

THE BEST WAY TO DESCRIBE ALLAN RODEWALD IS JUST AS AN ARTIST THAT DOESN'T GET CAUGHT UP IN IT. HE DOES HIS THING THE WAY HE WANTS TO—A MARRIAGE OF HIS ART AND A BUSINESS SENSE THAT HE DISCOVERED ALONG THE WAY THAT HAS ALLOWED HIM TO WRITE HIS OWN RULEBOOK. OH, AND HE'S GOT A KILLER STUDIO...

So did you build your studio from the ground up?

Yeah. I built it in 2000, moved in in 2001. No one was here yet—typical 'artist takes a chance' type of thing. But it's a great spot. I've got a great view and they're building up Washington Avenue like crazy. It was a pretty cool deal. I took a chance and it paid off.

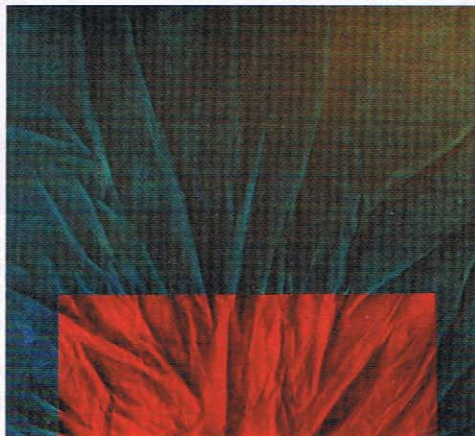
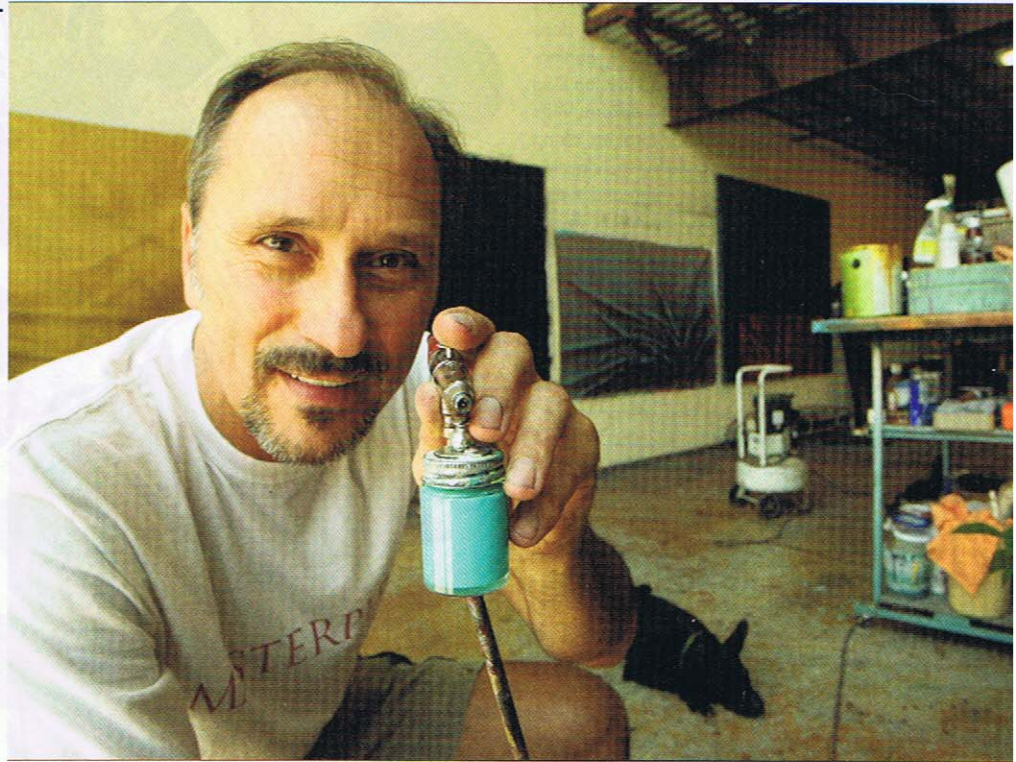
Tell me about the hardwoods you have in there.

The floor is a cool deal because I love to play basketball. I knew I was building the house and I had been passing out cards to all these floor guys in case they ever ran across an old gym floor. The day they were pouring the slab for my house, a storm came through and flooded the slab area so I had to wait to pour the slab—and you know you're all anxious but you can't do nothing until the slab is poured. But that same storm busted a window in the gym where I play basketball over at First Baptist. It ruined the floor where I play basketball—approximately almost to the board the size that I needed to put into my house. Yeah! They were gonna throw it out and I said 'you mind if I haul it off for you?' Of course I had to take an air grinder and grind off the... they put a nail in about every 18 inches, so I had a lot of nail grinding to do, but I tell you what, man it's a beautiful Bird's Eye Maple floor made by the company that makes the floor for the Rockets, the Olympics, same stuff. This whole house is kind of serendipitous. A lot of things happened that really just seemed to fall into place for me. And the floor was one of them. I had been looking for a floor for my house for about a year and then the floor that I got was the floor I played basketball on.

Had your sneaker marks on it.

Yeah—blood! Sweat and blood. I've had a couple bloody noses on that thing.

You're a rare case in that you've been able to turn your craft into a successful commercial venture, with which a lot of artists wouldn't identify. Was that a shift for you or did you always have sort of a business sense in respect to your art?



It wasn't a shift, but I for some reason never envisioned working for anyone, and I never envisioned being an entrepreneur. I never envisioned... I never knew about business plan. My dad was a construction worker, and my mom was basically a housewife. My dad got his tax done at H&R Block... we didn't talk about investing... what you needed to do. I was a little kid who knew how to draw so they said 'we took him to lessons, and he's going to college,' and I just drew. It's that that sort of carried me through but you know I always had a good work ethic and in a lot of ways, I'm not your typical artist in that I was never one to... you know, I didn't hang out at the studio and paint in college. I worked, I did my stuff and then I went and played basketball. That type of thing. I had friends. So I had that aspect of it, but I also had the art thing in me and I always had summer jobs. I just worked and I did stuff. For me it was always better to get up at 8 and get to work. So I carry normal business hours for the most part. I'm aware what I need to make every day. I pay my taxes, I have a retirement plan. That whole thing. But I can't say that it was something that I consciously did, you know? I mean, I have to work on those things but... for some reason, it wasn't really a shift but it wasn't something I tried consciously... you know I tell people that the fear of failure wasn't really in me because I didn't understand it. I didn't understand what failure would be—well, if I took a chance and I moved to Houston, what would happen? I never really looked at the backside of it.