



Art in Embassies Exhibition
United States Embassy Muscat

Anne Marie Price **Springtime Vibez**, 2020
Surfboard, mirror mosaic, 86 x 19 x 2 in. (218,4 x 48,3 x 5,1 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Huntington Beach, California

Art in Embassies

Established in 1963, the U.S. Department of State's office of Art in Embassies (AIE) plays a vital role in our nation's public diplomacy through a culturally expansive mission, creating temporary and permanent exhibitions, artist programming, and publications. The Museum of Modern Art first envisioned this global visual arts program a decade earlier. In the early 1960s, President John F. Kennedy formalized it, naming the program's first director. Now with over 200 venues, AIE curates temporary and permanent exhibitions for the representational spaces of all U.S. chanceries, consulates, and embassy residences worldwide, selecting and commissioning contemporary

art from the U.S. and the host countries. These exhibitions provide international audiences with a sense of the quality, scope, and diversity of both countries' art and culture, establishing AIE's presence in more countries than any other U.S. foundation or arts organization.

AIE's exhibitions allow citizens, many of whom might never travel to the United States, to personally experience the depth and breadth of our artistic heritage and values, making what has been called a "footprint that can be left where people have no opportunity to see American art."

<https://art.state.gov/>

Welcome

Since I arrived in Oman in January 2020, I have been struck by how both the United States and Oman are countries with vast coastlines and large cities. I have chosen the art for my Residence in Muscat to show American interpretations of my country's urban, seaside, and lakeside landscapes. Individually and collectively, the art exhibited here symbolizes some of the diverse landscapes, waterscapes, and people of the United States, which I believe Omanis are in a unique position to appreciate. I welcome Omani and other guests who visit my Residence to offer their own interpretations of the artworks.

I extend my thanks to Art in Embassies for connecting me with these wonderful artists and to the artists themselves for generously loaning their work. Also, I am grateful to Art in Embassies staff for their hard work and dedication in creating this exhibition and catalog.

Ambassador Leslie M. Tsou

*Muscat, Oman
September 2021*

Erik Asla

(born 1964)

