brennen McElhaney, *Carriage Classic*  
Acrylic on paper, 8.75 x 12.25 in.



Brennen McElhaney, *Portrait of Dan*  
Oil on Canvas, 18 x 14 in.

## Commissions

I'd love to help you celebrate important things in your life! Maybe there is a scene that holds special meaning for you. And a commissioned landscape would be just the thing. Commissioning a painting is a straight forward process that sets the stage for creating exactly the painting you want for your collection.

## Portraits

There's nothing quite like a painted portrait. It's unique. It's personal. It's honoring. I absolutely love painting portraits and I would be delighted to help celebrate your family member or special person by painting his (or her) portrait.

## To Purchase

Buying art is fabulously easy! Choose your favorite and give me a call! Cash, check or Paypal are accepted. Gift certificates are also available and can be applied to your purchase including commissions, portraits and paintings in inventory.

**email** ► [gallery1@mac.com](mailto:gallery1@mac.com)

**Call** ► (828) 684-3448

**Visit** ► [BMcElhaney.com](http://BMcElhaney.com)

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Painting on location at the Nolichucky River  
Nantahala Outdoor Center, Erwin, TN



Painting on location at Bearwallow Mountain  
Gerton, NC

## An Invitation to Join my “Collector’s Circle”

If you haven’t already, I’d like to invite you to subscribe to my art newsletter (what I call my “Collector’s Circle.”) It’s a free newsletter for people, like you, who appreciate art.

You’ll get a behind-the-scenes view into my art world and enjoy VIP access to my journey.

Here’s what you can expect:

- Images of New Paintings
- Pages from my sketchbook
- Insights on Art, Framing, Display etc.
- Travel Journals & Notes
- Invitations to art shows and events
- Access to me (Have a question? Just ‘Reply’ to any email.)
- Behind-The-Scenes tour of my art studio
- Photos from painting trips
- Techniques, tips and notes on my creative process
- Special offers (before anyone else!)
- Invitations to Seminars and Workshops
- And free gifts (Like this *Plein Air* Portfolio!)

**Join my “Collector’s Circle” ► <http://bmc.me/art/vip>**

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