

## **GARY AYLWARD**

Gary's work consists of landscapes that deal with the natural icons of the coast: oceans, rivers and mountains. Water, figuring prominently in all of these subjects, is primal and connected to our physical and emotional needs. The most valued commodity on our planet, its ability to move our souls is well documented in the art, music, and literature of human culture.

Thematically traditional in our culture, landscapes historically portrayed a pictorial record of a location and were arranged in strongly delineated foreground, middle ground, and background. With the development of photography, some artists redefined their purpose and intent. Decidedly modern by intention and design, Gary's paintings often compress and reduce these elements, and the abstract arrangement of the composition takes precedence. The anecdotal detail of such representational art is included in his paintings, only to enhance the esthetic experience of the image. Hopefully, the viewer will be elevated to a stronger connection with what he has distilled from his own experience. "Icon" then, suggests a higher connection to the image than just a visual representation of landscape.

The Rockies, the Pacific Coast, the Gulf Islands are the predominant source of inspiration for these images. Most storm series consist of oceanscapes captured at Ucluelet and Tofino within brief one-hour windows of opportunity. Often the corridor of inspiration is limited by light, weather, and tide that conspire for or against the artist. Every new season finds Gary deep in research, seeking new inspiration through his camera lens. He works from his extensive photographic research with the intention of capturing the light, detail and immediacy of the moment.

Technically Gary's work is built upon Renaissance painting techniques with the addition of modern materials such as media, gels and other various textural enhancers. Initially, thin transparent layers of paint lay down the foundation underpainting for the subsequent build-up of opaque layers to bring the forms to their final finish. This technique creates deep darks, brilliant mid-tones and strong highlights which all combine to create dramatic effects. Large spontaneous brushwork during the underpainting stage helps to create the energy of the subject; subsequent fine brush strokes focus and sharpen the experience.

Trained at McMaster University and Sheridan College in Ontario during the 1970's, Gary now calls Vancouver Island home. Also a full time teacher of senior art in the Comox Valley, Gary motivates and challenges his students to use their own voices as they begin their journeys as young pre-professionals. After extensive study in Art History and Architecture, he sees the artistic potential in the world around him. His sense of design never sleeps; he loves to alter and restructure his home, his furniture and his landscaping to bring the world into an aesthetic and soothing balance.

A lover of the natural world, Gary sails the Pacific coast, hikes in the Rockies and Coastal ranges and is an active environmentalist in the Comox Valley. Inspired by the grace and wildness of nature, he has found his muse in the capricious sea and the rugged Rocky Mountains of Western Canada.

### **Selected Exhibitions and Representation**

2012-2019 Ian Tan Gallery, Vancouver, BC

1998–2011 Plaza Galleries, Whistler, BC

2009 Solo Show, Winchester Gallery, Victoria, BC

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2005	Solo Show, Winchester Gallery, Victoria, BC
2003-6	Island Folk Galleries, Tofino, BC
2000	Solo Show, Winchester Gallery, Victoria, BC
1998	Solo Show, Winchester Gallery, Victoria, BC
1996	Solo Show, Winchester Gallery, Victoria, BC
1988-91	Del Bello Gallery, Toronto, ON
1988-90	Burlington Cultural Centre Art Auction, Burlington, ON
1987-90	Christmas Show, Planetree Gallery, Burlington, ON
1987	Halton Teachers' Art Show, Oakville, ON
1986	Venture Inn Gallery, Toronto, ON
1984	Mohawk College Art Gallery, Hamilton, ON
1984	Alchem Chemical Company, Burlington, ON
1982-83	Group Show, Lester B. Pearson Secondary School, Burlington, ON
1981	Christmas Art Show, Beckett Art Gallery, Hamilton, ON
1979	Teacher as Artist, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON
1976-78	McMaster University Student Shows, Hamilton, ON
1974	CKOC Art Show, The Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton, ON
1973	Art in the Park, Gore Park, Hamilton, ON

Gary's work has been well received by art patrons in both corporate and private collections both nationally and internationally.

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