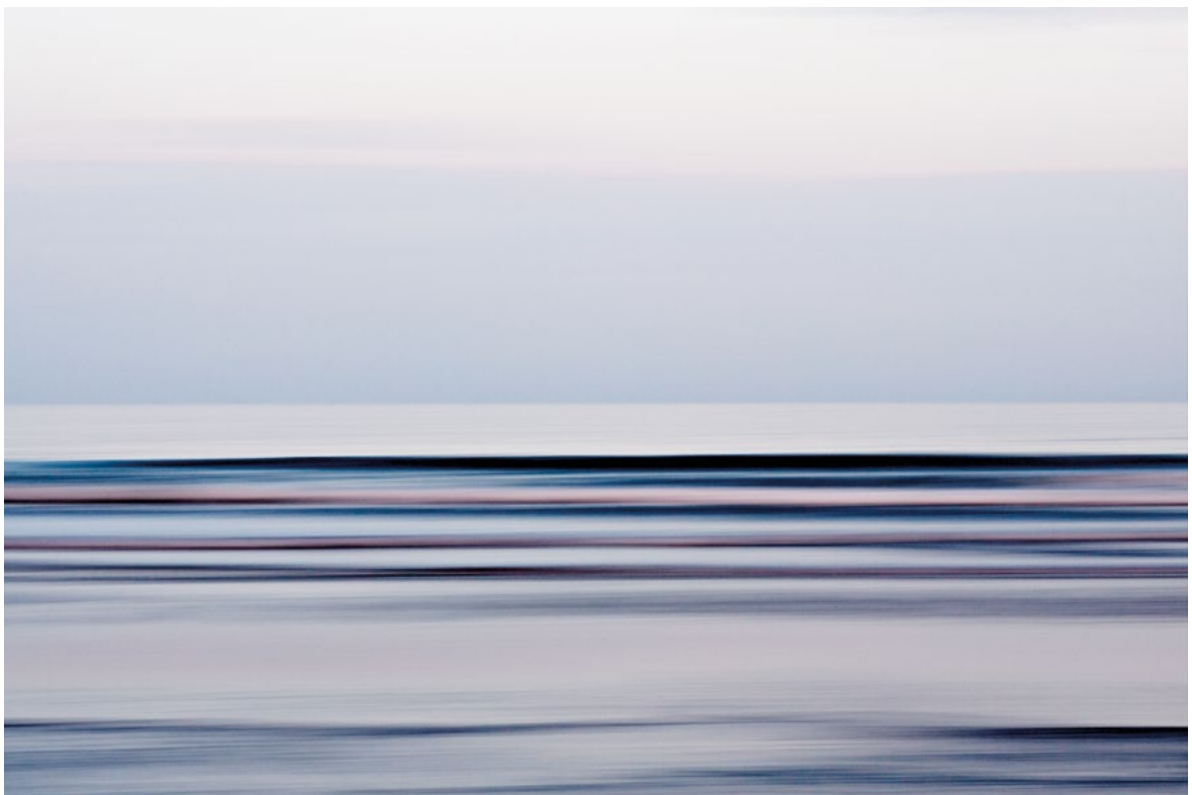
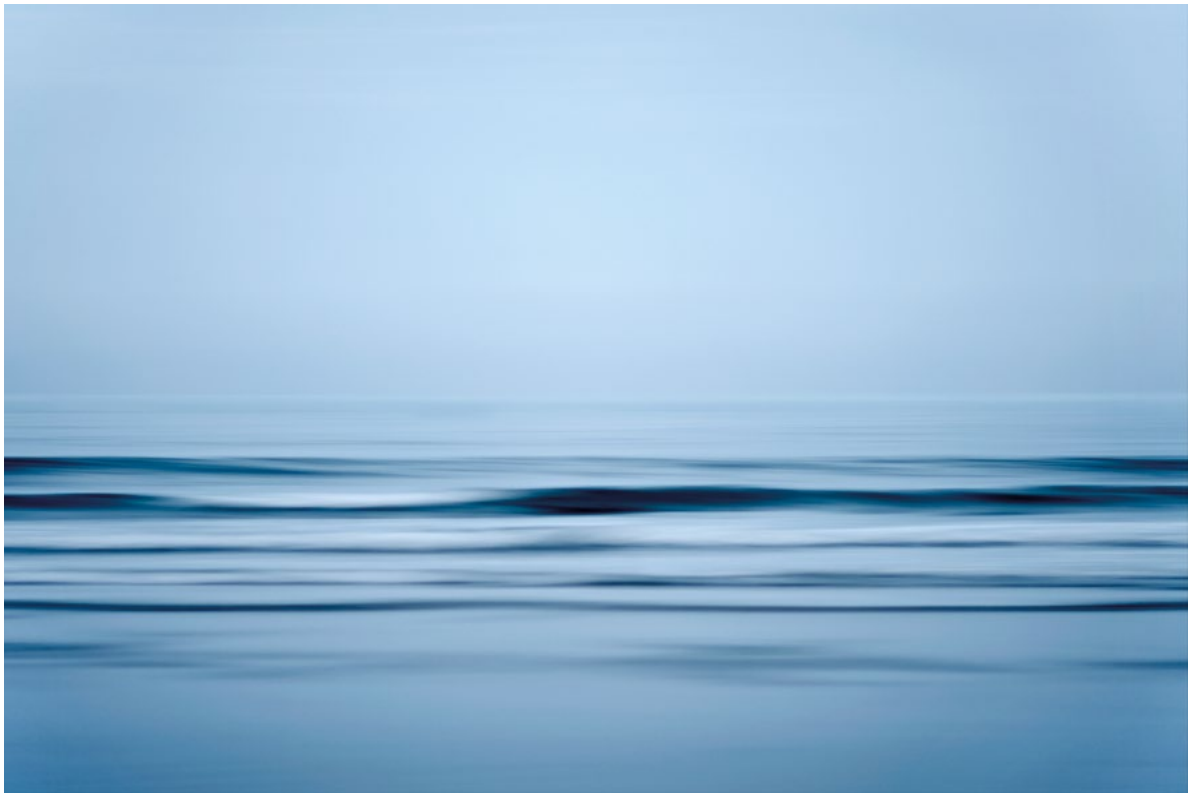
Santa Monica, 4:41 am and *Santa Monica, 5:13 am* are part of Erik Asla's *The Stillness of Motion* series, which seeks to show the ocean in the contradictory state of frenetic movement that evokes tranquility.¹ Most commonly known for his advertising work for major corporations such as Saks Fifth Avenue, Audi, and Calvin Klein, as well as editorial work for notable magazines such as *Bazaar*, *German Vogue*, *Vanity Fair*, the *New York Times Magazine*, and *Tatler*,² Asla recently decided to focus less on commercial work and devote more time to fine art photography, drawn to its artistic freedom and solitary endeavors.³ Influenced by Robert Rauschenberg and Roy Lichtenstein, his photos capture the serenity and movement of the sea, sky, and beach.

