



(Fig. 8) *Wagon Growth*, 2010, oil on canvas with collage, 40 x 32 inches

An adjunct faculty member at Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle, Washington, Patrick LoCicero may be best known for paintings such as *Wagon Growth* (fig. 8), which feature a centralized iconic image (in this case a strong reference to childhood) surrounded by images from the more distant past. These elements typically allude to travel, as the artist states:

"My paintings refer to the idea of traveling as a metaphor for multiple kinds of passage—literally, symbolically, and culturally. I am fascinated by the idea of physically moving from one place to another as well as the concept of moving through memories and associations from one time period to another. The contrasts that are set up between the collaged surfaces and the painted image are as interesting to me as the play between the actual shallow space and the implied deep space. I am always striving for a close material and conceptual relationship between the painted and collaged surfaces of my pieces."



In his most recent works, LoCicero uses exotic and/or extinct birds as a central image. Though the birds are not in flight, they connote the ability to travel freely. The collaged elements serve as a catalog of distant times and places that his central messenger (perhaps a surrogate for self, or an archetypal symbol) may have witnessed or desires to witness. His work is less about social satire than it is about social anthropology or archeology. His “digs” consist of mining a vast array of printed images, expertly cutting away extraneous detail, and sorting each image into a storage container for future use—not knowing at the time what purpose it might serve. In the age of Photoshop, LoCicero prefers hand-manipulation of collage elements combined with painting to construct his images. The shift between the implied and real space is a complex puzzle loaded with visual tension that leaves the viewer wondering which layer precedes the other, while navigating the pictorial relationships to understand his narrative.

Returning to other commonalities present in our exhibiting artists’ work, LoCicero’s *Graduates* (fig. 9) references stereotypical photographic portraits from a bygone age. Unlike Lynn Criswell who uses childhood pictures, Patrick elects adults as subjects for his narrative. In this example, the central figure is a rather ordinary goose carrying an assortment of avian kin on its back, sporting a fedora (a trademark of much of the artist’s work—recalling the Surrealist René Magritte—and signifying the goose’s gender), and donning a set of wheels. The latter element



(Fig. 9) *Graduates*, 2010, oil on canvas with collage, 40 x 32 inches

reinforces the theme of travel and suggests evolution. Each element (including the row of tobacco bands) combines to convey a puzzling personal message. In



the absence of a play-by-play, blow-by-blow, a plus b equals c interpretation, the ambiguity of the artist's references allows the viewer to explore his intuitive response to the imagery, informed by his own memories and experiences. These visual exercises remind us of our childhood when we sought to find answers to seemingly difficult questions. Why is the sky blue? Why does the goose sport wheels? Why is the grass green? Why is the goose carrying other birds on its back? Why do geese fly in a vee? Why are portraits of people included in the background? Why, why, why? And like an exasperated parent, the artist might simply answer: because. This isn't to suggest that contemporary artists are impertinent; rather, that they desire the viewer to explore the work with the same joyfulness with which it was created. LoCicero's work provides considerable opportunities for personal discovery and encouragement for the inquisitive viewer to seek out more specific knowledge about his historic visual references, in order to clarify specific intent.

Patrick LoCicero earned his Master of Fine Arts degree in Art from the San Francisco Art Institute, and a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree from Ohio State University, Columbus. He exhibits widely in the United States and is a recipient of the Maryland State Arts Award. His work is represented in numerous private and public collections. In addition to his studio work, LoCicero is an adjunct faculty member at Cornish College of the Arts, Seattle, Washington.



(Fig. 10) *Art History*, 2012, oil on canvas with collage, 40 x 32 inches