

COLLECTOR'S FOCUS **MARINE ART**

# MARITIME MEMORIES

BY JOHN O'HERN



## COLLECTOR'S FOCUS MARINE ART



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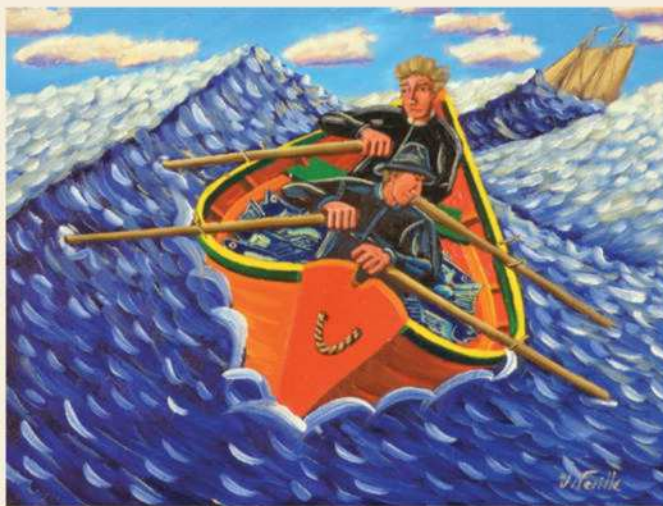
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2. **Addison Art Gallery**, *The Blue Ocean*, oil on linen panel, 20 x 24", by Frank Gardner. 3. **Quidley & Company**, *Adventure*, oil, 9 x 12", by Michael Keane (1948-2015). 4. **Gleason Fine Art**, *Breezing Up*, oil on canvas, 12 x 16", by John Neville. 5. **The Gallery at Tree's Place**, *Wooden Ships*, oil on linen, 20 x 30", by James Wolford. 6. **The Gallery at Tree's Place**, *Clear Morning Passage*, oil on panel, 9 x 12", by Ken Salaz. 7. **The Gallery at Tree's Place**, *Remedy*, oil on linen, 36 x 48", by Antonia Tyz Peeples.

If you grew up along any of the country's coasts, your first taste of adventure may have been sailing in a sturdy, broad-beamed sailboat with just the wind in the single sail for propulsion. **Michael Keane** (1948-2015) was born near the coast of Massachusetts and lived the last 20 years of his life at the headwaters of the North River, one of the country's major shipbuilding locales in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Keane's first drawing, done at the age of 4, was of a boat. During his career, he painted boats of all sorts from sleek sailing yachts to the humble catboat. The title *The Age of Adventure* may conjure images of swashbuckling sailors on the high seas, but for children learning to sail in a catboat, at high water in the protection of the salt marsh, there's little difference. Keane wrote, "Like good music, art lifts you, it changes you, it alters your state of consciousness. That's what exhilaration is."

**John Stobart** has always loved boats and when his mother sent him off on a tram to the port of Liverpool at the age of 8, he recalls, "I was totally overwhelmed. It permanently boggled my mind." Fortunately, for us, he un-boggled his mind and has created scenes of historical ports



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and vessels with extraordinary accuracy and detail. The ship in *Nantucket Arrival*—"Shenandoah" Off Brant Point, 2016, is a contemporary vessel, a replica of a 19<sup>th</sup>-century square topsail schooner. It plies the waters of southeastern New England and, here, is entering the harbor at Nantucket.

Sailing in vessels on the sea isn't all pleasure. Sturdy working boats like *The Blue Ocean* are part of a dwindling fleet that sails from ports like Provincetown, Massachusetts, to harvest scallops, lobster and various fish. **Frank Gardner** plays with and pushes color, making each blue of *The Blue Ocean* have its own character—the

deep blue of the harbor, the lighter blue of the sky and the chipped blue paint of the well-worn boat.

Gardner says, "I am drawn to fleeting light effects and color while sometimes sacrificing detail. A controlled chaos or loose spontaneity is my favored look, although each color and stroke is well thought out and carefully placed. My goal is to convey to the viewer my feelings about the scene through my use of color and brushwork."

He continues, "I not only brush paint on, but lift it off, or smear it with a finger or paint rag. It is often the lifting off of the paint or moving it around after it is on the





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canvas that gives the look I am after.”