Asla was born in Drammen, Norway, but now lives and works in California. Early in his career, he served as a photographic assistant to renowned fashion and celebrity photographer Herb Ritts. His first solo exhibition occurred in Palm Springs in June of 2017, and his first major show at a European gallery was at Galleri Semmingsen in Oslo, Norway, in 2018.

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(top) **Santa Monica, 4:41 am**, undated
Archival pigment print mounted on aluminum
42 x 62 in. (106,7 x 157,5 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Santa Monica, California

(bottom) **Santa Monica, 5:13 am**, undated
Archival pigment print mounted on aluminum
42 x 62 in. (106,7 x 157,5 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Santa Monica, California



Penny Carter

Often involving saturations in light and shadow, the compositions in Penny Carter's photorealistic paintings depict two paradoxical settings: the slower pace of her hometown in Rock Hill, South Carolina, and the bustling sprawl of her home in New York City.⁴ Carter captures the glamour of city life and the magnitude of urban skyscrapers in her works, but she evokes nostalgia for her past with humble Southern vignettes of country neighborhoods, families, newsstands, shopkeepers, and horse races. The artist says that each painting conjures up a "mysterious place where anything might happen, a landscape overflowing with possibilities of which [she is] hopeful, yet not entirely optimistic."⁵

Carter earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina, then a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence in 1971. She has illustrated books, magazines, and newspapers, and she created window illustrations for Tiffany & Company and the Russian Tea Room; she designs dinnerware and packaging for the latter. Her clients include Walt Disney World and the *New York Times*.⁶ Carter's work has been exhibited in solo and group exhibitions, including the Lancaster County Council of the Arts in South Carolina, Gallery 138 in New York, and the Franklin G. Burroughs-Simeon B. Chapin Art Museum in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.



Madison Morning, undated
Acrylic on paper, 12 ½ x 10 in. (31,8 x 25,4 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, New York



Lost Conversation, undated
Acrylic on paper, 13 x 10 ¾ in. (33 x 26,4 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, New York

Ed Malcik

Former diplomat Ed Malcik's work finds itself at the center of fine art photography and documentary, encouraging the viewer to reflect on and describe what is seen in his renditions. He depicts urban landscapes through signs and street art, mainly featuring scenes without people. "In the theater of city streets, I am as interested in the stage as the actors,"⁷ he said of his documentary style.

A member of the National Press Photographers Association, Malcik studied photojournalism at the University of Texas, Austin, and was a staff photographer for the Texas House of Representatives and the *Austin American-Statesman*. He freelanced for the Associated Press, the United Press International, and various

publications such as *Cosmopolitan*, *Texas Monthly*, and the *New York Times*, among others.⁸ In 1980, Malcik was a Peace Corps volunteer in the Republic of The Gambia, West Africa, working with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). From 1985–2010, he served as a U.S. Foreign Services Officer in eight countries and Washington, D.C. After retiring from diplomacy, he continued his artistic passion and worked on photographic projects in Paris; Chennai, India; New York; and Austin, Texas.⁹ His photographs are in the Wittliff Collections at Texas State University in San Marcos and have been exhibited in Europe, India, and the United States.



