



DEAN LARSON

Mosaics of shapes



Dean Larson's scenes of primarily New York and European cities will be shown at George Billis Gallery in New York, April 26 to May 21. Larson's paintings are of light, form and movement suggested by his rapid brushstrokes and often vivid color.

Larson's paintings have become more loosely painted. "They're not as tight as they used to be," he comments. "I'm paying more attention to controlling the edges to convey a sense of movement."

Under the Manhattan Bridge, looking toward the Brooklyn Bridge on New York's East River, is a subtle study in blues and greens reminiscent of Whistler's *Nocturnes on the Thames*. Larson says he was focusing on "the mosaics of shapes and how shapes work together. I was also working on the idea of the importance of the painting being executed quickly...When working wet into wet, the variety in the edges is optimal. I let the paint do what the paint wants to do—the colors blend, fuse, join and bleed into each other. If you spend too much time modeling, it loses its sense of spontaneity.

"Whenever possible I paint on location and get as much as possible finished before I bring them back to the studio," he continues. "It's important to work from direct observation to have the excitement of the experience of being there propel the process from beginning to end."

Two paintings of the same scene demonstrate his concentration on edges and "mosaics of shapes." One is *Up the Great Staircase* and the



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1
Up the Great Staircase,
oil on canvas
mounted on panel,
14 x 11"

2
*Under the Manhattan
Bridge*, oil on canvas,
9 x 12"

3
Delivery Truck, Night,
oil on panel, 24 x 30"

4
*Down the Great
Staircase*, oil on panel,
18 x 24"

other is *Down the Great Staircase* of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

In *Up the Great Staircase* the interior light of the museum is subtle. Although painted with little detail, each person is an individual, walking up or down the stairs, studying a map, corralling a child

or engaged in conversation.

Looking *Down the Great Staircase* the strong exterior light coming through the front doors casts the figures into silhouette, their edges blurring as they would to the eye trying to adjust to the bright light. As in the previous painting, Larson has painted

each figure as an individual—entering, leaving, buying a ticket, checking a bag.

Larson says, "My works are not meant to teach any particular viewpoint, but to open up a reflection of a view of the world around us and the connection between our environment and with each other." ●