



Hillary Osborn's Cape Cod: Where Art finds the Perfect Home

by Molly Stoloff

Absorbed by the simple, sometimes austere beauty of Cape landscapes, Hillary Osborn experiences an emotional range from serenity to exhilaration when she's painting. The results evoke similar responses in those who view her works.

In choosing a particular scene she explains that while she may be drawn to the view, her decision to paint it depends on an internal response.

As a child, Hillary enjoyed creative projects. Her high school art teacher, Miss Eldridge, inscribed a pivotal book on Degas and presented it to her, transforming the book into a symbol of her dream.



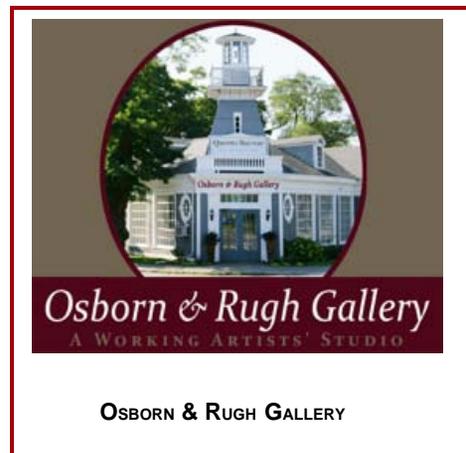
Megansett Spring. Oil on Canvas, 11x14
Published courtesy of www.HillaryOsborn.com

During 1983, her high school art class traveled to New York City to tour artist studios and visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In that same year, Hillary won the Globe Key Award for a small wax figure astride a horse, displayed at the Prudential Center in Boston.

After graduating, she attended the University of Massachusetts, earning a BA in Fine Art. She then entered the MFA program at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, where she found wider ranges of artistic expression.

She focused on painting in oils, a family background providing the backdrop for her decision. A talented grandmother, a paternal line of Vineyard artists, a maternal great-uncle, and a respected Canadian artist with work in museums all influenced her decision. During the advanced studies she narrowed her focus to landscape/cityscape painting.

Her MFA complete, she returned home where she exhibited work and won awards. She supported herself briefly in an unrelated field to enable her to continue in her chosen vocation, and questioned the ability to support herself doing the work she loved.



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After joining the Falmouth Artists Guild, she served on its board of directors, teaching, showing, selling, and learning something she knew little about, the business side of making art.

A Provincetown gallery solicited work, requesting local scenes. In supplying the gallery the following summer she built a body of work, traveling to and from Provincetown weekly to paint. Each move – be it to a new studio or new gallery – reinforced her belief in the work.



Winter Thaw, Oil on Canvas, 9" x 10 "

Published courtesy of www.HillaryOsborn.com

Her search revealed available studio space at the Cataumet Arts Center. Having met artist Doug Rugh prior to the move, the two artists now found themselves in adjacent studios.

A New York City gallery discovered her work, exhibiting and selling it in the City. In 2004, Hillary and Doug were married.

In Cataumet, Hillary took in student interns, passing on knowledge and studio experience to a younger generation. She joined the Copley Society, exhibited, and increased sales, her reputation expanding. Faced again with shrinking space, together the couple searched for a gallery location.

Prepared now to manage a business, they renovated and moved into Queens Buyway. Hillary remembers their gallery building from childhood, "as the big white one we passed on the way to the ferry, the one with all the windows and a cupola over the doorway."

Today, works by Hillary and her husband cover the walls of their gallery. Occasionally the landscapes are punctuated by a still life, rarely a piece with a figure.

Working 'plein air,' she transfers what she sees and feels on location to the canvas, sketching at first, followed by additional on-site and studio work.



Secluded Beach, Oil on Canvas, 24" x 36" Published courtesy of www.HillaryOsborn.com



Osborn & Rugh Gallery, in Falmouth

Envisioning their studio/gallery as an inclusive center, they planned from the start to make their work public from inception to sale.

Visitors can view and discuss the ongoing work, sign up for a class or make a purchase, all under the same roof. Their goal was one of inclusiveness. Open to a variety of creative expression, they host poetry readings, lectures, musical performances, book signings, and writing groups.

Several of Hillary's paintings are currently on display at Highfield Hall, a locally restored mansion which hosts community events.

If you prefer to talk with the artist, head to the Osborn & Rugh Gallery where she paints and sells. Located at the junction as you turn onto Queen's Buyway, there's ample parking across the street or behind the building.

Call ahead to confirm she's there. Ask about her inspirations, the next classes, or simply watch her as she works.





Molly Stoloff appreciates the arts, from music to painting to dance to literature. Born in Canada, she emigrated in 1959 to attend school in the U.S. She married an American, raised a family and was published in the Christian Science Monitor. With her children grown, she moved with her husband to Cape Cod and retired.

An early love of writing was reinvigorated after taking a local writing class. Molly co-wrote a ten-minute play entitled, *The Writer's Circle*, performed at the opening of the Algonquin Theatre in New York City in 2007, and won second place in the 2008 Prime Time Contest for prose. This is her first article for CapeWomenOnline magazine.