

JOANNE GEISEL

STUDIO VIEWS

Studio Views began in May of 2020

We got a rare view of the artist at work in their studio and gained insight to their unique creative processes during Covid-19. In May of 2021, we asked them to check back in.



JUNE 2020

When we first started to social distance, I thought that my life's changes were minor. The biggest part of my day continued to be focused on painting but without concerns about teaching and delivering paintings to shows and galleries. Now after weeks into it, I realize my life has changed quite a bit. The subject of my paintings has quite organically taken the theme of one of my favorite places to paint and I find that I have escaped to Bald Head Island! From my photos I am revisiting the expansive skies, the outstanding view from Captain Charlie's Station and the glorious beaches.

I find that now I have time to watch other painters do demonstrations on the computer and to experiment with techniques and colors. I am visiting with old friends and family more often through video chatting and phone calls.

Although at times I am eager for the isolation to end, I consider myself too fortunate to complain. My husband of 45 years and I laugh throughout the day. I have wonderful neighbors with whom I occasionally chat. I can take walks, bike, weed in our flower beds and there is plenty of time to explore new dinner dishes knowing I will find a continuous array of food from our supermarkets.

I am keenly aware that life is not like this everywhere and that many people are very fearful. Although I feel I am living in a bubble, I am following the news and the virus information closely and am very attentive to how our world's story and the local narrative are unfolding.



JUNE 2021

A year ago, I easily put aside social obligations and the confusion of calendar schedules with the beginning of Covid. I enjoyed the time learning about other artists over the internet and creating paintings of beautiful Bald Head Island, a location that I have painted and cherished for many years. I felt that I could leave the worry to others. Little did I know our isolation would last so very long! My lightheartedness became more difficult to maintain when I experienced the confusion around me due to a crazy election year. I was so thankful when the election was over and the transition to a new president was complete.

During the first three months of 2021, I painted thirty eight non xemerged and disheartened me with their messages about mankind's abuse of power, neglecting his role in changing the earth and the direction of mankind's future. Since I have always had a mission to uplift the viewer through my paintings, I put these aside for another time.

Returning to painting landscapes in April was a welcome relief. It was also when people were feeling more relaxed about social interaction since so many were inoculated. It was at this time that I participated in a plein air event at East Beach in Norfolk in April. It was a wonderful week of painting and enjoying fellow painters which culminated with a show and sale that benefited public art for the area.

Painting landscapes is a joy. When I paint landscapes and other subjects from life I feel the pulse of nature and the expansive awareness of how interconnected we all are. In particular I love to be outdoors exploring and experiencing nature while standing at an easel. So I feel that I have a renewed commitment to paint with freshness and joy and to get back to teaching painting. Both give me purpose which is to recharge our environment, expand our senses and find new creative ways to enjoy our journeys.

Whereas last year, my studio was chocked full of artwork since galleries were closed. This year, my studio had been rather bare because paintings are out at galleries. This has motivated me along with my refreshed commitment to have fun without pressure. Since the beginning of June, I have been painting marshes and skies, starting with small studies and then turning them into larger paintings. I am enthusiastic about the subject, particularly the skies because they are constantly changing color and form and to me represent our spiritual nature. The marshes inspire me as well because they are the ocean's estuary. So many creatures begin their lives here.