Just as the catboat is in the ubiquitous pleasure and learning craft, the traditional dory is the sturdy work boat. **John Neville** grew up in a fishing and shipbuilding family in Nova Scotia. He began his art life as an etcher but turned to oil painting in the 1990s. His highly colorful, strongly patterned and nearly abstract paintings often feature a red dory, beached or besting the high seas with sturdy hands and arms at the oars.

In *Breezing Up*, a bit of seaman’s under-

statement, two men with their catch of bluefish battle the swells, no less in peril than the sailing vessel in the distance.

Van Gogh wrote, “The fishermen know that the sea is dangerous and the storm terrible, but they have never found these dangers sufficient reason for remaining ashore.”

*From historic vessels to boats at the harbor, this special section presents artwork by some of the leading artists of the maritime genre. There are also insights from dealers on the genre, as well as inspirations as shared by the artists themselves.*

Located in Orleans, Massachusetts, on Cape Cod, the **Gallery at Tree’s Place** is home to a number of artists who create maritime-themed artwork. Among them are **Antonia Tyz Peebles**, **Ken Salaz** and **James Wolford**.

Peebles’ *Remedy* is one of her works that studies the ocean and its surface patterns, while Wolford’s *Wooden Ships* shows his fascination with the beauty of wooden sailboats. Wolford’s painting focuses on the sailboats but the harbor background offers a sense of perspective and distance.

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8. **Quidley & Company**, *Cutter of Sankaty Head Light*, oil on panel, 8 x 10", by William Davis. 9. **Quidley & Company**, *"Maria" Off Sandy Hook, 1861*, oil on canvas, 30 x 40", by Tim Thompson. 10. **Ray Crane**, *Rounding West Point, on the Hudson*, oil on canvas, 10 x 20" 11. **Quidley & Company**, *The Spanish Treasure Fleet Departs the Florida Coast for Spain*, oil on canvas, 30 x 40", by Tim Thompson. 12. **Ray Crane**, *Inner Harbor, Gloucester*, oil on canvas, 8 x 14" 13. **Ray Crane**, *Evening off Boston Light*, oil on canvas, 12 x 16" 14. **Terry Elkins**, *Owls Head Light*, pencil on collage, 27 x 24"

Salaz's *Clear Morning Passage*, was inspired by a visit to a hidden lake in Montana. "The lake is very hard to access because it is located on an Indian reservation, and in order to enter the land, you need permission from the tribe. After obtaining permission from a friend, I arrived around 4 in the morning, prepared to paint the sunrise and its effects on the water and surrounding mountains," he says. "To my great surprise, the entire area was illuminated beautifully by the rising sun

and the whole landscape came alive with the vibrant colors of the morning."

With gallery locations also near the coasts, **Quidley & Company** represents artists such as **Tim Thompson** and **William Davis**, whose paintings feature historic sailboats and yachting scenes.

Thompson spent his childhood in the Channel Islands and established his career with nautical themes that included America's Cup races and yachts. "Thompson's work is characterized by his

use of traditional oil techniques," explains the gallery. "Placing layer upon layer of translucent wash on canvas, he procures a luminosity rarely seen in contemporary marine paintings."

Born in Somerville, Massachusetts, and growing up on Cape Cod, Davis is a self-taught artist who began his career as a dealer and collector of 19<sup>th</sup>-century American works. Inspired by his collecting, Davis began painting full time and eventually he became enamored by plein air



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painting. "Davis continues to be inspired by the natural beauty of his native Cape Cod's pristine coastlines," the gallery says, "and by the forests and mountains of northern New England."

Growing up in the Northeast, **Ray Crane** has been inspired by the beauty and history of coastal New England and the Hudson River Valley, which he says provide an endless variety of scenes and subjects for his work—both historic and contemporary.

"My painting of the *Inner Harbor*,

*Gloucester* is a timeless image that could be today—or a hundred years ago," he says. "Schooners are still a familiar sight here, against the backdrop of the venerable Paint Factory of 1863, now a whale research center."

In *Evening of Boston Light*, he shows a schooner about to pass Boston Light on Little Brewster Island, which is home to what is considered the first lighthouse in America built in 1716. Then, *Rounding West Point, on the Hudson*, is an image of a classic Hudson River steamer with

the Academy building barely visible in the distance.

"In my paintings I bring the past to the present, showing scenes as familiar today as they were long ago," Crane says, "and serving as a reminder of the heritage that stays with us even as times change."

