

Chris Stephens uses vibrant colors to portray the sweeping landscapes of the Shenandoah Valley, achieving an alluring interpretation of the countryside. Stephens holds an MFA from James Madison University, and his work can be found in numerous collections including SAS Institute, American Express, Bell Atlantic, First Union National Bank, Wachovia Bank & Trust, Duke Energy, Lowe's, and UNC Women's and Children's Hospital. Chris now lives in Front Royal, VA.

*"I paint from life. My process is direct and uncluttered. I make individual marks, each based on something seen. I feel my way into the subject, looking for lyrical, organizing structures, discovered anew with each painting, like parallel diagonals or edges of forms intersecting at right angles. Ideally, my paintings are simple accumulations of marks within a compositional structure. I constrain my work within a particular subject, and apply strong formats to evoke different emotional and visual possibilities. Color and paint have their own magic; I try to harness it. Color conveys my feeling of the experience. Oil paint is uniquely suited to hold the energy of the marks made in response to life; it's an alchemic substance. My paintings begin with exuberance for light, subject and paint; I try to carry it through the whole process."*