



Alan Powell

Artist Statement

Metaphysics, mathematics, and music are my building blocks. Add an intense fondness of color and a deep-seated need to make marks = my art.

By 1996, when my painting instructor told me to “just keep painting,” I had already had three petite seizures and one grand mal.

Who would think that something could not only interrupt my art making, but completely stop it ... and nearly kill me?! I continued to paint. On a New York to Los Angeles flight in 2012, I had a seizure during the flight. The pilot turned the plane around landed in Denver where I spent several weeks getting back to “normal.” In LA, while visiting my mom, she fell and went to the hospital. I went to visit her and I had a seizure at the entrance to the facility. Those were the first doctors to tell me I had a severe seizure disorder.

I was then hospitalized in Los Angeles and rehabbed in a skilled nursing facility. From 2013-2019 I was NOT actually painting! Sometimes, merely standing in front of canvas holding a brush...it made no difference whether there was any paint on it. When there was, the goal was to literally paint my way out of a bag I didn't even know I was in. I knew, my wife knew. Art friends and casual acquaintances all knew there was something very wrong with that picture. I should have been in the studio painting.

New mixtures of anti-seizure medications (cocktails) were tried out, but my type of epilepsy always found ways around them. I had over 50 seizures, all grand mal. During this period, I was airlifted multiple times to hospitals in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. One flight took me to a hospital in Palm Springs. A doctor there said, “you are one resilient critter! There is someone you need to see.” He referred me to the University of California Irvine Comprehensive Epilepsy Center. The neurologist and the neurosurgeon suggested brain surgery, as in “your next seizure may be your last.” I looked at my wife and the doctor and said “let's do it. If this helps one other person, it's totally worth it.” November 20, 2025, will be five years without a seizure. I just keep painting!

As Carolyn Schlam says in Her latest Book ‘More Joy of Art’ 2025 ...
“Alan Powell gives you The Stage ... You get to Write the Play”