Fashion Week, undated
Color photograph, 17 x 22 in. (43,2 x 55,9 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Austin, Texas

Virginia Praschnik

(born 1962)

“My stories are told without words, so you can hear with your eyes,” says Virginia Praschnik about her creative process: telling the story on a canvas, inviting the imagination to sense a where, when, or why.¹⁰ Painting in thick layers with a palette knife allows Praschnik to emphasize textures and experiment with color and contrast, giving her representational artwork a distinct character. She has achieved success in both design and visual art, but painting is her preferred method of expression.

Born in San José, Uruguay, Praschnik gained artistic experience at her mother’s studio, starting art school at age five.¹¹ In 1981, she moved to New York, where she first pursued metalsmithing, design, and sculpture. She then moved to Miami Beach, Florida, in 1987 and became a visual artist and a jewelry designer at Praschnik Fine Jewelers. She exhibited her work at Art Basel in Miami Beach and Art Impact International,¹² and she was a featured artist in *Artist Portfolio* magazine.¹³



El Faro, undated
Oil on canvas, 16 x 20 in. (40,6 x 50,8 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Bay Harbor Islands, Florida

Anne Marie Price

Self-taught mosaic artist Anne Marie Price uses tesserae, or cut stained glass and ceramic pieces, to add detailed elements to her works that the viewer cannot easily see, non-verbal clues that “we need to look closely at our world in order to appreciate all its many facets.”¹⁴ Her intricate mosaics vacillate between abstract and contemporary, as well as nature and portraiture. Drawn to the beaches of Southern California, she is also known for her temporary mosaic beach art. These works incorporate plastic found in the sand and aim to make passers-by think about humanity’s impact on the coastal ecosystem. She originally began creating mosaic surfboards like *Springtime Vibez* as part of a commission for a local charity auction.¹⁵

Originally from Wisconsin, Price moved to California in 2011 to focus on her craft. Her prizes include the People’s Choice Award for *Like Sun and Waves I Rise*, the first mosaic surfboard dedicated to women surfers, and the Olive Stack Artist’s Residency in Ireland.¹⁶ She is a member of the Society of American Mosaic Artists, the Artist Guild of Fallbrook Art Center, and the Huntington Beach Art Council. Her works have been exhibited at the Ciel Gallery, Charlotte, North Carolina; the Institute of Mosaic Art, Berkeley, California; and the Irvine Arts Center, California.



Springtime VibeZ, 2020

Surfboard, mirror mosaic, 86 x 19 x 2 in. (218,4 x 48,3 x 5,1 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Huntington Beach, California

Seth Tane

(born 1953)

Seth Tane is fascinated by the sights and sounds of rural landscapes and urban environments. Utilizing traditional oil painting materials and methods, he paints from personal experiences to illustrate what he sees in a world of accelerating change. Tane typically features views of San Francisco, New York City's subway, portraits of abandoned railroad tracks and trains, shipyards, and diverse marine subjects. His artwork seeks to portray a stimulating view of America from a new and interesting perspective.¹⁷

Tane has a natural facility with tools and began his career with welded steel sculpture; he later transitioned into mixed media at the Rhode Island School of Design in the early 1970s. Although he was working with three-dimensional art, Tane always appreciated realist paintings, and he eventually became an oil painter. In 1979, he moved from Portland, Oregon, to New York City, purchasing an oil tanker to use as a

living space and studio. An introduction to the working waterfront led Tane to earn a captain's license and start a specialty maritime consulting business that included towing and commercial salvage. He also used his specialized equipment to move large-scale sculptures for well-known artists, galleries, and museums. In 2006, Tane returned to painting and occasional sculpture full-time.¹⁸ He has received several awards, including the New Jersey Humanities Council Film Grant, the Special Project Grant by the South Carolina Arts Council, and the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant. His works have been exhibited at the Gibbes Museum, Charleston, South Carolina; the Owensboro Museum of Fine Art, Kentucky; and the Modernism Gallery in San Francisco, California.¹⁹



Hilltop, 2014

Oil on panel, 6 ¾ x 10 in. (17,1 x 25,4 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Portland, Oregon, and New York



Union Sq. Halal, 2013

Oil on panel, 6 ¾ x 10 in. (17,1 x 25,4 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Portland, Oregon, and New York



