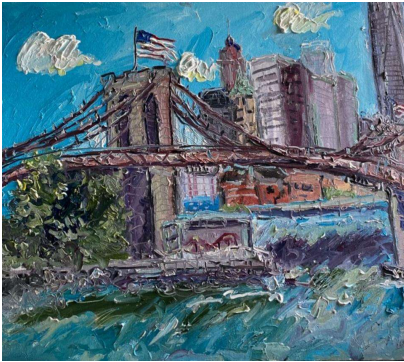


Painting The Town During A Pandemic In New York City

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Senior Contributor



Artist Chris Kappmeier's "Brooklyn Bridge"
ART BY CHRIS KAPPMEIER

New York City brings out the worst in artist Chris Kappmeier. It conjures flashbacks of his former truck delivery job and collisions with hostile customers, two taxi cabs, and an ice-cream truck. So you could imagine the stress Manhattan gives him during a pandemic.



Artist Chris Kappmeier paints the Brooklyn Bridge
SEAN GARDNER

Ironically, the Big Apple's sparse streets, parks, and unobstructed architectural views cleared his conscience, inspiring his best work artistically, via Chris Kappmeier Studio. Kappmeier, who calls himself a post impressionist-expressionist, happily paints the town these days, with camera, easel and brushes in hand. Just don't ask him to drive.



Kappmeier's New York architecture series was inspired by city streets and "dead-end job" he quit to pursue his dream career as an artist.

ART BY CHRIS KAPPMEIER

He now rides shotgun, the best view to see, photograph, paint and frame Manhattan's unique architectural story—including Radio City Music Hall, Times Square, taxis, even crosswalks expressed in his painting "Block the Box", a city intersection violation with which he's quite familiar. Perspective is the only positive Kappmeier took from that "dead-end job." Turn's out, perspective is all he needs.



"Blocking the Box" shows a Manhattan intersection blocked by a truck (much like the one Kappmeier used to drive).

ART BY CHRIS KAPPMEIER

"I was miserable, getting up at 4 a.m., arguing with accounts, sitting in traffic every day," Kappmeier recalls in a New Jersey accent as thick as his brush strokes. "I just started snapping pictures through that big truck window. You could never get these shots walking around, only sitting in

traffic. Then I quit and started painting what I saw."



Kappmeier's inspiration is Dutch post-impressionist Vincent van Gogh.

ART BY CHRIS KAPPMEIER

Kappmeier's angst is best healed through expressive art. His hero, Vincent van Gogh, was notoriously feisty too. Like the Dutch post-impressionist, Kappmeier keeps it real in overalls (his tongue as sharp as his eye), inspired by his late brother Scott who encouraged him to chase this dream (like Theo did for Vincent).



Chris Kappmeier wears his heart on his neck and sleeve. Art is his life.

RICHARD ASHTON III PHOTOGRAPHY

Art is Kappmeier's life now, certified by his heavy body ink—an "Art Life" neck tattoo, an American eagle-American flag 9/11 tribute, and a forearm VanGogh portrait that says:

“I do not ever wish to suppress suffering because often it is that which makes the artists express themselves most forcibly.”



Chris Kappmeier’s art passion extends to his body and soul.
SEAN GARDNER

His Rasta dreadlocks and mohawk days long gone, Kappmeier now expresses himself most forcibly with punchlines and F-bombs. No joke is off limits, even how suicide might “inflate the value” of his vast portfolio like van Gogh. He’s an enigma—ranting like Tony Soprano while painting (and obsessing over) mixed-media ballerinas during Shark Week. None of these quirks undermines his talent.



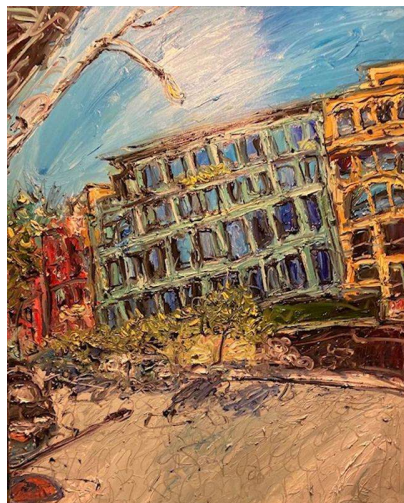
Kappmeier’s ballerina series was inspired by a show called “Bunheads.”
ART BY CHRIS KAPPEMEIER

Kappmeier’s *Iconic New York* architecture series is a commentary on today’s big city society, pandemic and all. First in the series is Ian Schrager’s 40 Bond Street, an 11-story residential luxury building in NoHo designed by

Handel Architects and Herzog & de Meuron. Kappmeier’s “40 Bond Street” spotlights the green-bottle glass façade to represent NYC’s modern architecture boom beautified by art installations.



