



A World to Itself:

NEW WORK BY GEOFF DUNN

Pucker Gallery • Boston



VINES, LATE OCTOBER
Oil on canvas • 30 x 24" • GD37

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My identity is deeply rooted in Erie County in Western Pennsylvania where my ancestor, Oliver Dunn, settled in 1797 after immigrating from Ireland. His descendants, which include farmers, merchants, and surgeons, have lived here until this day. All of us have been blessed by the natural beauty and bounty of the land as well as the precious gift of the waters of Lake Erie and its tributaries, including the waterway commencing from French Creek on which one could reach any land on the globe. Human history is as deep and rich as the post-glacial soil here. I believe it is my duty to revere and protect all that is around us. In the post-retirement, more contemplative time of my life I have chosen plein air painting as one way to meet these obligations. The concept of wabi-sabi, rooted in Japanese aesthetics, has shaped my beliefs and approach to painting through its celebration of the beauty of imperfection, transience, and simplicity. Underlying this is the Buddhist teaching of the three marks of existence: impermanence, suffering, and absence of self-nature. Applied to plein air painting, this philosophy manifests itself by emphasizing the inherent, natural beauty of the landscape, including its imperfections and the marks of time. Instead of copying nature as in photorealistic depiction, I express nature by identifying with the irregularities and asymmetry in the natural

landscape. This could mean accentuating uneven lines, contrasting textures in soil and water, and the subtle colors that speak to the landscape's natural state. Capturing the ephemeral qualities of the landscape, such as the fleeting atmospheric changes or the decay of autumn leaves, reflects the transient aspect of wabi-sabi. This approach to painting draws me to scenes that symbolize the passage of time or the cycle of life and death, highlighting the serene beauty in these temporary states.

Beyond physical characteristics, wabi-sabi in landscape painting speaks to an emotional resonance with the natural world, embracing its imperfections as part of a deeper, more meaningful

“In art what is so extraordinary is the language that comes through without sound.”

• SAMUEL BAK, ARTIST •

beauty. My hope is that this philosophical approach encourages viewers to reflect on their own place within the natural cycle, fostering a connection with the landscape that is profound and introspective. In essence, applying wabi-sabi to landscape painting is about more than aesthetic choice; it is a philosophical approach that influences both the creation and perception of art, celebrating the imperfect, transient, and modest aspects of nature and, by extension, life itself. My ancestors first cut the land with the plow. Their descendants then cut with the scalpel to heal those that grew upon the land. Ultimately, we cut the emptiness of the bare canvas with the brush in reverence of the life cycle of the land.

— Geoff Dunn

• My work also embodies *Samsāra* (Devanagari: संसारः), a Pali and Sanskrit word that means “wandering” as well as “world.” The term connotes “cyclic change” or, less formally, “running around in circles.” •