GYRO, 2013

Oil on panel, 6 ¾ x 10 in. (17,1 x 25,4 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Portland, Oregon, and New York



Looking down at the Bowery, 2019
Oil on panel, 6 ¾ x 10 in. (17,1 x 25,4 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Portland, Oregon, and New York



Lonely Platforms, 2014
Oil on panel, 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 in. (17,1 x 25,4 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Portland, Oregon, and New York



Upper Deck, 2014

Oil on panel, 6 ¾ x 10 in. (17,1 x 25,4 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Portland, Oregon, and New York



Stockton & Clay, S.F., 2011
Oil on panel, 47 x 71 ¼ in. (119,4 x 181 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Portland, Oregon, and New York



Pointy End of the Platform, 2017
Oil on panel, 6 ¾ x 10 in. (17,1 x 25,4 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Portland, Oregon, and New York



Chelsea Rooftop, 2014

Oil on panel, 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 in. (17,1 x 25,4 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Portland, Oregon, and New York

Thomas A.D. Watson

(born 1965)

Third-generation artist Thomas Aldren Dingman Watson is recognized for his representational oil and watercolor landscapes of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and the Adirondack Mountains in New York. From his twenty-foot Simmons Sea-Skiff, Watson translates what he sees in nature into sketches which he later paints.²⁰ Each painting can be interpreted as a nostalgic window to the past, as Watson creates scenes as he remembers them from his childhood. His artworks are virtually devoid of human life, although some paintings include distant figures “completely subservient to the landscape.”²¹

A lifelong New Englander, Watson was raised in Vermont surrounded by creativity with a family of artists. His grandfather, Ernest W. Watson, was an engraver who taught drawing and design at the Pratt Institute in New York; as editor of *American Artist* through 1955, he interviewed more than 200 artists.²² His father, Aldren A. Watson, was an artist and author known for his pencil illustrations in books such as *Country Furniture* and *The Watson Drawing Book* (co-authored with Ernest Watson). His mother, also an author, wrote fiction and poetry for children and adults. Watson graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence won the St. Botolph Club Foundation Annual Visual Artists award.

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(top) **Cape Cod Light**, 2010

Oil on linen, 37 ¾ x 51 ¾ in. (95,9 x 131,4 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Truro, Massachusetts

(bottom) **Long Point, Provincetown**, 2016

Oil on linen, 37 ¾ x 51 ¾ in. (95,9 x 131,4 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Truro, Massachusetts



Meghan Weeks

(born 1986)

Meghan Weeks paints her representational landscapes and seascapes en plein air, or on-site outdoors, later reworking them in her studio. Her compositions are flooded with light, shadow, and vivid color painted with impressionistic brushstrokes, and she seeks to transport her viewers to a time, place, and sense of being through her works.²³ “I think that there is something profound in drawing a viewer’s attention to a moment through the fundamentals of temperature, atmosphere, and light; the idea that one person’s experience of a place can evoke the same sensation for another through the surface of a canvas astounds me. I believe that relaying the most basic products of human perception is a powerful concept in itself,” she says.²⁴

Weeks earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in architecture from Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, and a Master of Arts degree in curating at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London. She also completed coursework and seminars at the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, London; the International School of Painting, Drawing, and Sculpture, Umbria, Italy; and the College of Art Centre for Continuing Studies in Edinburgh, Scotland. She was awarded the T. Whitney Blake Memorial Prize at Yale University and the SteepleArts artist residency in Newburgh, Scotland. The Vanderbilt Gallery, Nantucket, Massachusetts; the Arts Club, London; the Massachusetts Audubon Society, Lincoln; and Sloan Merrill Gallery in Boston have exhibited her paintings.²⁵ Weeks lives and works in Boston.



