



Newsletter of the Center City Residents' Association

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## Spotlight On...

### Ed Bronstein: Artist, Architect, Neighborhood Icon

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

Enthusiastic, joyful, accessible: these words describe Ed Bronstein's paintings as well as Ed Bronstein, the painter. Neighbors often see Ed riding his bike around town; painting scenes *en plein air*; attending art openings; and exhibiting his work, often for the benefit of an organization or school. He paints in his Naudain Street home studio, which has been shown as part of the Philadelphia Open Studio Tour and the annual CCRA House Tour. He has even painted in the Athenaeum on Washington Square, to which he then gave one of his pictures. Not at all reclusive, Bronstein is an active participant in the life of our neighborhood. He helped organize the annual fall Philadelphia Open Studio Tour and the annual spring Art in the Open event.

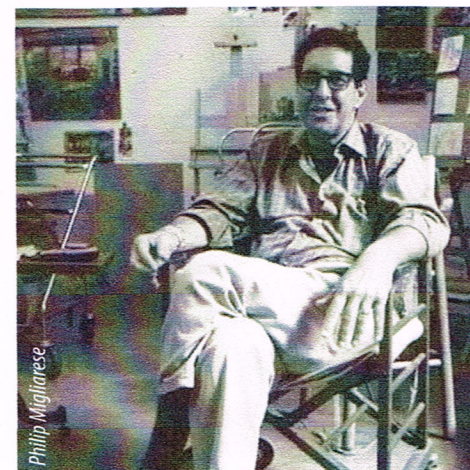
Local art enthusiasts often say they recognize an Ed Bronstein painting before they spot his signature because of his distinctive painterly style applied to his frequent subjects such as urban scenes, city buildings, industrial relics and vehicles. Bronstein thinks of Center City as his Disney World, filled with color, imagery, and even humor. For example, his "Bug Bus," featured in an exhibit at the Philadelphia Center for Architecture on Arch Street, depicts a huge bus with its side mirrors out. The painting is just one of many that transform the everyday visual images of the city into a fantasy world.

Bronstein contributes his time and money to the community. At his 2011 show, "At Home in the Neighborhood," at Twenty-Two Gallery on 22nd Street, half the proceeds from all sales went to Greenfield School to bring art

back to the students. He raised more than \$3,000, which was used to attract visiting artists and to purchase an art cart of supplies. Again, at a 2013 show at The Sporting Club at the Bellevue, Broad & Walnut Streets, half the proceeds went to Rebuilding Together Philadelphia to fund home repairs for low-income homeowners and revitalize low-income communities. In 2007 he had a show at Bartram's Gardens to which he donated 25 percent of all painting sales. He frequently has donated a painting to be auctioned at the annual Fidler Square Fair.

Bronstein has exhibited at other local venues including the Cosmopolitan Club at 1616 Latimer Street, and the Rosenfeld Gallery at 113 Arch Street. His work has also been shown at galleries elsewhere in Pennsylvania and in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey and

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Ed Bronstein in his studio

## CENTER CITY RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

1600 Market Street, Suite 2500  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
215-546-6719  
centercity@centercityresidents.org  
www.centercityresidents.org



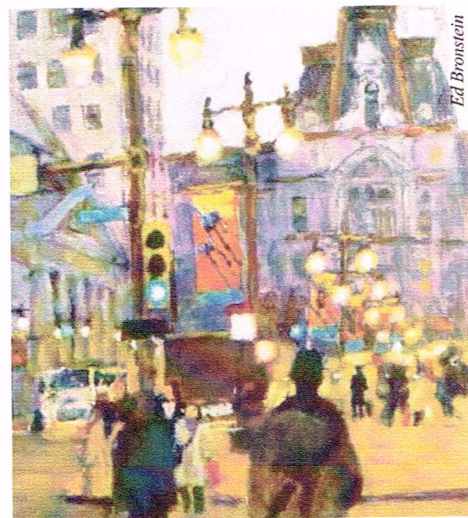
Fitler Square: *Early Light* (diptych) — oil on canvas. All paintings by Ed Bronstein.



24th and Lombard: *Morning Coffee* — oil on canvas.

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Vermont; and he had a solo show in Dublin, Ireland, in 2008. In October, he will have a show at The Station Gallery, 3922 Kennett Pike, Greenville, Delaware.



Broad Street, *December Dusk* — oil on canvas.

Working in gouache, oil, watercolor, and pen and ink, Bronstein also creates landscapes, still lifes, and portraits. He began painting in 1989 and attended courses at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and Fleisher Art Memorial. In 1996, Mayor Rendell appointed him to the Philadelphia Art Commission.

Prior to becoming an artist, Bronstein had a successful career for 35 years as an architect in Philadelphia. He earned a Bachelor's Degree from Princeton University and a Master's Degree in Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania, and began his architectural career in 1968. In 1974 he opened his own office.

Bronstein's restaurant designs appeared on the covers of five national design journals, as well as *Pennsylvania Architect* and the book *Dining by Design*. In 1983 he won the Gold Key Award, the highest design award of the American Hotel and Motel Association. His interior design for the former offices of the

Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, in what was then known as the Architects' Building at 17th & Sansom (now housing the Hotel Palomar), appeared in *Architecture Magazine's* 1994 Annual Review of American Architecture. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* called his design of Greene Towne School, a Montessori preschool, "one of the most artful and inventive new buildings to show up in Center City in the last few years." He closed his architectural office in 2001 but continued teaching at Drexel University.

For more information about Ed Bronstein and his work, and to see examples of his art, please go to [www.edbronstein.com](http://www.edbronstein.com).

Both POST and the CCRA House Tour, mentioned in this article, are covered elsewhere in this issue of CCQ. For more information on POST, see sidebar below. For more on the House Tour, see Page 32 (Back Cover). For more on supporting Greenfield School, also mentioned here, see Page 25.

## Center City Artists Featured at the 15th Annual Philadelphia Open Studio Tours (POST)

As part of the Philadelphia Open Studio Tour, now in its 15th year, artists to the west of Broad Street will open their studios to visitors on Saturday, October 11, and Sunday, October 12, starting at noon each day. The self-guided tour, sponsored by the Center for Emerging Visual Artists (CFEVA), will include two of our neighborhood artists located on Naudain Street, Bhavisha Patel and Karen Stabenow. Just south of South Street, The Studios at 2202 Alter Street will open several artists' studios in one building. Art will also be on display at Twenty-Two Gallery at 236 South 22nd Street; CFEVA at the Barclay, 237 South 18th Street, third floor; and The Art Shop at Moore,

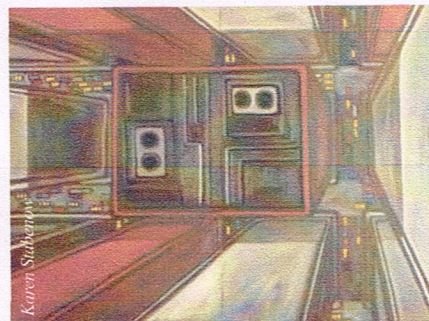
1916 Race Street. Artists working east of Broad will exhibit on Saturday, October 25, and Sunday, October 26.

For a complete list of participating studios and galleries, go to [philaopenstudios.org/post/neighborhood/west](http://philaopenstudios.org/post/neighborhood/west) and [philaopenstudios.org/post/neighborhood/east](http://philaopenstudios.org/post/neighborhood/east).

— Bonnie Eisenfeld



Bhavisha Patel, with one of her paintings of Rittenhouse Square.



Neighborhood artist Karen Stabenow's "Broadway Boogie."