FRESH SNOW, ELK CREEK OUTLET
Oil on canvas board • 20 x 16" • GD41



BEAVER LODGE, FRENCH CREEK, WEST BRANCH
Oil on canvas • 20 x 16" • GD42



BITTER COLD, PRESQUE ISLE
Oil on canvas board • 16 x 20" • GD53



FEBRUARY, LATE AFTERNOON
Oil on canvas board • 20 x 16" • GD54



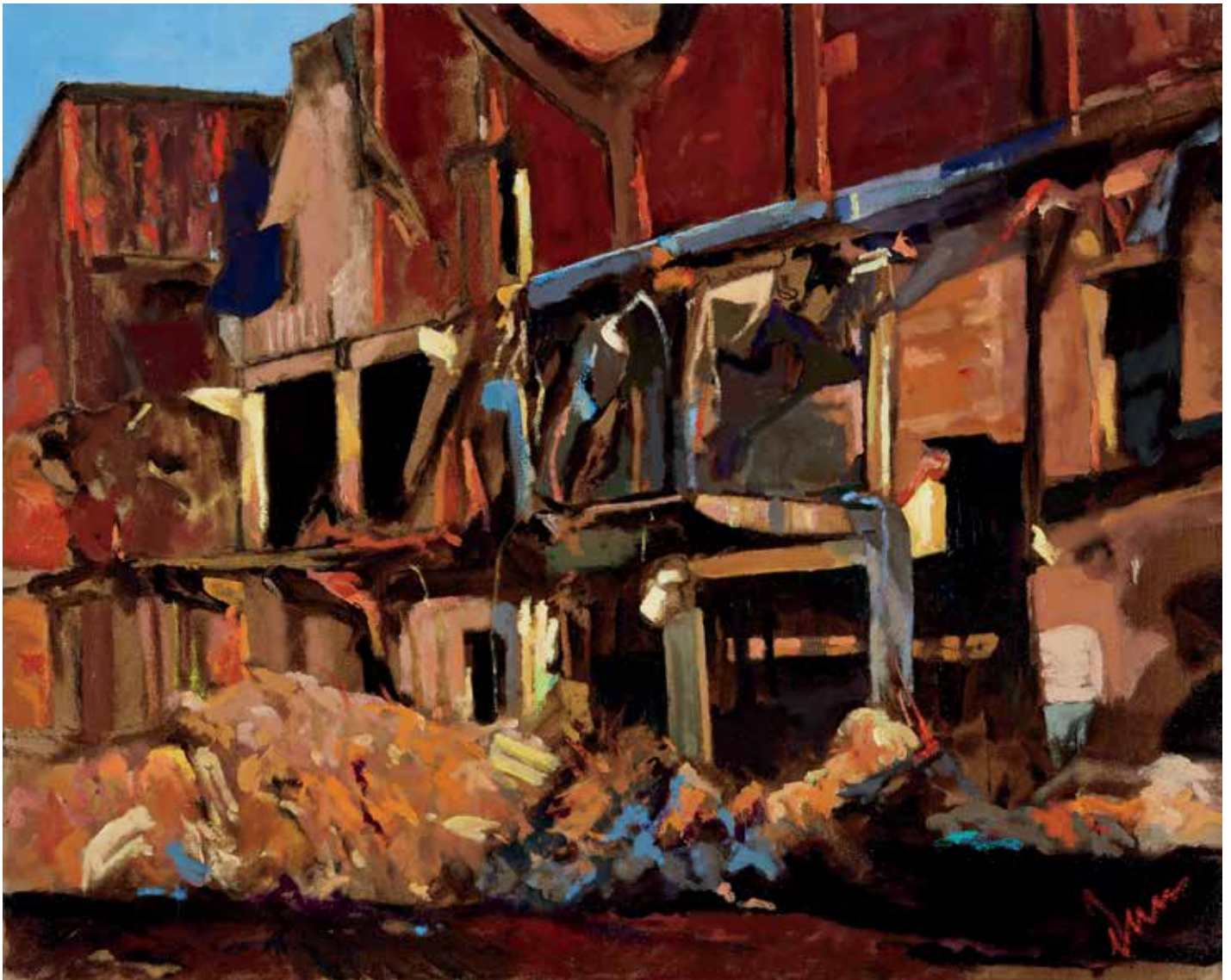
THE POTTING SHED, SEPTEMBER SUNLIGHT
Oil on canvas board • 16 x 20" • GD58



ABANDONED TRACTOR
Oil on canvas board • 16 x 20" • GD61

“What I find so excellent in Dunn’s work is the detail. Although it looks like it was painted with a certain freedom and easy brushwork, the brushwork is very precise. Every stroke is extremely responsible for what it brings out. If it is a branch, if it is leaf, if it is just a stain of sun on a leaf, it is extremely precise. This is the power of the work, the high resolution of Dunn’s painting. I find this gives it a force.”

• SAMUEL BAK, ARTIST •



ERIE MALLEABLE IRON, DUSK
Oil on canvas • 24 x 30" • GD47



SWAMP BIRCHES, PRESQUE ISLE
Oil on canvas board • 12 x 9" • GD38



OCTOBER DUSK, PRESQUE ISLE
Oil on canvas board • 11 x 14" • GD36



VIRGINIA CREEPER IN HEAVY RAIN
Oil on canvas • 30 x 24" • GD55



NOVEMBER STORM, PRESQUE ISLE
Oil on canvas board • 16 x 20" • GD48



NOVEMBER MARSH, PRESQUE ISLE
Oil on canvas board • 16 x 20" • GD62

“There is no difference between landscape and still life because the landscape becomes the still life and the still life becomes the landscape. It is mainly the magic of the brush that leaves some paint on the canvas. The brushstroke is a metamorphosis into our perception of light and shade and shape.”

• SAMUEL BAK, ARTIST •



NOVEMBER AMARYLLIS
Oil on canvas board • 20 x 16" • GD56



JANUARY BOUQUET
Oil on canvas board • 20 x 16" • GD57



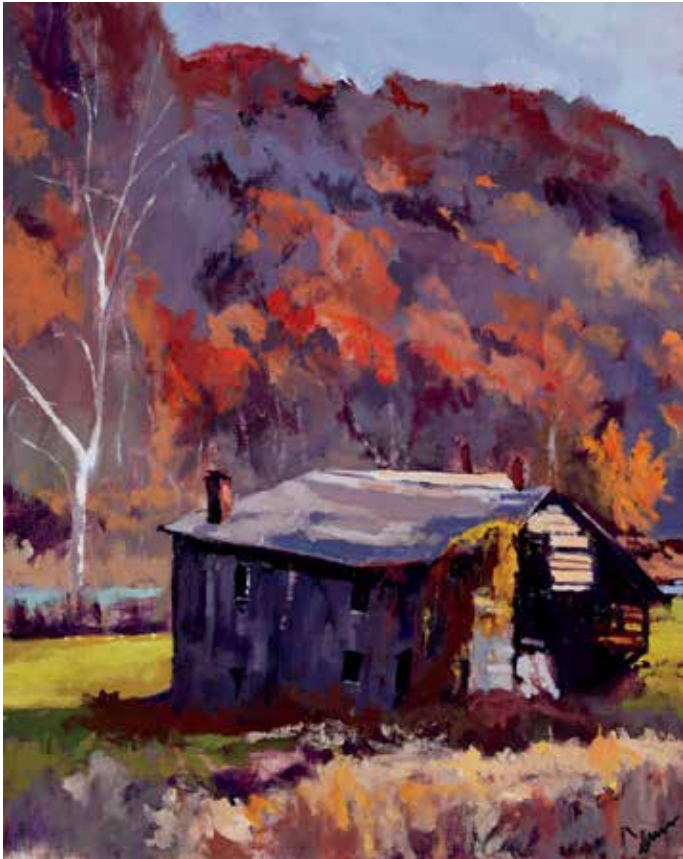
SCOTCH PINES, DECEMBER DUSK
Oil on canvas board • 20 x 16" • GD63