Top of the Hill, Stonington, undated
Oil on linen, 17 x 21 in. (43,2 x 53,3 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Boston, Massachusetts



Hello, Goodbye, 2020
Oil on canvas, 14 ¼ x 18 ¼ in. (36,2 x 46,4 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Boston, Massachusetts



Tom's Idea, undated
Oil on linen, 13 x 17 in. (33 x 43,2 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Boston, Massachusetts

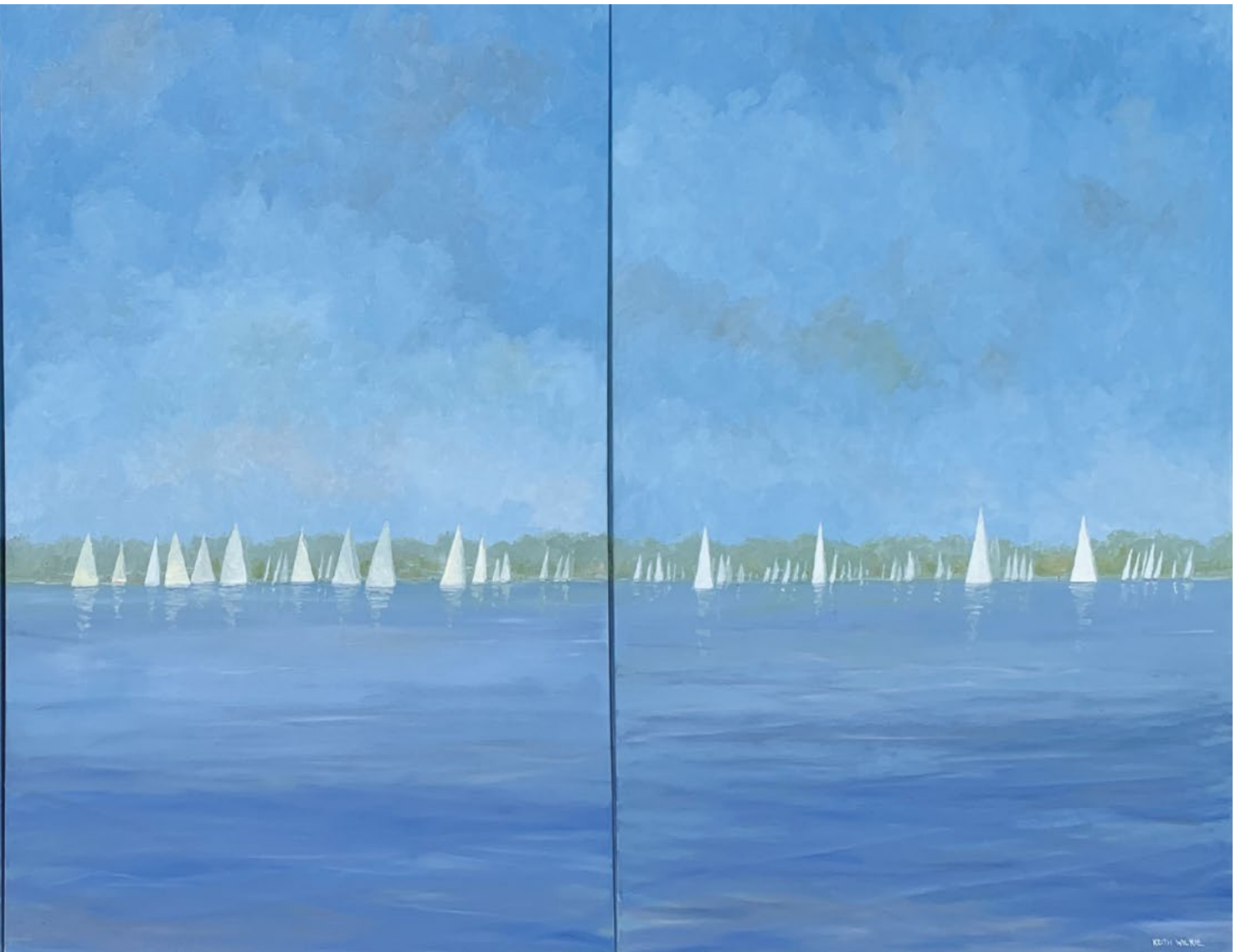
Keith Wilkie

"A great deal of inspiration arrives while on the water in a boat, whether sailing, fishing, or simply cruising local waterways...I try to capture those feelings, the light and mood when I paint, regardless of the subject,"²⁶ says Keith Wilkie, a self-taught visual artist, sailor, and traveler. His oil and acrylic paintings evoke the peaceful and stormy nature of coastal landscapes, marine subjects, and other maritime moments from the Chesapeake Bay to the Caribbean. When he paints, memories emerge for Wilkie, like fishing and boating with his father and grandfather in the Carolinas.