Ian Schrager’s 40 Bond street apartment building designed by Herzog & De Meuron and Handel Architects (Michael Jacobs/Art in All of Us/Corbis via Getty Images)
CORBIS VIA GETTY IMAGES



Kappmeier’s abstract “40 Bond Street” portrays Ian Schrager’s 11-story building (with green-glass façade) designed by Handel Architects and Herzog & de Meuron.
ART BY CHRIS KAPPEMEIER

“I love the structure of this building,” says Kappmeier. “I like the twisted iron fence in front. The green is actually steel, but it looks like a copper patina and the blue sky reflects off the mirrored glass. This painting is a little abstract with a

unique perspective, but I like it that way.”



Cartier’s historic Fifth Avenue townhouse (built in 1905) was acquired by Pierre Cartier for a \$1 million double-strand pearl necklace, plus \$100. (Robert Alexander/Getty Images)
GETTY IMAGES



Kappmeier’s “Maison Cartier” painting represents Fifth Avenue luxury, courtesy of the jeweler’s Midtown townhouse store
ART BY CHRIS KAPPEMEIER

Kappmeier’s “Maison Cartier” painting highlights the iconic jeweler’s Midtown townhouse, its brilliant red awnings as symbols of exclusive luxury—a Fifth Avenue bulwark from the chain-store invasion. His “Barney’s Going Out Of Business”

canvas is a retail gut punch, a Manhattan institution bidding farewell—a modern casualty of the Amazon-COVID-19 era. Kappmeier plans a sad sequel with Lord & Taylor, Manhattan’s first department store which also announced its demise after nearly 200 years.



Exterior facade of Barneys New York flagship clothing store, prior to closing. (Ben Hider/Getty Images) GETTY IMAGES

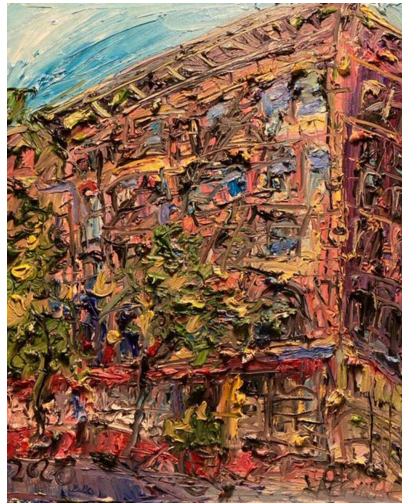


"Barneys Going Out of Business" documents the Manhattan retailer saying goodbye. ART BY CHRIS KAPPMEIER

Between 1863 and 2011, New York’s tenement buildings housed an estimated 15,000 people from 20-plus nations. "Tenement Museum" is Kappmeier’s ode to New York City’s immigration history and closed museums.



The Tenement Museum housed 15,000 immigrants from 20-plus nations between 1863 and 2011. (Prisma Bildagentur/Universal Images Group via Getty Images) UNIVERSAL IMAGES GROUP VIA GETTY IMAGES

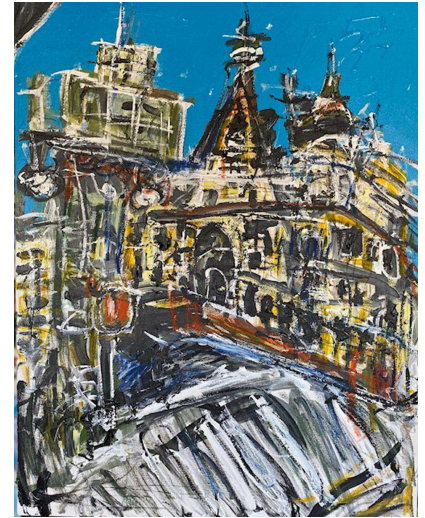


"Tenement Museum" is an abstract tribute to pandemic-closed museums and New York’s rich immigration history. ART BY CHRIS KAPPMEIER

Not necessarily Manhattan’s uptown patron palaces but lesser-known museums nationwide affected by the pandemic that Kappmeier can assist or save via a charity event or auction partnership.