FEBRUARY AFTERNOON SUN, FRENCH CREEK, WEST BRANCH
Oil on canvas • 20 x 16" • GD43



FROZEN MARSH, PRESQUE ISLE
Oil on canvas board • 12 x 16" • GD52



RUINED BARN, WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA
Oil on canvas board • 20 x 16" • GD51



THE POTTING SHED
Oil on canvas board • 20 x 16" • GD40



BLOWING CLEAR, FALL AFTERNOON
Oil on canvas board • 16 x 20" • GD49



CONDEMNED HOUSE
Oil on canvas board • 20 x 16" • GD39



COURTYARD AT ADMIRAL
Oil on canvas board • 16 x 20" • GD59



SPRING PLOUGHING
Oil on canvas • 24 x 30" • GD60



RED CABBAGES AND ZINNIAS
Oil on canvas board • 18 x 14" • GD32

“In the perfect landscape,
everything fits into the frame
and yet it is so much more. To the
right and to the left, you imagine
what goes on. And yet inside is an
entire world to itself.”

• SAMUEL BAK, ARTIST •



OCTOBER SKY, PRESQUE ISLE
Oil on canvas • 20 x 16" • GD35



SOLITARY NORWEGIAN SPRUCE, LAKE ERIE
Oil on canvas board • 20 x 16" • GD50

Geoffrey P. Dunn, MD, FACS, is an Emeritus member of the Department of Surgery of UPMC Hamot, former Medical Director of the Palliative Care Consultation Service there, and has been a visiting professor in India, Great Britain, Canada, China, and Norway.

Painting has been an important activity in Dunn's life ever since it was recommended to him at age 13 by his mother when he was confined to quarters for misbehavior at school. Upon graduation from high school, he had a one-person show of his work, earning him the school prize in fine arts. He also received the school's prize for best historical essay in which he chronicled the development of American landscape painting during the nineteenth century. In college, Dunn majored in religion and minored in fine arts, studying with the Dutch painter Charles Stegeman. Professor Stegeman first suggested to Dunn a career in medicine: "You are a very competent painter and do fabulous work, but I believe your heart is elsewhere. I think you should be a doctor." Dunn continued to study privately with Andrew Sanders. After a long hiatus, he resumed painting during trips to the Georgian Bay region of Ontario, where he was strongly influenced by the Canadian school, The Group of Seven. During the late 1990s Dunn recognized a deeper and more spiritual purpose to painting through the inspiration and counsel of Brother Thomas. At that time plein air painting had increasingly become the counterpoint and catharsis for Dunn's career in hospice and palliative care and the substance of much of his professional writing and lecturing.

Dunn has had solo exhibitions at Glass Growers Gallery and the Erie Insurance Group's gallery, in addition to exhibiting at the Mercyhurst faculty exhibit and the Erie Art Museum Spring Show. Dr. Dunn is a member of the Northwest Pennsylvania Artists Association and in 2012, he was accepted as a non-resident artist member of the Salmagundi Art Club in New York.

PUCKER

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GALLERY

Pucker Gallery

240 Newbury Street, 3rd floor
Boston, MA 02116
617.267.9473
contactus@puckergallery.com

Gallery Hours:

Monday through Saturday
10 AM to 5:30 PM

Sunday
1 PM to 5 PM

Pucker Gallery is a member of the
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New England Appraisers Association.

Credits:

Design: Leslie Anne Feagley
Editors: Jeanne Koles and
Michaela Dehning

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artist biographies, and
subscribe to the *Artwork
of the Week* email list.

Cover:
WETLANDS, PRESQUE ISLE,
MID-MORNING
Oil on canvas • 30 x 24" • GD34

A World to Itself:

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Dates:

7 September through 13 October 2024

Public Opening Reception:

Saturday 7 September 2024 • 3pm to 6pm • The artist will be present

Online Events:

Please visit www.puckergallery.com for a list of virtual gatherings and events accompanying *A World to Itself*.



FRENCH CREEK, SOUTH BRANCH, JULY
Oil on canvas • 16 x 20" • GD44