

Essential Art:  
Work by Blue Mountain Gallery Artists during the Pandemic

June – October 2020

[www.bluemoutaingallery.org](http://www.bluemoutaingallery.org)

## Essential Art Spotlight

### Richard Mills – Carrying on

My wife and I are so fortunate to be away in the country. Daily natural rhythms reassure us with a normalcy, even discounting for strange weather. We carry on, always aware of the crushing reality affecting everyone, everywhere. And the pain and sacrifice of so many souls. And the uncertain future. I'm finding it very difficult to focus on painting. Gardening and spring are my immediate hope. I read endless articles and emails. I listen to a lot of music and watch TV.

I am steadied by the strong moral presence of Michael Kitchen in Foyle's War. Not to mention Andrew Cuomo. I weep watching Paul Simon playing Graceland to the packed, ecstatic dancing audience at Hyde Park on YouTube, the pain and intimacy of Nina Simone singing Mississippi Goddam. Her face, her nostrils and sweat. The closeness of musicians. I never missed people so much.

At 7PM, I broadcast music outside as thanks and offering: Pete Seeger singing We Shall Overcome, Luciano Pavarotti singing Ave Maria and Gloria Gaynor's I will Survive. I had been indoors all winter painting. December, January, February. Light flowing indoors with the snow reflected light outdoors, most always framed by doors or windows.

*Snow/March 4 News. 24" x 24" oil on canvas*

The first week of March, snow coming down outside in the left third of the piece, looking down a hallway to where a TV catches banner headlines.



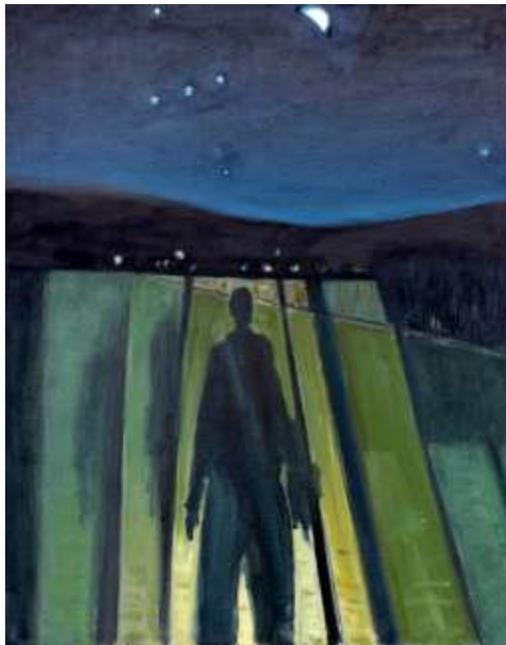
*Vessel.* 16x16 Oil on raw canvas

The next week, a low point: the same view to the left, snow melted, an old milk canister looking to me like an urn.



*Night* 30" x 24" oil on canvas

Then night time, light - studio lights - now flowing outward, my shadow cast on the meadow, lights of the village, Orion above with a half Moon, Venus in the west (unfinished).



There may be a series of Facetime portraits in the works.  
I can no longer say anything for certain. Probably never should have.

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