The Dakota is a prestigious Manhattan cooperative apartment building where The Beatles’ John Lennon was assassinated 40 years ago on Manhattan’s Upper West Side. FLICKRVISION

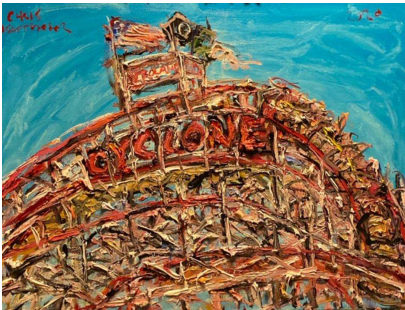


This abstract painting of The Dakota, a landmark Renaissance Revival building, honors New York’s grand architecture ART BY CHRIS KAPPMEIER

"The Dakota," a landmark Renaissance Revival building where The Beatles’ John Lennon lived and died, is a tribute to New York’s grandest architecture, which Kappmeier prefers over the 21st century modern glass tower trend. "I like the old stuff," he says while touching up a tutu on a ballerina painting.



The iconic Coney Island Cyclone in Brooklyn, New York was closed this summer due to the COVID pandemic. (Adam Rountree/Getty Images) GETTY IMAGES



Coney Island's famous Cyclone rollercoaster
ART BY CHRIS KAPPEMEIER

Kappmeier's Coney Island amusement park series represents Brooklyn's lost summer, featuring "The Cyclone" rollercoaster, "Lynn's Trapeze" aerial swing, "The Wonder Wheel" (all closed during the pandemic) as well as "Nathan's Famous Hotdog Stand," which still hosted its annual July 4th Hot Dog Eating Contest.



Wonder Wheel, Coney Island. (Education Images/Universal Images Group via Getty Images) UNIVERSAL IMAGES GROUP VIA GETTY IMAGES



Kappmeier's "Wonder Wheel" is part of a Coney Island amusement park series.
PAINTING BY CHRIS KAPPEMEIER

He honors the Wonder Wheel's 100th anniversary with "Day Wonder Wheel" in oil, and a mixed-media "Night Wonder Wheel." The New York landmark series concludes with the "Brooklyn Bridge," painted from a park he virtually enjoyed all to himself.



Kappmeier celebrates the 100th anniversary of Coney Island's iconic ferris wheel with "Day Wonder Wheel" in oil, and a mixed-media "Night Wonder Wheel."
PAINTING BY CHRIS KAPPEMEIER



"Nathan's Famous Hotdog Stand," which hosts the annual July 4th Hot Dog Eating Contest.
ART BY CHRIS KAPPEMEIER

"There's nobody on the streets," Kappmeier says of New York. "I wish it was like this all the time."



The aerial swing at Coney Island has been shuttered this summer due to COVID-19.
FLICKR VISION



"Lynn's Trapeze" aerial swing at Coney Island.
PAINTING BY CHRIS KAPPEMEIER

Indoors, Kappmeier creates in his kitchen, crammed with canvases where pots and pans should be. Why not? Painting is his meal ticket. Blank canvases (up to 30" x 40") and finished paintings priced from \$2,000 to \$10,000 fill virtually every inch of his one-bedroom apartment. A Madame Tussaud's photo of

Kappmeier standing with van Gogh and Picasso sits on a shelf.



Kappmeier is a prolific painter of cherry blossoms
PAINTING BY CHRIS KAPPMEIER

The artist paints on a whim—cherry blossoms in spring, architecture in summer, mixed media sharks in August, and those damn ballerinas while binge-watching the show *Bunheads* (yes, his kitchen has a TV too). Infatuated with their strength, movement and grace, this series distracted him for weeks. His “Blue Ballerina” is a standout in the 20-piece dance series.



“Blue Ballerina” stands out in the ballerina dancer series by Chris Kappmeier.
PAINTING BY CHRIS KAPPMEIER



“Backstage Ballerinas” is part of the 20-piece ballerina series that Kappmeier slaved over for weeks. Only Shark Week devoured his obsession.
ART BY CHRIS KAPPMEIER

Shark Week inspired an abstract painting of Mike Tyson facing his shark fears while wearing a goofy flotation device. Kappmeier also painted Kobe Bryant to celebrate the late NBA legend’s 42nd birthday recently.



