

# SHARON MCGAULEY



*One Boat, Early Morning • Oil on canvas • 30" x 30"*

In some ways, the form and process of Sharon McGauley's art represents the scope of Cape Cod's landscape. Just as the eye can take in an entire harbor or an expanse of seashore, it can also zoom in on something as small as an individual person wading out on the flats, a single dinghy in the peach-pink gauze of a foggy dawn, or even pebbles and grains of sand at water's edge. Sharon McGauley's paintings range in size from tiny to the grand. She beautifully

captures both expansive seascapes (as in Cotton Candy Cloud and Twilights) and human figures with their myriad personalities (such as the The Pink Pirate and the swimmers in Going Under).

Painting in different sizes and subjects animates McGauley as an artist. "I love making paintings of all sizes," she says. "I have a feeling of being excited to paint most every time I pick up my brush, no matter

what size I am working on. Larger paintings can be in my studio for weeks, or even months, so to have a little painting come together in an afternoon is fun and satisfying in a different way."

Although McGauley has painted all over the country, her connection to this area runs deep. "Cape Cod has been the most consistent and long running influence in my work," she says. "I visited the Cape for the first time as a young child, with family friends, and the first painting I made was of dunes from that trip. It still hangs in my parents' house. At this point it's a cliché to talk about the light and the beauty here, but there is a reason it's a cliché - it's true. It's incredible that in a place so full of people, it is still so easy to feel immersed in its wild beauty."

McGauley continues to paint a variety of subjects, and recently has focused on portraits in a new way. "There has been an evolution in my paintings of people," she explains. "I started my career painting land and seascapes. After a while, people started appearing. At first, they were far away and blurry - tiny figures blending into the atmosphere around them. Recently



*Cotton Candy Cloud • Oil on canvas • 36" x 25"*



*Pink Pirate • Oil on board • 6" x 6"*

I have been more interested in their personalities, so they have come into focus, and the seascapes have moved back onto their own canvases."

There's a surreal, utopian quality to many of McGauley's paintings, and her love of people shines amid the warm colors of her scenes and backgrounds. Many of her figures are impressionistic and abstracted, so for instance, The Pink Pirate has a straw-like neck and forearms and might either be a young child going to dress-up day at a local yacht club or a grandmother headed out to a masquerade beach party. This whimsical quality is intentional. She explains: "Sometimes I paint my family and friends, sometimes I see someone (often at the beach), am charmed by them, and imagine putting them on a canvas. I am usually too embarrassed to ask for a photo, but sometimes I do, or I do sketches, or I just make them up when I get back to my studio. In this way, they have a caricature quality. I can play with the paint and my feeling about them more than worry about what they look like. I am smiling the entire time I am painting them. People are so funny and charming and sweet. I guess that's something I have always walked around seeing. To have the experience of translating that into paint is delightful." 🍷

~ Chris White

*You can find Sharon McGauley's work at Addison Art Gallery in Orleans and at [addisonart.com](http://addisonart.com)*

SEE MORE OF SHARON MCGAULEY'S WORK AT [ADDISONART.COM](http://ADDISONART.COM)