

## Wilderness House Literary Review 19/4

### Peggy Fox

**PEGGY FOX** grew up in Pittsburgh, PA where her parents and teachers encouraged creative expression in art and music. After college studies in psychology and religion she relocated to Cambridge, MA in 1969 where she developed her lifelong commitment to painting, classical piano, and a psychotherapy career. In 1971 Peggy attended the Art Institute of Boston evening classes for one year and other local painting courses at the Center for Adult Education in Cambridge. Teacher Antoinette Prince, a Museum School of Boston scholar, inspired her to continue painting after Peggy completed her Doctorate in Education at Boston University in 1979. She also began to practice psychotherapy as a licensed psychologist from 1982 to 2021.

In the 1980's and 1990's Peggy exhibited in several one person and group shows at local galleries including the Field Gallery on Martha's Vineyard and exhibited her series of After Gauguin paintings at many local venues receiving some reviews of her art. In the summer of 1995 Peggy opened her own gallery at Rocky Neck in Gloucester MA where she sold several paintings of Cape Ann. Peggy was an active artist member of the Cambridge Art Association from 1980 to 2000 and Co-Director of the Stebbins Gallery, Harvard Square Cambridge from 1991 to 2000 where she regularly exhibited and sold her and others' art work.

In later years, Peggy's clinical work with older adults included offering painting classes to senior residents and patients in various clinical settings, including the VNA Hospice, the Cambridge Health Alliance, and local Assisted Living facilities. In retirement Peggy continues to paint in her home studio and en plein air capturing her love of the New England landscape. Most recently she took an online painting class with Impressionist Anne Blair Brown and is inspired to find new approaches to her painting style, and to continue helping others experience the joy of painting.



### Artist Statement

**I** like to explore the deeper emotions and poetic truths of our existence in all aspects of my work, whether with people or in my paintings. Love, sadness and joy stir the heart in continual unexpected ways. Finding balance within the human psyche is akin to allowing color, line and space harmonize on canvas. In each, I am a witness granted the unique privilege of sharing an integrative experience, however fleeting. Nevertheless, in art as in life, we also need to develop lasting friendships. Therefore, many of my paintings are good friends, faithful in the darkest hours, and ultimately lead me to peace of mind. Thus, I most often paint with no other goal but to take Nature as my primary subject and to bring her vibrant colors to life with paint. I approach a landscape with the reverence I feel for our natural world and the universal spirit. To quote Henri Matisse: "What I dream of is an art that is pure and calm, free of disturbing subject matter." [peggyfoxwarren@gmail.com](mailto:peggyfoxwarren@gmail.com)



