

Paul Batch

If Paul Batch's paintings were compiled into a slide show, sitting in the dark, as the saturated tonal hues of his landscapes progressed from slide to slide, allowing ample time to digest the scenes, one might feel as though they are getting a glimpse into this intriguing artist's personal memories.

Like our memories can be, Batch's treatment of his compositions feels reality adjacent. They are not specific in their detail, instead they are imbued with emotion—as represented by the intensity of his colors. The serene, atmospheric elements of Paul Batch's oil paintings seem to have sprung from rooted memories that have found a home on his canvas.

Batch, who was born and raised in Massachusetts, says his family's summer sojourns from the western part of the state to the Cape were filled with a sense of excited anticipation. "As we approached the

bridge, I knew I was in for something special. I'm a bit older now, but hitting the bridge still brings back those summer memories." Today, raising a young family in his new home of Georgia—where he says the more temperate climate lured him—the sentimentality of place is found in each of his landscapes.

Heavily influenced by the tonalist movement, where Batch asserts that one of the main characteristics of the movement is that the intention of the work focuses more on a poetic response to the world around us, rather than a more direct representation of specific places. "I let the process decide how literal and how abstract a piece becomes. Many of my paintings are done in multiple layers and built up over time. What often happens is that the more layers that are involved, the more abstract the image can become. Abstraction in my work comes from the



Afternoon Flock • Oil on panel • 12" x 16"



Summer Afternoon • Oil on panel • 9" x 12"

physical act of painting in search of the meaning of what I'm trying to convey," the artist explains.

The simplified composition of Batch's scenes is not complicated by superfluous details, allowing the viewer to soak up the subliminal point of focus Batch has deftly highlighted. "I do a lot of editing, stripping the landscape down to a bare minimum. The design or composition of the painting dictates a lot of the feel a piece will have. One of the wonderful aspects of painting is that I can move trees and buildings to suit the needs of the painting. In fact, people on the Cape know and love the Cape so well, I have been called out a few times for moving things around," he says with a laugh. "Whether it is the exploration of nature or abstract concepts, each painting tells a unique story that invites the viewer to interpret and connect with my art on their own personal level."

Most of Batch's work appears to present a very disciplined palette, working within a range of tones and colors, and other work extends his color range

in very subtle ways. "I begin each painting with a limited palette, focusing on the value structure, and then add more colors throughout the process," he explains. "The number of colors I use on a single piece can range from six or seven all the way to over 20 different pigments."

And in every painting, the Cape light plays a significant role. "The light is absolutely different along the coast," he reflects. "Coastal light possesses unique characteristics due to its interaction with the ocean, atmosphere and surrounding landscape. The vastness of the shoreline and the way it interacts with the atmosphere is magical. Land masses diffuse into obscurity and the light in my paintings often represents a transitional moment and or a metaphor for hope." 🏠

~Julie Craven Wagner

Paul Batch is exclusively represented on the Cape by Addison Art Gallery in Orleans and online at addisonart.com.