



TICKET TO RIDE™ - "Nine Paintings, Nine Lives, One Ticket to Ride..."

Exhibition

A new thematic painting series has been launched by American artist Michael Bell (b. 1971). The first three paintings of nine in the series were debuted for the public in celebration of the completion of this monumental series on April 18, 2008 at a star-studded launch party thrown for Bell by Noel Ashman at his New York City celebrity hotspot, *The Plumm*.

Bell is best known for tapping into America's love affair with Gangsters in Hollywood - with an infamous painting clientele list that includes numerous actors from *The Sopranos*, *CSI: Miami*, *Law & Order*, *Brotherhood* and from famous Gangster films such as *Goodfellas* and *A Bronx Tale*.

Ticket to Ride lives up to its thrilling title, and Bell continues with his gangster-genre painting traditions in this new series. In a literary and cinematic sense, with a cinematographer's eye for suspenseful scenes, this narrative painting series boasts a unique mix of painting skills and easily accessible metropolitan imagery on 60" X 60" canvases.

Artist's Statement

"Painting, for me, is a dynamic process of self-exploration and a constructive way to give form and meaningful expression to an internal experience. I take on a philosophical approach to the art-making process, investigating problems on a personal and intuitive level. It's the journey that fuels my mind, informs me, helps raise new questions, and gives my work resonance. I'm always concerned with the interconnections between my works and how they are presented; therefore I present my *TICKET TO RIDE* paintings together in a particular order within a thematic series.

TICKET TO RIDE taps into America's love affair with Gangsters and explores a metaphorical "ride" through a sequence of images that have murderous implications. The metropolitan landscapes bring a sense of decadence and iconic theatricality to suspenseful scenes, while working with objects as metaphors extend meaning deep within this series on a psychological level. The final product becomes a passionate reflection of all that was revealed to me about my own Ticket to Ride during intense moments of personal clarity. Get on board, and enjoy the ride." – **Michael Bell**

TICKET TO RIDE is a narrative painting series that boasts a unique mix of drawing and oil painting skills, mixed-media and easily accessible metropolitan imagery on nine 60" X 60" canvases. A major motion picture is headed in the works based on this painting series.

Installation

The exhibit will consist of nine 60" X 60" mixed-media oil paintings on canvas and one sketchbook visual journal that documented the artist's behind the scenes art-making process. All works are wired and ready to hang. The nine pieces require approximately 72 linear running feet to hang each work side-by-side, or grouped side-by-side on a three-wall space to bring the viewer full circle from painting 1 all the way around to painting 9. The exhibit must be presented in its entirety. We will hand deliver and can hang the show ourselves if you wish.

Visit Michael Bell's Official Website: <http://mbellart.com>

Official Ticket to Ride Movie Website: <http://tickettoridemovie.com>

View the TICKET TO RIDE Launch Party in NYC:

http://mbellart.com/theplumm_rockstarvideo.html

E-mail: info@galleriared.com

Phone: 212.991.8720

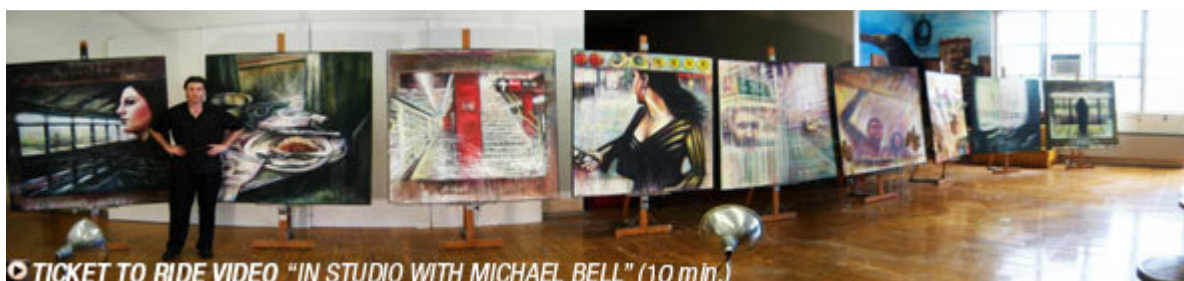
Artist's Biography

Michael Bell was born April 10, 1971 on his Mother's birthday. Bell grew up with a magical gift and an intense passion for the visual arts, experiencing success early in his artistic career by winning 1st Place at the age of five in his first juried art exhibition. As an emerging young artist Michael has spent a lot of his life in and around New York City, studying art with his grandmother, a self-taught artist from Lyndhurst, NJ. It was during this time period Bell began exploring life visually through his paintings.



