

UPCOMING SHOW

Up to 20 works on show
June 29-July 12, 2008
The Field Gallery
1050 State Road
West Tisbury, MA 02575
(508) 693-5595

• SHOW LOCATION WEST TISBURY, MA



BEN JOHNSON

Sea and sky

The exquisite detail of birds and their plumage not only sparked Ben Johnson to start painting them more, but it also led him to abandoning his once minimal painting style in favor of one that better captures the particulars of these creatures.

"I had a wonderful experience a few years ago with a good friend who took me birding, and it was the first time I had actually gone out with the intention of identifying different birds," says Johnson. "I just loved it and while I had painted birds prior to that point, they were mainly from imagination and memory. But that experience got me interested in the identification of specific birds and refining my work to match this."

As an artist, it's not just the color and look of the different birds that appeal to Johnson. He is also in awe of flight and

the visual and spiritual history that goes along with this motion that birds appear to do so effortlessly.

"There is something about the ability to fly, something that speaks to my spiritual yearnings and spiritual life," says Johnson. "Flight is the unattainable and there is something about watching another creature fly that is awe-inspiring, and it does seem to speak spiritually to me. The moment you look in the sky and see, say, a Red-tailed Hawk circling above, it literally lifts your feet off the ground for a moment. And there is such a mystery there as well."

For Johnson, his work has always been about the natural world, be it a bird in flight or a place in the landscape of special significance. Johnson is drawn to this subject matter because of the mystery he finds in them and because he has yet to completely express his fascination with it.

His landscape paintings focus on the island of Martha's Vineyard.

"Like the birds, there is a certain mystery to that island," says Johnson. "It seems like there is magic in the rocks on Martha's Vineyard. There is something about the stones and the rocks that I find interesting. Most of my recent landscapes focused on large boulders that fall on the beach, like you see in the painting *Constellation Beach*. It's not the actual name of the spot, but what I refer to it as."

Besides the spiritual element to the land around Martha's Vineyard, Johnson finds several technical aspects of the area that attract him as well.

"I'm looking for an idea of spaciousness and big skies," says Johnson. "The landscapes come from a personal love and experience within that spot, but I also look for compositional concerns."



CLAY CLIFFS, OIL ON PANEL, 18 X 36"

The Collector Says . . .

“One Ben Johnson piece we have reminds me of a place from my childhood. And anyone who comes in my home looks at it and says it reminds them of a place they’ve been as well. I finally asked Ben where it’s from and he said it’s from his mind. I think that’s incredible. The second piece we have is of the ocean and it’s of a place I always want to be able to remember.”

— *Diane Watts, Vineyard Haven, MA*



KINGFISHER, OIL ON PANEL, 11 X 14"

The Gallery Says . . .

“Ben’s work is rooted in the representational genre yet has a modernist sensibility. His paintings exhibit both his exceptional skill and a deep love of his subject matter which is one of the reasons why his paintings have such a wide appeal.”

— *Chris Morse, Owner, The Field Gallery and The Granary Gallery*



CONSTELLATION BEACH, OIL ON PANEL, 8 X 20"



TERN (NUMBER TWO), OIL ON PANEL, 11 X 14"



WINDOWS AND SHADOWS, OIL ON PANEL, 8 X 12"



TALISMAN, OIL ON PANEL, 18 X 36"



SNOW BUNTING, OIL ON PANEL, 10 X 10"

Johnson wants collectors to find a sense of quiet in his work that comes from his love of the natural world and his desire to create paintings that serve as a bridge for collectors into the natural world.

"My wife refers to the paintings as offering up room to breathe," says Johnson. "I want the paintings to act as a connection to the spiritual that I see in the natural world all around us constantly. I love for the paintings to also be appreciated for their attention to detail, to how much room they offer the viewer to inhabit the paintings themselves. There is detail in the painting, but they are still open-ended so collectors can enter into them and have a personal experience with the painting." ●

For a direct link to the exhibiting gallery go to



www.americanartcollector.com

Price Range Indicator

Our at-a-glance Price Range Indicator shows what you can expect to pay for this artist's work.

	Small	Medium	Large
2008	\$950	\$2,500	\$4,500