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SUSAN RAND BROWN

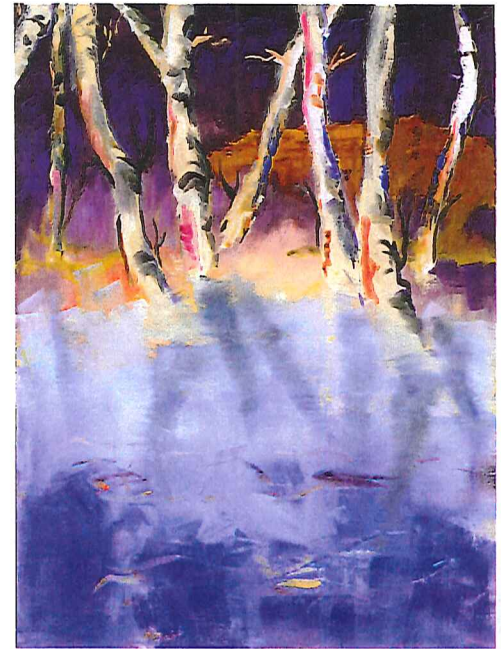
Jan Dilenschneider

Watching Jan Dilenschneider paint in a secluded studio on the top floor of her home facing Long Island Sound, not far from the birthplace of Connecticut impressionism, a visitor easily imagines Monet at Argenteuil with his easel open to the elements on the River Seine. Years later, Monet no longer saw the world as fixed scenes and objects, but as sensory impressions of color and shape evoked by the movement of light.

So, too, Dilenschneider has found her Argenteuil and her Giverny in documenting the tidal waters, hidden streams, golden sedges and groves of narrow, angular birches surrounding her studio. Standing at her easel, the artist's senses open to mystery and surprise. She captures the continually changing light and passage of time as seasons cycle from autumn's glory through dormancy and to spring's rebirth.

Her descriptive titles—*Golden Grasses on the Shoreline*, *Sun through the Trees*, *Pond Reflections*, *Reeds Along the Golden Fields*, *Lazy Brook in the Mist*—speak to her passion for recording the endless depth and possibility within a relatively narrow, unspoiled geography. Where Monet saw eternity in a haystack and returned to it again and again, Dilenschneider gravitates to the humble reed and crisscrossed spiky thatch with colors ranging from bright greens to tangy rust, which she documents with the passion of a scientist and the heart of a poet.

Using a variety of surprising tools including chopsticks, squeegees, rubber and metal spatulas and even fingers slipped through bristles of a housepainter's brush, Dilenschneider picks from her saturated palette, applying impressionist colors with gestural spontaneity to heavy canvas, or more recently aluminum for its sparkle and "slip." Up close, these peaceful landscapes jitterbug with the joie de vivre of American



Above: Jan Dilenschneider, *Silver Birch near the Water I*, 2015, and *Silver Birch near the Water II*, 2015, oil on canvas, 40 x 30" (each).
Below: Jan Dilenschneider, *Winter Landscape I*, 2014, and *Winter Landscape II*, 2014, oil on canvas, 36 x 36" (each).

abstract expressionism.

"I want you to feel how I feel when I'm looking at the water and the trees—becoming the water and the trees, green against purple, yellow against pink—that's why I also call myself an expressionist with an impressionist palette," she says. "My impressionist paintings are getting closer to my abstracts, and my abstracts to my impressionist paintings." Dilenschneider studied at the National Academy of Design in New York City with Wolf Kahn, who encouraged her to become the bold, assured colorist she is today, and at the Silvermine School of Art, home to Connecticut impressionism.

The artist has been painting in pairs, creating diptychs as a means to register subtle movements in time. On the wall in her studio hangs a stunning example, a pair with soft purple mist—or sfumato—rising in the horizon. In these more abstract works, materials and brushstrokes serve as form and content.

These and other new works will be shown July 7–25 in

the Galerie Pierre-Alain Challier, Paris. This is Dilenschneider's third consecutive summer exhibition in this highly regarded Marais District gallery, which includes such artists as Giorgio de Chirico and Sonia Delaunay. A champion of open expression and exchange of ideas for artists and scholars, Dilenschneider recently founded the Scholar Rescue Program for the Arts, administered by the International Institute of Education. She dedicates this show to the type of artistic and scholarly freedom that "the remarkable French men and women demonstrated earlier this year," she says.

While Dilenschneider doesn't paint outdoors, her scenes enable us to see the willow's first buds and hear rushes in the breeze—portals to fleeting moments.

Susan Rand Brown is a poet, art critic and frequent contributor to Art New England. She teaches literature in Hartford, CT, and writes for Provincetown Arts and the Provincetown Banner.

Jan Dilenschneider: Dualities
On view through September 18, 2015
Bellarmine Museum of Art
Fairfield, CT
jmhdilenschneider.com