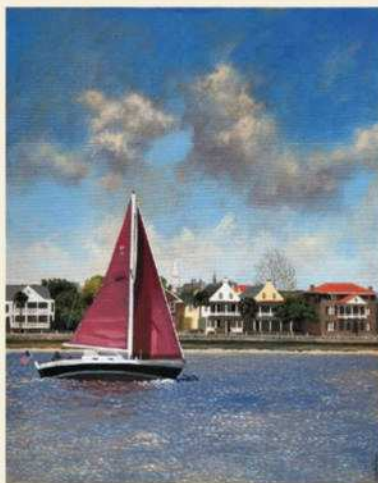
When **Terry Eklins** moved to Bridgehampton, New York, 30 years ago, one of the first things that caught his attention were the local baymen launching their dories into the surf. "It evoked another time, now sadly lost, a special part of East



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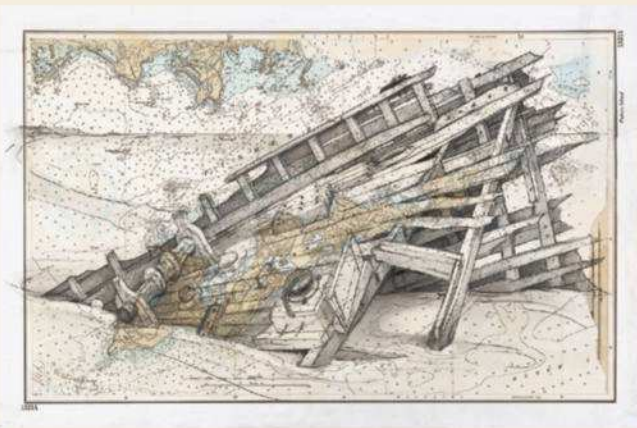
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15. Terry Elkins, *The Flying Dutchman*, oil on linen, 24 x 30" 16. Richard A. Johnson, *Red Sail*, acrylic on canvas, 30 x 24" 17. Richard A. Johnson, *Near Georgetown*, acrylic on canvas, 30 x 24" 18. Terry Elkins, *Fishers Island*, pencil on collage, 22 x 33½" 19. American Society of Marine Artists, *Sunset on the Driftway*, oil, 18 x 30", by Sergio Roffo. 20. Lisa Gleim, *A Boat of Many Colors*, pastel, 11 x 14" 21. Lisa Gleim, *Boat House*, pastel, 14 x 18" 22. Jacobina Trump, *Serenity*, oil on linen, 18 x 34"

End life where men put to sea to maintain themselves, a time now destroyed by the commercialization of the fishing industry, by huge offshore fleets, by pollution and the crunch of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century," he says. "The dory became a symbol for a disappearing way of life, an era. They now lay empty, overturned and unused.

"About that time I also found a set of nautical charts from Long Island to Maine," he continues. "They oriented me

to my surroundings. I started using them as collage and then drawing on them, superimposing the image over the chart to complement or amplify the idea. That led to other ideas and littoral imagery."

Richard A. Johnson developed an interest for sailing while attending the Ringling School of Art and Design in Florida when he got his first sailboat by trading a painting for it. Years later, his brother Don had a 52-foot, old wooden

schooner that he enjoyed sailing on while getting ideas for new paintings.

"*Summer Sail* and *Red Sail* both were a result of sailing off the coast of Charleston, South Carolina," says Johnson, while his newest work is called *Near Georgetown* and depicts two boats anchored across from where his brother docked his boat. "I really liked the way that the light was hitting the trees behind the boats."

The American Society of Marine Artists



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23. American Society of Marine Artists, *Good Things Come*, oil, 18 x 36", by Lisa Egell. 24. Jacobina Trump, *Blazing J*, oil on linen, 24 x 30" 25. Jacobina Trump, *After the Start J's*, oil on linen, 22 x 36" 26. Karen Ann Hitt, *Crescendo At The Marsh*, oil on linen, 12 x 24" 27. S L Johnson, *By the Dock*, oil on canvas, 14 x 18" 28. Nancy Balmert, *Santa Maria della Salute*, oil on canvas, 30 x 40" 29. Nancy Balmert, *Venice Remembered*, oil on canvas, 20 x 16"

was founded in 1978 by a small group of professional artists whose purpose was to recognize, encourage and promote marine art and maritime history. As the organization celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2018, ASMA has stayed true to its mission, but not without enormous changes taking place over a four-decade span.

