

Next to our kitchen sink sits a blue glass vase – that deep cobalt blue that we all know. Every time I do the dishes, I find myself gazing into it and admiring the beautiful blue world that is inside. I do the same with Ellen Hutchinson’s paintings. Within each of Ellen’s paintings is a world of shape and contour so precise and closely observed that I can’t help but stop and marvel. It isn’t the technical wizardry of her paintings that catches me (although her powers are self-evident in each and every work), it is the sensitivity and loving fascination that she brings to each object that I appreciate. She isn’t interested in “fooling the eye”. She is more interested in showing us the beautifully delicate world she has discovered. This separates her from all the realist painters whose work is about achieving “effects”. She is more closely aligned with the great American still life tradition of Raphaelle Peale and John Frederick Peto. There are no cheap tricks in these paintings, only true artistry, and interpretive skill.

This doesn’t fully explain it, though. The important thing is that Ellen’s paintings make me stop and think about many things. Not the tiny bits and pieces of the busy day just past, but the exact opposite. Ellen’s paintings help, even provoke me, to look harder, deeper, and simply appreciate the worlds within.

Randall Exon

The subjects of Ellen Hutchinson’s pictures are mostly ordinary objects depicted with extraordinary clarity and intensity. Ellen loves to show the light as it bounces off of things and, with some sort of sorcery, transmits the magic of the situations she paints. But most of all, she arrives at her ultimate goal – the sharing with her audience an unrestrained shameless sense of beauty.

Jack Beal

Ellen Hutchinson’s still-life paintings are relentlessly affirmative, they make ordinary events such as writing a letter seem sacramental. They do so by restating in contemporary language the still life of abundance, which Dutch painters perfected in the 17th century.

Edward Sozanski

Ellen Hutchinson’s paintings have always been very beautifully and pleasingly rendered, but what is most intriguing and unique about them is her ambitious construction and juxtaposition of the subject matter that conveys a strong spatial rhythm and flow, and hints at a mysterious narrative.

Sondra Freckelton

Ellen Hutchinson does truly wonderful things with a formula that’s almost as old as painting itself. Hers is an effortless-seeming talent.

Andrew Mangravite

Even though Ellen Hutchinson’s still-lives are conventional, they have a certain brilliance that sets them apart.

Charlotte Observer