

## ARTIST BIOS

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

**r.h. ballard gallery – 307 Main Street – PO BOX 412 – Washington, VA 22747**

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**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.

**LAURA HOPKINS** works in the tradition of the 19th century American Tonalists, painting expressive, atmospheric landscapes in oil. The ephemeral light of twilight, dawn, and evening, particularly in autumn and winter, serve as favorite motifs.

Although Laura creates much of her work in the studio from memory and imagination, her painting process remains rooted in time spent outdoors drawing, painting, taking photographs, and appreciating the beauty of the natural world. These studies, drawings, and photos serve as a creative wellspring. Her intuitive, gestural approach leads to paintings that can vary from closely representative of a specific place to boldly imagined from an abstract start.

Laura is largely self-taught, having come to painting late in life. She continues to explore the work of 19th century American Tonalists and to study with contemporary painters.

Laura is a member of the Oil Painters of America, the American Impressionist Society, the Art League, Mid-Atlantic Plein Air Painters, the Loudoun Sketch Club, the Artists in Middleburg Gallery, and the Lyme Art Association. Her award-winning work has been featured in Elan Magazine and Middleburg Life.

**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.

**PATRICIA McMAHON RICE** is an award-winning artist specializing in fine art oil paintings in the Classical Realist tradition.

Her artistic approach combines a thoughtful blend of past and present, using time-honored techniques and materials of the great masters while adding her own contemporary flare, resulting in works of art that are aesthetically beautiful and unmistakably unique.

**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.

**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.