

# Museum STUDIOS

*Museum Studios is home to a selection of the Bay Area's best artists. If you need a more specific reason to explore its many studios and meet its many creative minds, here are three exciting artists whose work is not to be missed.*



## Neil Murphy *A Map of the Mind*

The first thing that Neil Murphy said in regards to being interviewed was both quotable, and an inadvertent directive in how to appreciate his art: “I’ll just ramble and you can pick stuff out and say, ‘that’s intriguing.’”

Murphy uses the complexity of mixed media – usually digital and traditional paint techniques – to explore a lifelong fascination.

“I’ve always had an interest in technology and science and the arts, and the part of the world that fascinates me the most is where those all come together,” Murphy said. “So a lot of my work not only has different technologies involved in it but it is also frequently about science topics.”

At first glance his portfolio might appear to be an atlas, or an

instruction manual for the human brain. His style often appears to be topographical, with minute details, lines and paths populating many layers of complex textures and seemingly abstract shapes. In many cases he is borrowing from the cartography handbook, but in doing so he creates thoughtful musings on a vast and complicated subject matter.

Every one of Murphy’s pieces starts with a painting, and then he begins to add to it in a multitude of ways: digitally, traditionally, or with an installation element like a light box. All of these techniques are used to make curious maps that can guide viewers along on a visual choose-your-own-adventure, or allow one to simply get lost in the landscape. The technique of printing and then adding on also allows one a chance to follow Murphy’s journey from conception

to completion and visit all of the stops along the way, seeing where he felt an image was complete in and of itself, and where that led him next.

In this way, Murphy’s work is a lot like a computer, or a human mind. Each part, layer, or element works on an individual level, but when working in conjunction they unlock an infinite number of potential experiences.

Murphy’s work takes on the task of plotting out sprawling maps of these experiences that the viewer can ramble through, and along the way they find so many reasons to stop and say, “that’s intriguing.”

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**Studio #29**