A member of the American Society of Marine Artists and Oil Painters of America, Wilkie now paints full-time after retiring from the U.S. Department of State but maintains his U.S. Coast Guard captain's license.²⁷ His works were featured in the *Fine Art Connoisseur*, *American Art Collector*, and *Southwest Art Magazine*. Wilkie's paintings have been shown in the Annapolis Maritime Museum, Maryland; the Coos Art Museum, Coos Bay, Oregon; the Biggs Museum of American Art, Dover, Delaware; the Buffalo and Erie County Naval & Military Park Museum, New York; the Healdsburg Center for the Arts, California; and the Richeson School of Art & Gallery, Kimberly, Wisconsin; among others. He lives and works near Charleston, South Carolina.



Calm Regatta, undated
Oil on canvas, Triptych: 48 x 90 in. (121,9 x 228,6 cm)
Each panel: 48 x 30 (121,9 x 76,2 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Meggett, South Carolina



Elaine Wilson

(born 1958)

“My paintings are about revealing the specific nature of a place through repeated encounters versus capturing a particular moment. Over several visits, I find out more about a setting to see if I can unearth a rhythm of mark and color that elevates what I notice into something that others will find compelling. Every place has stories. As I work, I discover what they are. Sometimes stories are brought to a place by the individuals who populate my paintings with their errands, their play, and their work. While I choose a site primarily for its visual quality, the stories contribute to the richness of the experience,” says Elaine S. Wilson.²⁸ Her paintings, typically twenty feet long and inspired by Chinese landscape handscrolls and Italian murals, are based on drawings done en plein air, or on-site outdoors.²⁹

Wilson received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the Washington University School of Art, St. Louis, and a Master of Fine Arts degree in painting from the Yale School of Art at Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. She has over thirty years of teaching experience at the College for Creative Studies in Detroit and the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence and has hosted lectures and art workshops at universities in Indiana and Michigan. In 1983, Wilson was awarded the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation grant, allowing her to travel around Italy for two months. She also participated in fellowships at the National Endowment for the Arts and Joseph and Anni Albers Foundation in Bethany, Connecticut. Her works have been exhibited extensively across the U.S., including at ArtSpace, New Haven, Connecticut; the Painting Center, New York; and the Washington, D.C. Historical Society. The Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., and corporations such as Herman Miller and Cigna hold her work in their collections.



Statehood Yes!, 2017

Oil on canvas

31 ¾ x 21 ¾ x 2 ½ in.

(80,6 x 55,2 x 6,4 cm)

Courtesy of the artist,
Silver Spring, Maryland

Notes

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- 20 "Watson Biography," Thomas A.D. Watson Artist's Studio, accessed September 29, 2020, <http://thomasadwatson.com/Pages/Biography/Biography.html>.
- 21 John Greiner-Ferris, "Truro painter Thomas Watson goes forward into the past," the *Provincetown Banner*, August 1, 2019, <https://truro.wickedlocal.com/entertainment/20190801/truro-painter-thomas-watson-goes-forward-into-past>.
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- 24 "Artist Statement," Meghan Weeks, accessed January 5, 2021, <https://www.megcweeks.com/-artist-statement.html>.
- 25 "CV," Meghan Weeks, accessed September 29, 2020, <https://www.megcweeks.com/cv.html>.
- 26 Keith Wilkie, email to the author, September 21, 2020.
- 27 "About the Artist," Keith Wilkie Art Studio, accessed September 29, 2020, <https://www.keithwilkieart.com/about>.
- 28 "Elaine Wilson. American artist, born 1958," Artline, accessed January 6, 2021, https://www.artline.com/artists/dealers_artists/wilson-elaine.php.
- 29 Elaine Wilson, email to the author, September 21, 2020.

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