

ARTIST BIOS

www.rhballard.com

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LYNN MEHTA It is important for me to create a painting which is interesting both up close and further away to engage the imagination. Inspiration is something which is honest to me and something which I believe makes a universal connection. Color, composition, and paint handling are key elements in my paintings and tools for my expression. The fluidity and flexibility of oil paint is well-suited to my creative

process. When I paint, I connect with changing light, the color of my surroundings, and movement. I focus on abstract shapes and forms creating a whole.

I grew up along the Pacific Ocean in California and have painted for as long as I can remember. I attribute my love of the outdoors and different places to childhood days at the beach, summer backpacking and camping trips, living in India when I was 10 years old, and miles of traveling. Both new and familiar landscapes inspire me. Beaches, cities, mountains, farms, rivers, deserts, docks trigger my imagination.

My love of art has been my life. I was influenced by the art of my mom who painted the California landscape and encouraged my interest in art by setting up my toddler easel outdoors, enrolling me in art classes, giving me personal instruction, and purchasing art supplies for me.

GISELLE GAUTREAU Giselle creates contemporary landscape paintings in oil and encaustic. She received her MFA in Painting from Virginia Commonwealth University and has a BFA in Painting from Maine College of Art. Giselle has received numerous awards for her work, including a Professional Artist Fellowship from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and exhibited her work for 20+ years and has had multiple solo shows. Her work is in public, private and corporate collections in Canada, the United States, Europe and Japan. The artist states: "In my work I explore my ideas of memory of place, the landscape and ecology. Endlessly influenced by nature, my paintings explore the intersection of color and atmosphere along with the impact of what nature inspires. I paint with numerous layers of oil or encaustic paints, using both opaque and translucent layers to achieve a sense of depth, atmosphere and luminosity. The landscape for me is both visual inspiration and sometimes a metaphor for loss, change, resiliency and adaptation. For me, painting the landscape is a reminder of our connections to it.

MEG WALSH Former National Geographic editor and prolific painter, Meg Walsh, has an eye for the lush hues that dapple the world around us. Painting full-time since 2004, Walsh has honed her craft over the last eighteen years and earned several accolades and awards for her work. A member of the American Impressionist Society, her paintings are masterful examples of impressionist and postimpressionist color schemes. Walsh's command of these techniques elevates her work into dreamy renditions evoking the nostalgia of a life lived with rose-colored lenses. Dripping with dimension and life, Walsh welcomes viewers into a moment and invites them to share in mindful appreciation of the space around them. R.H. Ballard Gallery has been proud to continue hosting Walsh's artwork for more than a decade. Her work is

also featured in museums and private collections, showcasing her plein-air landscapes, animals, and still life paintings. Walsh earned a place in the book 100 Plein Air Painters of the Mid-Atlantic, as well as awards from juried plein-air competitions, cementing her prowess amongst great artists in the region.

ROBERT H. BALLARD Robert creates a series of abstract images relating to his love of color and composition. These are organic paintings that are not pre planned but evolve as they go forward. His paintings are built up in layers of color and texture and start by creating a concept of a composition. This progresses organically until the painting is realized and shows itself to be finished. Since he has always worked in series, each painting builds from the last one in technique and color which allows the idea to evolve. Robert studied painting at San Francisco State University, where he received a BA degree and The California College of the Arts in Oakland, CA where he received his MFA. He spent over 40 years as a Director and Curator of public and private galleries across the globe, including founding the Govett-Brewster Gallery in New Plymouth, New Zealand and has exhibited work across the United States. He is included in numerous private and public collections. Since 1997, He has joined his wife Joan in owning and operating R. H. Ballard Shop & Gallery in Washington, VA

CATHERINE HILLIS My paintings can be described as traditional landscapes, still lifes and figures, but I try to use my unique perspective to draw the viewer into the world as I see it, incorporating humor or beauty whenever possible in unexpected places. As an eager traveler, and perhaps even a bit of a gypsy, I try to view everyday subjects with fresh eyes. Painting on the national plein air circuit for the past decade has only enticed me to travel further and wider. White boats become abstracted shapes of bouncing color. The marsh is a complex tapestry of woven grasses and the seashore is almost too large for me to confine with paint. Colorful street graffiti becomes a modern masterpiece set in a bustling urban landscape. Creating art makes me feel good. I'm relaxed and healthy when I paint and if I'm working outdoors, with the sun shining, birds singing and breezes blowing, I cannot be happier. I paint both en plein air and in the studio but I cannot tell you which I prefer. I only know that whatever piece I'm working on at the time is the one I am meant to create. Our daily lives are hectic. I like to think my work can slow the pace, and make a troubled world feel better as I take a wide view of the chaos and bring focus and order to the pandemonium around me by squinting, and then positioning my pencil and brush onto paper or canvas. Throughout my career, I have admired, studied and found inspiration in past masters of my medium, Winslow Homer, who tells stories with paint, John Singer Sargent with his marvelous technical ability, Edward Hopper and his brooding landscapes and the masterful Andrew Wyeth. I greatly admire and follow the work of contemporary painters John Salminen and Joseph Zbukvik. Teaching art provides me another regular, joyful outlet. I believe in giving back. I'm devoted to sharing what I know with students. I'm a believer in common sense instruction and providing lifelong skills to each learner. I have proudly served as a member of the faculty at the re-known Art League School in Alexandria, Virginia; Frederick Community College in Maryland, and in many art centers across the

USA and around the world. I continue each year to conduct workshops nationally and internationally.

BRIDGETTE GUERZON MILLS Bridgette Guerzon Mills is a mixed media artist whose work incorporates a variety of materials including photography, paint, encaustic, as well as fiber, textiles, and other reclaimed materials. Her artwork and journals have been published in magazines and books and her work has been collected in the United States and internationally. She currently resides in Towson, MD with her family. As a mixed media artist, encaustic is a versatile medium that allows her to create depth in layers and serves as a means for further exploration in both form and meaning. She combines her photography with encaustics to create a bridge between two worlds, the real and the reconstructed. The canvas becomes a multilayered surface that speaks to both the visual and tactile senses. Her outdoor installations, often created using foraged or recycled materials, focus on environmental issues and seek to engage and educate the public about these concerns.

TOM TARTAGLINO Although I am an art school graduate, my training and experience come from a lifetime love of painting. Art school gave me helpful hints. My inspiration for a work of art usually happens while observing a scene many times. The scene will draw me in and I start to see what it is I am attracted to. I will try to capture a psychological truth about my subject, which I see in plein aire impressionism, but I will be looking for subtleties that an impressionistic handling would miss. Through close observation, I concentrate on the details that make it realistic and truthful. When complete, it will be about something beyond the scene. It will have a depiction of a physical person or place, but carry a mood we all identify with.

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