

## **TOM HLAS**

### **“Recalling the Stories: Abstract Insights”**

Norfolk Hub

As an abstract artist, I work primarily in acrylics and mixed media collage.

I was born and raised near a small, rural town in Iowa, where I grew up the eighth of ten children. I then moved to the Washington, DC area to do postgraduate work. Paul and I then moved to Miami, Florida and later to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Tiring of big city life, we moved to Norfolk, Connecticut, where we now live and work.

Art courses make up only a part of my formal education. I studied drawing and painting at Montgomery Community College in Rockville, Maryland, early in my career. My educational experiences also include a Bachelor degree in Vocal Music and postgraduate studies in philosophy and theology as well as on-the-job training in marketing.

The paper cutouts of Matisse, the abstract expressionists and color field painters of yesteryear as well as artists of today are all sources of inspiration for me.

My paintings are grounded in memories with an eye looking toward the future. The concept of home is very important to me: home as a place where I grew up, home as the many places I've lived since, home where I live now, home as a sense of belonging, home as hospitality and welcome to others.

When I created the abstract body of work featured in this exhibit, the paintings seemed to have a story to tell. To complement this narrative nature, I gave the paintings fairly long titles that reflected what they told me.

As well as my studio practice, I also teach art courses at the West Hartford Art League in West Hartford, CT and have recently been selected to participate in the Golden Paint Art Educators Program.