

HOME DESIGN / ART / WINE / CUISINE / REAL ESTATE

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The background is a dramatic painting of a stormy sea at night. The sky is filled with dark, swirling clouds in shades of teal, blue, and black. Several bright white lightning bolts strike down from the clouds onto the dark, choppy water. In the distance, a faint city skyline is visible on the horizon, with a few lights reflecting on the water. The overall mood is intense and atmospheric.

RICK SPITZ STUDIO

rspitz.studio@gmail.com | 864-616-4986 | rickspitzstudio.com

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GROWING up on a working cattle ranch in Oklahoma, Rick Spitz spent a lot of time in nature, seeing both its wonder and its fury. It inspired him and influenced a deep passion—a passion that is evident in his photography and his oil paintings.

Spitz obtained an architectural degree in 1981 from the University of Oklahoma. Over the next decade, he was contracted to create architectural renderings for architects and developers, providing them with conceptual illustrations and paintings of their finished projects in watercolor. His prolific work led to employment with an architectural and engineering firm based in Greenville, South Carolina, and so Spitz moved his family from Oklahoma in 1988 and later received his architectural license.

Now, the retired architect devotes his time to one of his greatest loves: painting. Naturally, Spitz's passion for nature and its beauty comes out in high relief on the canvas, with a perspective that paints a dynamic, vibrant and captivating view. "People see a painting of a beautiful sunset and don't feel the same wonder as they do when they see a photograph, because something is lost," Spitz says. "I try to paint in a way that shows



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how stunning a thunderstorm can be, the energy in a waterfall, the unrelenting magnificence of a tornado. I absolutely love nature and capturing a beautiful landscape or beautiful cloud formation on canvas."

Clouds, in fact, are a particular point of interest for Spitz, who studied meteorology in school. "Clouds are incredible—the way that they form, the unique shapes that they take and the ways that they offer a prelude to what is to come."

Spitz works mainly in oils, watercolors and colored pencils, though he is also known to step away from the canvas and pick up a camera. Above all, he has an eye for detail and a dedication to showing as much as possible. "It takes several months to complete a painting, because something that takes someone else a few days to paint in a landscape will take me so much longer," Spitz says. "I want to get every detail I can."

The well-traveled artist loves being in nature and exploring other countries to see different sights and capture them on canvas, from the waterfalls of Croatia to the Mesa Verde in New Mexico and Arizona. He is a member of the Metropolitan Arts Council in Greenville, South Carolina.



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864.616.4986

RICKSPITZSTUDIO.COM