



PORTSMOUTH
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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PHOTO CAPTION: Barbara Adams. *Tugs Two*. Oil on canvas. Photo by Ken Goldman (kenphotogeek.com)

“ABSTRACTING THE SEACOAST” AT PORTSMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

On October 1, the work of five contemporary artists will be on display in “Abstracting the Seacoast” at Portsmouth Historical Society. The artists—Dustan Knight, Tom Glover, Peter Cady, Barbara Adams, and Brian Chu—have challenged themselves to create new ways of portraying and abstracting their appreciation of this unique coastal area.

In five highly individual styles, “Abstracting the Seacoast” evokes the smell of the salt marsh, the call of seagulls, and the crash of the waves along the coast. It brings to mind the bustle of the docks loading and unloading, while the ubiquitous Moran tugboats chug down the river. Historic Portsmouth, with its venerable red brick buildings, narrow side alleys, and bright, busy Market Square dissolves into the softer natural world of silver pocket beaches and deep pine and birch woods. All these impressions have been incorporated into this inspiring exhibition by these artists.

Each artist approaches the possibilities of abstracting the Seacoast differently. Peter Cady has spent a lifetime observing the marshes, woods, and shore of the Seacoast, while recently he has been exploring use of collage to express his vision of these treasured places. Tom Glover works to incorporate into his paintings what he has learned from John Laurent, Walt Kuhn, Charles Woodbury, and Richard Diebenkorn, and then tries to keep in mind the historical context of this area as he works. Barbara Adams has always treasured the historic buildings of Portsmouth; the connection with her fellow artists in working on this exhibition inspired her to newly creative and energetic visions of the city. In yet another approach, Dustan Knight explores the territory between a literal representation of her Seacoast home and her non-representational emotional experiences living beside the sea. Dustan’s work is loose and easy feeling with nuanced colors and suggested images. Brian Chu paints vernacular cityscapes in active textured colors. He maintains a perspective on subjectivity and objectivity which gives each painting a quiet suspense in his negotiation between the two.

A brochure accompanies this exhibition and highlights several works of each artist. An essay entitled “Seacoast Abstraction” by professional art critic and artist Christopher Volpe is also included.

The opening reception for “Abstracting the Seacoast” is Friday, October 1, from 5 pm to 7 pm, during the Portsmouth-wide monthly open-studio event Art ‘Round Town. The exhibition will be on display through November 18 at Portsmouth Historical Society’s Discover Portsmouth Welcome Center, which is open to the public from 10 am to 5 pm, daily, at 10 Middle Street. Additional information can be found at PortsmouthHistory.org or by calling 603-436-8433.