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'Influenced by the ocean'

Washington artist views, portrays water, stone and air through 'Pacific Portals'

By DWIGHT CASWELL

Marc Boone paints the Pacific Ocean in his current show, "Pacific Portals," open Saturday, June 11 at Astoria's Imogen Gallery. The ocean is seen through apertures — surf-carved holes and spaces between stone pillars in rock formations at the water's edge — and the flat canvasses achieve an abstract depth. The sea in its changing moods is blue and gray and sparkles with silver. The acute triangle of a sail rises above the waves, the boat hidden in a trough, a vibrant slash of white against troubled swells. "I like moving in and out in the picture," says Boone, "and I have always been heavily influenced by the ocean."

Boone found the portals through which he views the Pacific along the Washington coast, and you may recognize Hole in the Wall (west of Forks) or Dead Man's Cove at Cape Disappointment State Park. In his paintings, these real places float in the tenuous world between realism and abstraction. A watercolor may have a thin white line of horizon, unpainted, with the shapes of sea and land, the colors of water and sunset, and most of the painting wiped away to a deathlike white, literally, with a sponge, like fog rolling in over the landscape. Another painting, in oils, is of the sea and a dark sky in shades of blue and gray, white-topped crests, surrounded by immovable rock. The seas flow through where the water has worn through rock; the water is flecked with the silver, literally, from metallic paint.

Boone has painted and exhibited largely in the east, but he is no stranger to the Pacific Northwest. Born and raised in the Palouse



PHOTO BY DWIGHT CASWELL

Artist Marc Boone, who lives in Ocean Park, Washington, will have work on display in the solo show "Pacific Portals," opening June 11 at Imogen Gallery in Astoria.

country of Northern Idaho and Eastern Washington, he came under the influence of legendary Oregon modernist Louis Bunce while studying at the Pacific Northwest College of Art. Soon he was in New York, where he had the great good fortune to be introduced to many leaders of the contemporary art scene, including Elaine de Koonig, Salvatore Scarpitta and Edward Dugmore. He experimented with mixed-media; he developed an exceptional eye for line and composition.

Boone lived and worked in the east, but he says, "In New York or Baltimore, I always felt like a Northwest painter, and it was always my plan to come back and stay."

He did just that six years ago, buying a home in Ocean Park, Washington, where he began painting a different kind of landscape. In doing so, he realized that 30 or more years ago he had abstracted trees to much the same

effect as his current painting of rocks and ocean. "I wasn't conscious of that at the time but developed it later. It looks like a big change, but you're going over old ground in a different way."

Boone began doing straight watercolors when he returned to the Northwest. "I didn't know if I'd like it," he says, "I had always included drawing, and I had done mixed-media. I discovered I liked it."

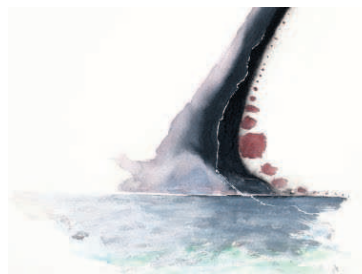
After two years of working in watercolor, he returned again to oils. His watercolors, with their white atmosphere, and his oils, with their expanses of tone, now influence each other. He begins his oil paintings with a general composition based on his sketchbook, he says, "with heavy color, and then work it up with a palette knife."

Marc Boone's paintings exude a mature self-assurance. He is an artist who has spent a lifetime coming to this point, and now



SUBMITTED PHOTO

"Pacific Portal 1" by Marc Boone.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

"Shaman's Trail" by Marc Boone.

his line is poised, his use of color confident. More importantly, life and death, water, stone and air struggle in these paintings and finally become a whole world of sense and feeling.

'Pacific Portals' opens at Imogen Gallery with a reception from 5 to 8 p.m. Saturday, June 11 during Astoria's Second Saturday Art Walk and continues for a month.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

"Pacific Portal 3" by Marc Boone.