

PAUL BATCH's (b. 1979) plein air sketches and finished studio landscapes certainly stand out from the crowd. Although this artist has full-palette flexibility, he often chooses to work with a limited number of colors in a tighter range, which creates a depth of atmosphere, radiant realistic light, and stunning color combinations not easily replicated. Applying paint with a skilled hand and a range of brush sizes and types, Batch also uses palette knives and razor blades to achieve abstract lines, shapes, and colors that harmonize with his more painterly passages.

Born and currently residing in Massachusetts, Batch received both a B.F.A. and an M.F.A. from the Hartford Art School at the University of Hartford (Connecticut) and has been a full-time artist ever since. Although he paints portraits and other subjects, he is best known as a landscapist as well as a popular teacher. Batch is one of many artists these days who have learned to use online platforms to distribute educational content, and he now offers downloadable videos and a mentorship program from his website, as well as live Zoom workshops and demonstrations.

Moving online is not the only adjustment Batch and other artists have had to make in 2020. The range of emotions they have experienced, from deep discouragement to profound resilience, has naturally made its way into their art. The painting pictured here, *Late Winter*,

was actually the first painting Batch completed after a month-long sabbatical at the beginning of the pandemic. "It has been a weird month, to say the least," he wrote on Instagram then. "First real day back at painting in about three or four weeks. Feeling pretty thankful for what I have, and hoping the best for everyone."

Late Winter carries that sense of hopefulness and deftly captures a majestic moment in nature that one would think is nearly impossible to recreate in paint. For Batch, the beauty is not only in the actual subject, but also its symbolic meaning. "The last of the day's light was just about to burn off into darkness as nightfall approached," he shares. "The contrast between the warmth of the light and the coolness in the ground created quite an incredible moment. Much of my work involves transitions. Whether it's the time of day, or changing seasons of life, the poetic possibilities that occur during these moments are a metaphor for our abilities to change and provide hope for tomorrow."

Batch is represented by Addison Art Gallery (Orleans, Massachusetts).

PAUL BATCH (b. 1979), *Late Winter*, 2020, oil on panel, 11 x 14 in.

