

# Jonathan Earle

Jonathan Earle always enjoyed drawing. He studied landscape architecture in college and so enjoyed the art classes he had to take that he considered becoming an artist. He decided against that for considerations of making a living. Yet the idea always nagged at him, and one day he made it a reality.

Earle started out as a landscape architect and became a construction superintendent for an elevator company for 12 years. From rooftops, he would often see the city skylines and long to sketch them. When his mother, who became ill shortly after retiring from the career she loved as a teacher, urged him not to wait until he retired to follow his passion, he decided to make changes in his life. He formed his own business, Green Cardinal Landscapes, to be closer to his wife and two children in Sandwich and to have time to pursue art.

Five years ago, Earle set out to learn to paint as methodically as if he were taking on a new job. He knew he needed to master the fundamentals. He had the winters free to study and he found his perfect teacher in Mary Moquin at several classes at the Cape Cod Art Center. "I knew I could learn the nuts and bolts from her," Earle says.

He was patient. He worked a year on tone and value exclusively. "For a couple of years, I didn't keep any work. I just kept scraping down and starting over," he says. "I'd use a canvas eight or 10 times before I'd throw it away. I could ask Mary anything, and she was always available to help me find my own

style." He did find his own style and began entering exhibitions and winning awards.

In Earle's distinctive style, one can see the influence of his singular past experience. "Creating a sense of place in the landscape is at the core of landscape architecture," he says. "A sense of place carries the experience of emotions associated with a familiar setting."

Earle always admired the Ashcan School artists, known for their gritty subjects and dark palette. Working as a builder, he spent a lot of time in city streets and was always drawn to the way light hit the dark alleys, how a street light illuminated a shop and reflections shone from cars and storefront windows—all of which are subjects in his paintings. The skills of drawing lines and creating perspective that he learned for his landscape work add dynamic movement to his work today. "I want to create depth and atmosphere, always wanting the eye to travel deeper into the painting," Earle says.

Earle, who in his previous occupation would keep a keen eye on the weather forecast, now truly enjoys cloudy days, when the quality of the light allows him to paint en plein air and capture the subtle shifts of the unique atmosphere. This summer he is looking forward to doing more painting on the Cape and capturing the beauty and colors found across the region. July 27 will mark a milestone for Earle when Orleans' Addison Art Gallery will host his first solo exhibition. —Rory Marcus

JONATHAN EARLE IS REPRESENTED BY ADDISON ART GALLERY, ORLEANS, [ADDISONART.COM](http://ADDISONART.COM).



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