



## Rick Fleury

Ten years ago, Rick Fleury, 48, fled an advertising career in New York to follow his passion for painting. He narrowed his choices for a new home between the thriving art scenes of Provincetown and Portland, Maine. "I came here and just fell in love with it," he says. "I never made it to Portland."

Rick Fleury Studio is an airy space in an otherwise nondescript office cluster in Eastham just off of Route 6. Much of his landscape work has a cohesive theme; roughly the bottom fifth of the canvas contains dark, earthen tones while the rest is dominated by an orchestral sky. Form, space, and color are dominant themes. Fleury prefers to work *alla prima*, swirling and blending his wet oil paint to create rich, thematic renderings of beaches, salt marshes, and tidal inlets. He sometimes uses a brush in each hand. "I try to paint music," he says. "I always listen to music when I paint. I feel like I'm dancing with the canvas."

On Cape Cod, his work is exclusively available at Addison Art in Orleans. In Boston, Fleury's work may be seen at the Copley Society on Newbury Street (to which he was accepted last year), as well as at Diana Levine, Fine Art at the Boston Design Center. "I've admired Rick's work for years," says Addison Art gallery owner Helen Addison. "He captures the Cape Cod landscape with a Zen-like sense and deep respect for our environment." Heavily influenced by the work of Mark Rothko, Fleury recently began a dialogue series with the late artist. His *Dialogue Twenty* is a snatch of color and light from Maguire's Landing in Wellfleet. The sky reveals an almost limitless variety of subtle, iridescent light over a deep cobalt sea. The highly

Payne's grey is a staple of Fleury's otherwise spare palette.

## *Dialogue XX: Blue Horizons* by Rick Fleury

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nuanced nature of the scene belies the fact that Fleury uses a paucity of colors.

"I try and work with only a few colors at a time, blending and borrowing, always in motion, like the sea itself," he says. He'll deploy white, cobalt blue, olive green, and raw umber in most of his works and combine some or all with Payne's gray, which he calls "Cape Cod in a tube." Tonality is brought to the forefront and combined with the deceptive simplicity of the composition. The effect is stunning.

"My technique is to load up the brush and let the accidents happen," Fleury says.

With his new success, Fleury is considering buying the studio space he currently rents. Taking his expanding reputation in stride, the self-taught Fleury says, "I couldn't predict last year where I'd be now, and I don't know where I'll be next year."

As far as the Cape arts scene is concerned, it's a good thing he never made it to Portland. 🗼

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*Rob Conery is a freelance writer based in West Yarmouth.*

