

CHRIS COOPER
Greenfield, MA 01301

www.ccooper.org
413-824-6081
chris@ccooper.org

ARTIST STATEMENT

I paint objectively because it clearly establishes a relationship between the viewer and artist. It is culturally understood that what is painted is what the artist saw, so the viewer is in essence seeing through the eyes of the artist. This relationship is even more pronounced when considering a self-portrait because unlike most objective paintings, which are less explicit about the viewer “seeing through the eyes of the artist”, the identity of the viewer is clearly defined as that of the artist. I try to have fun with this identity game by setting up different scenarios for who’s who for the viewer. Sometimes I provide the familiar view of seeing through my eyes when it is clear the image is made from my literal point of view (looking in a mirror, etc). But, I frequently deprive the viewer of this familiar way of seeing by making my self-portraits from as different a point of view, or rather perspective, than my own, such as being dead, obviously not aware of being seen, etc. To create this other perspective, I use a camera which provides an anonymous view. Through the camera’s anonymity, the viewer can easily see from their own perspective or at least not from mine. However, the same holds true for me the artist. Unlike conventional self-portraiture, where the artist experiences/explores themselves as themselves, I get to do it from the perspective of someone or something else.