Chilmark Pasture, 28 x 36", acrylic

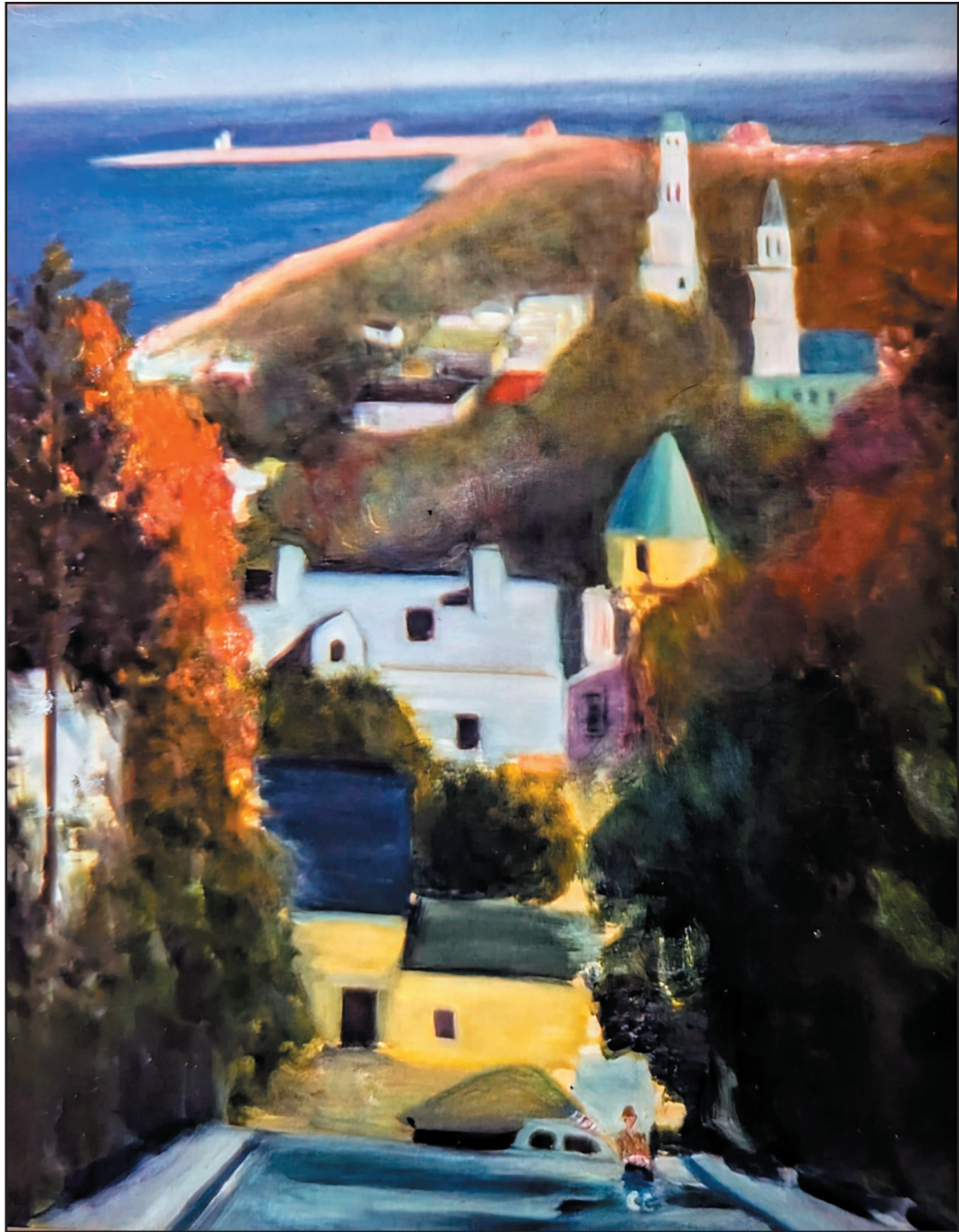


Moonrise Over Plum Island, 9 x 12", acrylic



Bluebonnets and Indian Firebrush, 9 x 12", acrylic





Summit Street, Rockport, 24 x 30", oil





Wellfleet, Audubon Sanctuary, 24 x 36", oil



Fresh Pond Place Courtyard, 11 x 14", acrylic





View from Castell n' Villa, Tuscany, 30 x 40", oil





Horseshoe Bay, Bermuda, 34 x 38", watercolor



Tina's Garden, 9 x 12", acrylic





Ellery Street, Cambridge 18 x 22", acrylic



Antoinette's Studio, 24 x 30", oil





Blue Lady, 15 x 18", watercolor

### **Essay on the Blue Lady**

*By Peggy Fox — August 1992*

PAINTING THE BLUE LADY TEN YEARS AGO BEGAN A DIALOGUE that continues to shape my inner life as an artist. I feel fortunate to have the Blue Lady in my external life as well, for now many people can know her mystery. Who is the Blue Lady and how did she emerge? In a dream I saw my face, but my eyes reflected a deeper soul than I could call my own. My "self-portrait" revealed a mythic woman, a composite of several women who lived hidden, complicated lives. I felt compelled to paint this figure, but the process was so intense I nearly destroyed the painting several times. In watercolor, there is a "point of no return", or so it often seems, and just when I was sure I had ruined her the Blue Lady miraculously transformed herself before my eyes. Perhaps the medium is the message, as I now understand the unconscious power of both painting and dreams.

At first, I had difficulty owning the Blue Lady. I brought her home from the studio along with a companion blue watercolor landscape. Proudly displaying the landscape to my husband, I tossed the Blue Lady into the trashcan, resigned to defeat. He looked down, did a second take, and pulled her back out again seeing her with new eyes. The Blue Lady was rescued by my husband who could see what I could not. The Blue Lady would live.

Years later I dreamt that the Blue Lady escaped from her glass frame

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and became a large paper cut-out stretched out across my bed. She now had a body waiting to start a life on her own terms. She still waits for me I feel. I don't think I will know her completely until I am an older woman, perhaps near 60. She shows me a tension between a life lived and a life reflected, a turning inward with sensitivity to suffering and loss. The Blue Lady may hold the mystery to all that you or I can be in this lifetime, or reflect our choices not brought to fruition. Only time will tell. As we live, we also wait for our destiny to unfold, to reflect on what is and what was this life. In the meantime, we can dream.