As a professional artist Bell has painted by commission some of the most famous people of our time, including the late John Gotti, cast members from HBO's *The Sopranos*, *CSI: Miami*, *Law & Order* and movies such as *Goodfellas* and *A Bronx Tale*. Backed by an impressive list of solid credentials and celebrity clientele, Bell has become just as famous as the many celebrities he has portrayed on canvas.

Bell has also played a vital role in pioneering the Visual Journaling movement, giving workshops and motivational speeches throughout the country. Bell is also an activist, donating his time and art generously to numerous charity benefits to help raise awareness and thousands of dollars for organizations through his painting sales. In 2005 Bell was awarded the coveted Los Angeles Good Shepherd Community Service Award for his efforts. Bell was also one of 24 selected Maryland State Teachers of the Year and has been an honored guest of the Governor, recognized on the floor of the House and the Senate, and was commissioned to paint the State Superintendent's portrait. In 2008 Bell unveiled his most recent painting on the red carpet in New York with *The Sopranos* Joseph R. Gannascoli, Frank Vincent and Dominic Chianese at an *A-List Stars & Cigars Gala* to help benefit kids with autism, cerebral palsy and traumatic brain injuries.



*Click the pic above to play video clip of Michael Bell in studio (*must be online to view)*

The Ticket to Ride Painting Series by Michael Bell

Below is the portfolio of representative pieces. Venue will insure items while in their possession. Click to view larger or online at: <http://mbellart.com/tickettoride.html>



1. ["The Transfer"](#)
60" X 60"
oils/mixed-media/ linen



2. ["Room Service"](#)
60" X 60"
oils/mixed-media/ linen



3. ["The Ring"](#)
60" X 60"
oils/mixed-media/ linen



4. ["Never Look Back"](#)
60" X 60"
oils/mixed-media/ linen



5. ["Getaway Car"](#)
60" X 60"
oils/mixed-media/ linen



6. ["Unfinished Business"](#)
60" X 60"
oils/mixed-media/ linen



7. ["The Meadows"](#)
60" X 60"
oils/mixed-media/ linen



8. ["Check In, Check Out"](#)
60" X 60"
oils/mixed-media/ linen



9. ["The N and the R"](#)
60" X 60"
oils/mixed-media/ linen



"Michael Bell's Ticket to Ride series is painting noir at its finest. Out of this monumental achievement, I am particularly intrigued by [Room Service](#). The eaten dessert, the gun lying on the table, the coffee... is it still warm? Having played a detective on Law & Order, I find myself scanning the table looking for clues. Are the occupant(s) just out of table range? Or is there something far more sinister here?" - **John Fiore - The Sopranos, Law & Order, Brotherhood**

FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 2008
NOEL ASHMAN presents:

ticket
to
ride

the Plumm is owned by
Noel Ashman
Chris Nott
and Wes

Jesse Bradford
Samantha Ronson
Ethan Crowe
Damon Dash
Joey McIntyre
Ann Delyon Jones
Ross Honsby
Eric Bell
Grimley
Simon Rex



MICHAEL BELL

TICKET TO RIDE PAINTING SERIES LAUNCH PARTY

04.18.08

Celebrity Artist MICHAEL BELL launches his TICKET TO RIDE series at The Plumm:
Nine 60" x 60" mixed-media oil paintings on canvas | \$50,000.00 per painting
VIP Party 10PM - 11PM, plus a Fashion Show by:

WICKED
THREADS

246 WEST 14TH ST
OFF (8TH AVE) NYC
www.MBELLART.com
www.TICKETTORIDEMOVIE.com

The Plumm
246 West 14th Street
New York, NY 10011
212.675.1567
www.theplumm.com

MICHAEL BELL

ticket to ride launch party

V.I.P. party: 10 - 11pm

Friday, April 18, 2008

THE PLUMM, HOURS: 10:00 PM - 4:00 AM

Each of Bell's Nine 60" X 60" Mixed-Media Oil Paintings on Canvas are: \$50,000.00 (per painting)
Michael Bell's Ticket to Ride Paintings are the inspiration behind the TICKET TO RIDE™ movie (TBA)



"The Transfer"



"Room Service"



"The Ring"



"Never Look Back"



"Getaway Car"



"Unfinished Business"



"The Meadows"



"Check In, Check Out"



"The N and the R"

Graphic Design by Jonathan Roehm

Visit Michael Bell's Official Website at: <http://mbellart.com>



Ticket to Ride Press Release

New York, NY (February 2009)—A new thematic painting series has been launched – *nine paintings in all* – by the American artist Michael Bell (b. 1971). The first three paintings were debuted for the public in celebration of the completion of this monumental series on April 18, 2008 at a star-studded launch party thrown for Michael Bell by Noel Ashman at his New York City celebrity hotspot, *The Plumm*.

