

CAPE ANN Museum

“This Unique Place” exhibition features paintings and drawings by Jeff Weaver at Cape Ann Museum

On view: March 18 through June 4, 2023



Jeff Weaver, *Tally's Corner*, 2003, Oil on canvas, 24x30, Private Collection

GLOUCESTER, MASS. (March 2023) – One of the area’s most beloved contemporary artists, Jeff Weaver, will be the subject of a special exhibition at the Cape Ann Museum from March 18 through June 4, 2023. *This Unique Place* features oil paintings, pastels and charcoals, all focusing on the built and natural landscape of Cape Ann.

LINK TO DROPBOX IMAGES:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/lcol136hivrgivv6vs52/h?dl=0&rlkey=em6g6h2nn1u1ezo5unhu4znkw>

The works in this exhibit represent Weaver’s overall view of Gloucester from the early 1970’s to the present. With a few exceptions, they were done entirely on site, as that is Weaver’s preferred working method. “While the subject matter of the pieces in this exhibit is of considerable importance, I hope that as works of art, the pieces convey something of my feelings for the world around me and my reactions to it,” said Weaver.

Weaver was born in Framingham, Mass., in 1953 and admits to being interested in drawing and painting from an early age, particularly in portraiture. As a student at Burlington High School, Weaver joined the

art class of Elinor Marvin, a skilled teacher who shared her knowledge of the technical and aesthetic aspects of painting, drawing, sculpture and printmaking with her students. It was while he was still in high school that Weaver first came to Gloucester on a painting excursion.

In 1972, fresh out of high school, Weaver moved to Gloucester, renting a room above Parisi's marine supply store in the city's Fort neighborhood. Weaver was studying figure drawing at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston at the time and several other students from the school were renting in the same building. Weaver took whatever work he could find. Along with a few other artists, he was commissioned to create a mural on the side of a delivery truck. The success of that endeavor led to more murals, business signs, and projects painting on pilot houses of offshore fishing boats.

Although he studied portraiture at the Museum School, Weaver veered away from that genre in Gloucester, finding the city's vestiges of the past, its "colorful mix of architecture, fishing vessels and ancient wharves" inspiring. Working from nature, he did drawings which were sometimes made into block prints; they were also used increasingly for landscape paintings, a genre Weaver largely trained himself in.

As he focused more on fine art painting, Weaver branched out from Gloucester's working waterfront and into the city's tightknit neighborhoods, exploring the architectural richness and the history of the city, looking for real depictions of a real place. Weaver is often drawn to neighborhoods and buildings that are endangered, sometimes facing destructions through benign neglect or gentrification. Several years ago, he embarked on a series of paintings of the 1860s Tarr & Wonson paint manufacturing complex on Rocky Neck, a site whose fate was not always certain, but which has now been stabilized.

More recently, he has been working on paintings and drawings capturing the old ice plant at the end of Commercial Street on the Fort, a building and industry which, despite the odds, has somehow survived in to the 21st century. In both cases, Weaver plumbed his subjects, focusing in depth on each site from all angles and at all times of the year, inside and outside, working in oil, pastels and watercolors. Works in these series and others are truthful yet nostalgic, emotional responses to what the artist sees and what he recognizes may soon be gone.

Over the years, as Weaver has come to intimately know Gloucester, his compositions have grown stronger. He often begins a work with a detailed perspective drawing done directly on canvas, capturing the basic components of his composition, cropping the scene as he progresses. From there, he layers in objects and colors, juxtaposing the old with the new, the mundane with the unexpected.

"Jeff Weaver's work is synonymous with the Gloucester and Cape Ann we all know, live in and celebrate," said Oliver Barker, the Museum's Director. "His work both reflects this unique place and defines our experience of it. We are honored to be able to share it."

An opening reception for the exhibition will be held on Saturday, March 25, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. for members and with regular museum admission for non-members. As part of the exhibition, Weaver will give a CAMTalk on Sunday, April 16 at 2:00 p.m. in the CAM Auditorium. The talk is free for members, \$10 for non-members and will be livestreamed on Vimeo and Facebook. He is also giving two gallery talks, one on Thursday, April 27 at 2:00 p.m. and the other on Thursday, May 11 at 2:00 p.m. The Museum website will be updated with programming information.

In connection with the exhibition, a 69-page catalog has been published by the Museum. The catalog includes an essay by Martha Oaks, Chief Curator, with contributions by artist Don Gorvett and collector Ernst von Metzsch. The Catalog will be available for purchase in the Museum shop for \$30.

This exhibition and the programs that accompany it are presented as part of the Cape Ann Museum's contribution to Gloucester's 400+ Anniversary, marking four hundred years since English colonizers first attempted to settle here. Over the course of the year, the Museum is presenting a wide variety of exhibitions and events that both celebrate the best of Cape Ann and acknowledge the important and complex history of this place stretching back for more than 10,000 years.

The Cape Ann Museum, founded in 1875, exists to preserve and celebrate the history and culture of the area and to keep it relevant to today's audiences. Spanning 44,000 square feet, the Museum is one of the major cultural institutions on Boston's North Shore welcoming more than 25,000 local, national, and international visitors each year to its exhibitions and programs. In addition to fine art, the Museum's collections include decorative art, textiles, artifacts from the maritime and granite industries, three historic homes, a Library & Archives and a sculpture park in the heart of downtown Gloucester. In Summer 2021, the Museum opened the 12,000 square foot Janet & William Ellery James Center at the [Cape Ann Museum Green](#). The campus also includes three historic buildings – the White-Ellery House (1710), the recently acquired Babson-Alling House (c.1740), and an adjacent Barn (c. 1740), all located on the site at the intersection of Washington and Poplar Streets in Gloucester.

The Cape Ann Museum is located at 27 Pleasant Street in Gloucester and is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission is \$15.00 adults, \$12.00 Cape Ann residents, seniors, and students. Youth (18 and under) and Museum members are free. Cape Ann residents can visit for free on the second Saturday of each month. For more information please call (978)283-0455 x110 or visit www.capeannmuseum.org.

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