"With nearly 500 members through the U.S. and abroad, the focus of marine art has broadened to include anything related to water, including what lives in it and around it," says Kim Shaklee, president and fellow of the organization. "Traditional maritime art is still alive and well, but many artists have become interested in portraying water subjects, endangered species and environmental issues that pertain to each of us. The possibilities are endless. Artists have become bolder in presenting unusual vantage points to their paintings, or obscure watercourses; many different nuances are sought out to individualize these artists."

Atlanta-based artist **Lisa Gleim** works in both pastel and oil, achieving two very

*"Appreciation for marine art is often directly shaped by an individual's life experiences and feelings. Marine artists embody the passion to create, while the collector must make a personal connection to the mysteries that live within our hearts."*

— Kim Shaklee, president and fellow, American Society of Marine Artists.

different styles. She is particularly interested in capturing the beauty of light and how it affects the landscape. Painting on location as often as possible, her destinations of choice are generally coastal scenes of the Lowcountry that remind her of her childhood summers at Pawleys Island, South Carolina.

"My advice to collectors is buy a piece of art that you love, that evokes a memory or reminds you of something special," Gleim says. "Art is very personal and it should make you feel something when you look at it."

Nautical painter **Jacobina Trump** could sail before she could cycle. Her father built their first wooden sailboat in their living room and from the beach they would sail on one of the inlets close to home. Growing up surrounded by water and living below sea level, made her aware of the beauty and the danger that always lie dormant in the forces of nature.

"Drawing and painting sharpens your observational visual skills. Once at sea this comes in handy as a photographic memory of the waves and colors," says Trump. "The sea is in motion and cannot





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be photographed as this would be a frozen picture. Water is not frozen and it does not stand still, ever."

Award-winning and nationally exhibiting artist **Karen Ann Hitt**, who has also come to be known as "An Original Hitt," says "As an artist, the passion is to reflect light, life [and] land as genuinely experienced at that moment."

Among her newest works is *Crescendo At the Marsh*, which was inspired by "the evening's grand performance, demanding attention and focus," she says. Originally at the docks to paint the working boats, the sky's effects on the waterfront captivated her. She did a small field sketch to capture color notes, bringing that with

her to complete the work in the studio. Hitt adds, "As artists we can only hope to capture a shadow of the divine unfolding before us, but it is a passion and energy that cannot be ignored or denied, and simply must be painted."

**S L Johnson** is always drawn to the sea. "The incredible play of light at that one moment before the sun sets reminds me of the beauty around us all the time if we care to notice," she says. "It inspires me to savor life and let difficulties slip away with the tide."

"I like paintings that invite you into them or speak to something inside you," continues Johnson. "Each message is unique to the viewer and can change with

the day or prompt a memory that encourages a smile of fond remembrance and nourishes the soul."

In February **Nancy Balmert's** floral paintings were recognized in Venice, Italy, where she received the Tiziano Artist of Nations Award. "The last time I was there was in the middle of the summer, when the weather was beautiful," she says. "This time—in the winter—there was rain; because of tidal flooding St. Mark's Piazza was underwater. It even snowed one day! But even in winter weather, Venice is so beautiful and fascinating. I'm a water person, and in Venice water is the essence of the city. Everything seems to happen on the water, and, of course, there are the gondolas!" ●

## FEATURED Artists & Galleries

### ADDISON ART GALLERY

43 S. Orleans Road, Orleans, MA 02653  
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### AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MARINE ARTISTS

P.O. Box 2903, Gainesville, GA 30503  
[www.americansocietyofmarineartists.com](http://www.americansocietyofmarineartists.com)

### THE GALLERY AT TREE'S PLACE

60 Route 6A, Orleans MA 02653  
(508) 255-5996, [www.treesplace.com](http://www.treesplace.com)

### GLEASON FINE ART

31 Townsend Avenue  
Boothbay Harbor, ME 04538  
(207) 633-6849, [www.gleasonfineart.com](http://www.gleasonfineart.com)

### JACOBINA TRUMP

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[www.jacobinatrump.com](http://www.jacobinatrump.com)

### KAREN ANN HITT

(941) 586-0207, [kanorighitt@gmail.com](mailto:kanorighitt@gmail.com)  
[www.anoriginalhitt.com](http://www.anoriginalhitt.com)

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### LISA GLEIM

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