Bell is best known for tapping into America's love affair with *Gangsters in Hollywood* - with an infamous painting clientele list that includes numerous actors from *The Sopranos*, *CSI: Miami*, *Law & Order*, *Brotherhood* and from famous Gangster films such as *Goodfellas*, *A Bronx Tale*, and more.

Ticket to Ride lives up to its thrilling title, and Bell continues with his gangster-genre painting traditions in this new series. In a literary and cinematic sense, with a cinematographer's eye for suspenseful scenes, this narrative painting series boasts a unique mix of painting skills and easily accessible metropolitan imagery on 60" X 60" canvases.

"Throughout my career of painting gangsters and celebrities that play gangsters (in movies and on television), I thought it would be fun to play one myself on canvas in my *Ticket to Ride* series," says Bell.

Bell's nine cinematic scenes are solidified and encoded through the act of painting layers upon layers of meaning over mixed-media New York City subway maps and New Jersey transit bus routes painted into each canvas. This process furthers the narrative of a metaphorical journey through the mind of a killer – from a New York City subway platform, onto the city streets of Manhattan, then beyond – to the ominous marshes of the New Jersey Meadowlands – one of the Mob's most famous burial grounds. Bell has left plenty of other clues behind in this series too for the viewer to decipher – in anagrams posing as numbers atop the taxi the off-duty taxi cab in *Getaway Car* (2008), on the license plate of the abandoned taxi in *The Meadows* (2008) and in mixed-media pugs dug up from the marshes of the Meadowlands varnished right into the canvas directly into *Unfinished Business* and *The Meadows* (later subtracted from the paintings by the artist, leaving behind fossil-like remains on the canvas itself). Every detail in every painting is there to make us think, and also to throw us off track, right down to each painting title. For instance, in *Never Look Back* (2008) the woman in the painting is doing exactly what the title suggests she not do – *look back*.

The artist also created several under paintings while creating *The Ring* (2008) and *Check in, Check out...* (2008) that hide even more clues to the real-life storyline and inspiration behind this narrative painting series. In *The Ring*, the painting began as a crowded subway of travelers coming and going. Then, two lovers were painted in a cinematic kiss. Eventually they too were painted out of the scene. Finally, the perspective of the subway changed and it is flooded with water, symbolic of emotions flooding the staircase and reminiscent of a scene out of Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*. Eventually the artist painted all the passengers out of the scene, yet they still remain below the layers of paint as under paintings – symbolic of a deserted subway platform haunted by the energies of all its past and future travelers. They may not be completely visible to the naked eye, but are documented through photographs taken of the paintings in progress, placed in the artist's sketchbook, which will also be on display for the public as a companion piece to this painting series that documents the artist's thought process.

There is never a real victim or victim(s) revealed in this series visually, however, in at least one painting, *Unfinished Business* (2008), Bell makes us, *the viewer*, take on the role of his victim looking out at the artist from his trunk. The artist used himself in the series when painting from direct observation using a mirror, along with his wife as a model (and accomplice). Eventually, in painting nine, *The N and the R* (2008), the woman ends up in the same place as she began her metaphorical journey in painting one *The Transfer* (2008), right back on the very same subway platform as she started. This was intentional to ask the viewer to project their own thoughts onto how this journey will end – or to interpret if it even began at all. Perhaps, the entire journey only takes place in our minds eye, like fleeting thoughts of planning a murderous plot while awaiting our train – or perhaps the journey is just beginning. Michael Bell won't say for certain because, as he states, "It's your *Ticket to Ride*."

Since the completion of this monumental painting series Michael Bell was urged by a few of his *Sopranos* clientele to write a screenplay about the story behind the nine paintings and nine lives that inspired his *Ticket to Ride* painting series, which Bell has since completed in 2008 and a major motion picture based on these paintings is currently in the works in 2009.

"Michael Bell's *Ticket to Ride* series is painting noir at its finest. Out of this monumental achievement, I am particularly intrigued by *Room Service* (2008). The eaten dessert, the gun lying on the table, the coffee... is it still warm? Having played a detective on *Law & Order*, I find myself scanning the table looking for clues. Are the occupant(s) just out of table range? Or is there something far more sinister here? I guess we'll all have to get our *ticket to ride* and get on board to find out." - John Fiore, Actor - *The Sopranos, Law & Order, Brotherhood*.

Contact a representative at GALLERIA RED™ for commissions, to request Bell's work in your Gallery or Museum, or for all appearance related inquiries at 212.991.8720 or via e-mail at: info@galleriared.com. View the TICKET TO RIDE painting series online at <http://mbellart.com>.