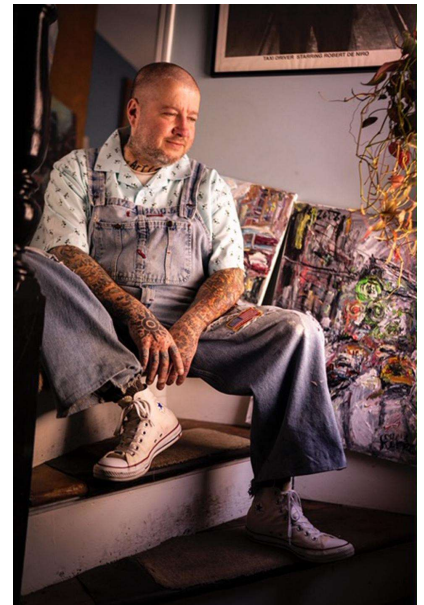
Kappmeier created this mixed-media shark in his kitchen studio during Shark Week.
ART BY CHRIS KAPPMEIER

As Labor Day approaches, he launched an End-of-Summer beach series highlighting New Jersey and New York beaches, including Cape May and The Hamptons. Kappmeier’s summer was very productive. He may not accept autumn cordially.



Chris Kappmeier’s “Lifeguards on Duty” features Atlantic Avenue Beach in East Hampton, a heavy-oil painting that’s part of his End-of-Summer beach series.
CHRIS KAPPMEIER

Trained at Newark School of Fine Industrial Art and a landscape painting trip to Sicily, Kappmeier honed his craft on Hoboken, New Jersey streets. There, he painted avenue scenes, parks, brownstones, cherry blossoms, and restaurants—and sold them from a gallery frame shop.



Chris Kappmeier’s apartment overflows with finished paintings and canvases.
RICHARD ASHTON III PHOTOGRAPHY

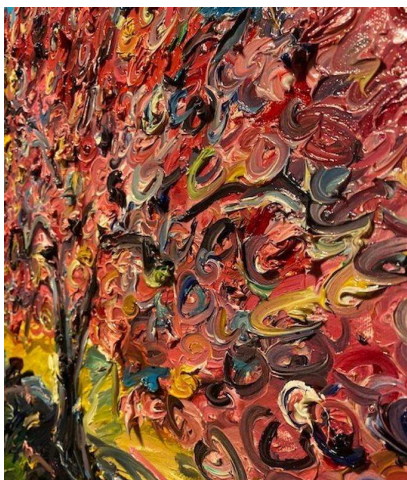
He’s sold nearly 1,500 paintings and exhibited at Morristown Art Museum, technically making him more successful than his idol van Gogh, who only sold one painting in his lifetime. The prolific artist “paints like an animal,” a French museum curator once told him. “People

always ask me, ‘How long did it take you to paint that?’ says the 53-year old. “I respond, ‘53 years and four hours.’ I paint fast.”



Cherry blossoms signal Kappmeier’s spring awakening, as one of his favorite subjects to paint

ART BY CHRIS KAPPMEIER



Kappmeier’s vivid colors and impasto technique erupt oils from the canvas like oozing lava.

ART BY CHRIS KAPPMEIER

Kappmeier’s swirling strokes, vivid colors, and impasto shapes erupt from the canvas like oozing lava (some globs take up to a year to fully dry). His technique relies on heavy oils a la van Gogh, adding volume and character—just like his salty language and opinions. The farther back you stand, the clearer his art (and soul) is conveyed.



An inspired Kappmeier paints in Brooklyn Bridge Park, with a sign of the times in his front pocket.

SEAN GARDNER

“I like the colors, the vibrancy and the mismatched perspective,” says Kappmeier. “I can appreciate the technical part, but with me it’s more about a feeling. Even with music, I can appreciate someone’s perfectly trained voice but I like raw music where a singer just may be screaming. The emotion is what hits me.”



Chris Kappmeier honed his skills painting cherry blossoms, Hoboken streetscapes and Sicily landscapes.

RICHARD ASHTON III PHOTOGRAPHY

Kappmeier sees the world in black and white, the way it is and the way it should be. That view has left dead-end jobs, dreadlocks and an ice cream truck in his wake. Yet he still composes his life, hopes and dreams in full color (brushing his vibrant personality onto canvas). Just like

van Gogh—but hopefully with a happier ending.

EDITORS’ PICK | Aug 30, 2020