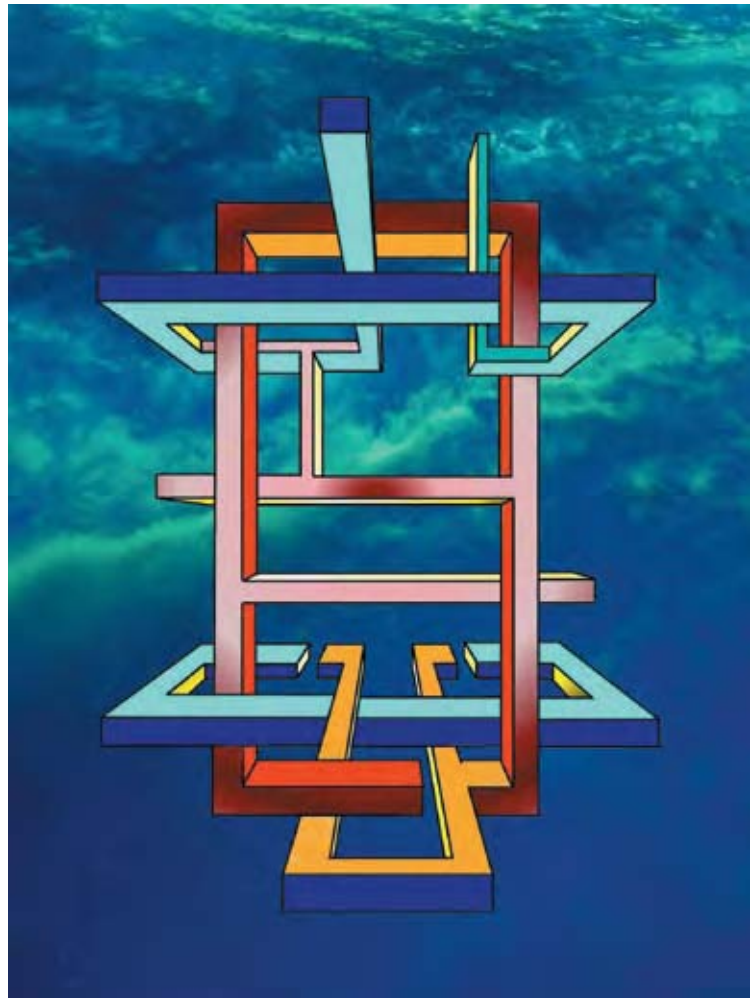


JMCP

JOURNAL OF MANAGED CARE PHARMACY

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COVER IMPRESSIONS

About our cover artist

The Gate (2008) ■ Alan King

Alan King was born in the town of Greenwich, England, located in south-east London, in February 1952. His interest in art began in childhood—he first started to draw at John Evelyn Primary School in Deptford (also in southeast London). King often drew in his textbooks, which did not please his teachers! In 1963, he enrolled at Eltham Green School in Greenwich where he studied for his A-level art certification under art instructors Richard Box and Jim Riddock. There King was introduced to the artists of the Surrealist movement and was fascinated by the work of Yves Tanguy, Giorgio de Chirico, and of course, Salvador Dali. Later, he studied the optical-illusion art of M. C. Escher and Oscar Reutersvärd, plus the architecture and interior design of Frank Lloyd Wright. Science fiction writers Isaac Asimov, Arthur C. Clarke, and Ray Bradbury also fueled King's imagination and influenced his work. He now listens to many of their audio books while creating his art.

King received his A-level art degree in 1968 and began his professional artistic journey by working as a commercial artist in London's highly competitive advertising industry. He produced his own fine art on the side. After 2 years, King left the commercial art industry for sales and marketing, but he continued to pursue his personal creative ambitions. By the early 1970s, he was exhibiting and selling his art throughout London. In 1977, King moved from London to Milton Keynes, England. He spent 28 years there—living and showing his art—but decided to move once again in 2005 to the Dorset village of Bloxworth in south-west England.

During the late 1990s, King started to experiment with a combination of digital and traditional art methods, and the result was "Massurrealist" works of art. Massurrealism is the name given to an art movement that was founded in 1992 by American artist James Seehafer, who credits the Internet with a major role in promoting the genre. It is characterized by the convergence of mass media and Surrealism, and often includes elements of Pop Art. King is considered to be one of the first Massurrealists in the United Kingdom. Over the years, he has developed his own unique and recognizable style by cleverly combining his masterful computer skills and expert drawing ability. King is able to express the images seen in his mind's eye by using the computer, and utilizes traditional art materials such as oils, acrylics, watercolors, and calligraphy ink for completing his digital paintings. His vibrant artwork is said to "bridge the gap between Surrealist imagery and new-media techniques." In 2004, Seehafer invited King to become an official member of the Massurrealists.

It comes as no surprise that King has a wonderful Web



site: kingart.co.uk. The site showcases his Massurrealist art with several gallery pages, provides information about his art exhibitions, and has a page that lists some critiques. One particular critique succinctly describes his work: "Alan's art is defined by his creation of intoxicating landscape compositions executed in a style that he refers to as 'Artyecture.' Alan's distinctive works evoke the landscapes of prominent Surrealist painters, but have a definite contemporary edge to them."

Another interesting page on King's Web site is called "The Process" which outlines the process he uses to create his art. "I am often asked how I produce my digital artwork," he says. "All my work starts out as a rough design sketch. Once finished, some [digital] prints

are hand colored." He has posted actual photographs of several works in progress, from the initial sketch to the finished piece. One such example found on this page is King's fabulous painting titled *The Gate*. Reminiscent of an Escher composition, it seems to present the impossible, such as a straight bar that appears to cross both in front of and behind a twisted bar. *The Gate* is very 3-dimensional—the foreground object appears to float in mid-air above a background that resembles a photograph of the earth taken from outer space.

King has exhibited his art in England, Hungary, Germany, Portugal, and Argentina. He has participated in both solo and group shows with England's Poole & East Dorset Art Society and at the Peacock Gallery in Poole. Other English galleries that have shown the artist's work include the Red Gate Gallery in London, the Jurassic Coast Gallery in Weymouth, and the White Stones Café Gallery in Portland. He is also a member of Artists in the World, a Web site "for artists who devote their lives to art, and who believe in freedom, equality, and peace."

King's visual illusions, such as those seen in *The Gate*, both stimulate and challenge the onlooker. A compilation of his extraordinary artwork has been published in a new book titled *A Room of Illusions: The Massurreal & Illusionary Art of Alan King*, available on Amazon.com. The book cover features King's haunting painting, *The Mask*.

Sheila Macho
Cover Editor

COVER CREDIT

Alan King, *The Gate*, digital painting from calligraphy inks on art paper original. Bloxworth, England. Copyright© Alan King 2008.

SOURCES

Interview with the artist.
<http://www.kingart.co.uk/critiques.htm>.