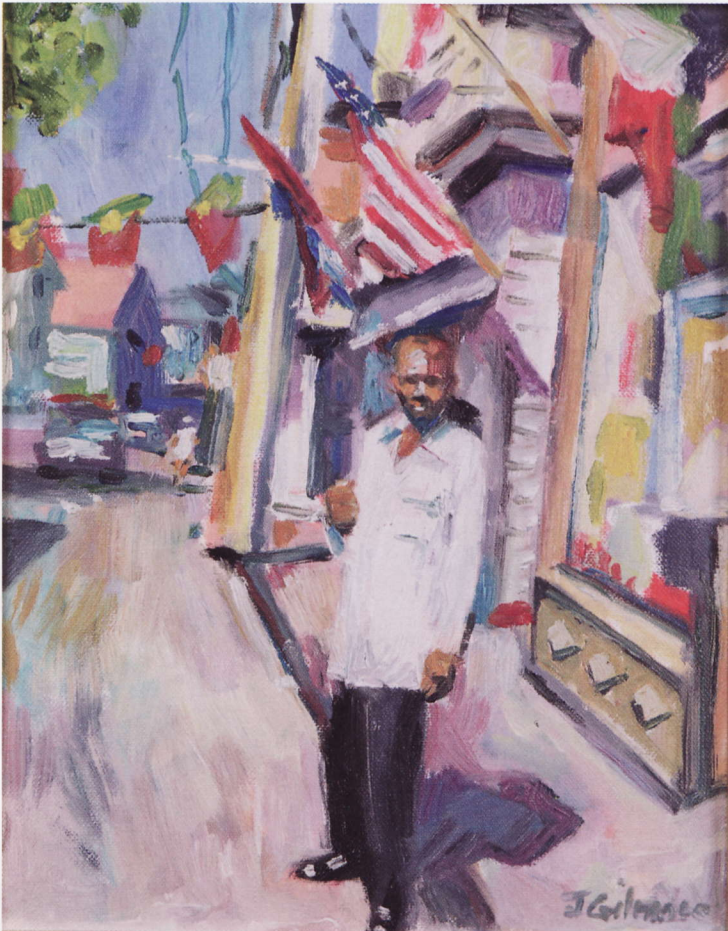


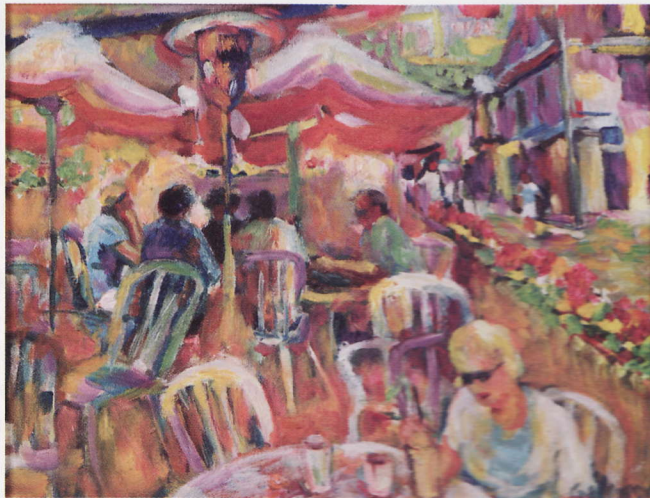
janet skinner gilmore

YARMOUTH

The bold strokes of a lifetime



Provincetown Waiter, oil on canvas, 14" x 11"



Red Umbrella, oil on canvas, 11" x 14"

Yarmouth's Janet Skinner Gilmore has been a professional artist for more than 60 years. "I was doing portraits by the time I was 12—I was paid 10 cents for each piece," she says. The prolific painter, whose vibrant street scenes, colorful interiors, and expressive portraits can be found at the Rowley Gallery in Orleans, has dedicated a lifetime to making art amidst the challenges of raising eight children and relocating from North Easton to a cottage on the Cape's Bass River in Yarmouth—all as a single parent.

Gilmore, a Brockton native, put her career on hold after getting married while a student at the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston. When she returned to complete her degree after having a family, she found out she was pregnant with her eighth child. "But I had painted all the time, and by that time I was dedicated to painting," she says.

In 1985, after separating from her husband, Gilmore moved to her family's modest summer cottage so her youngest child could attend high school in Yarmouth. "It was hard. I had to make a new life," Gilmore says. "I got involved with the Yarmouth Art Guild and the Cape Cod Art Association, and taught portrait and figure painting for 18 years."

Gilmore describes portraits as her bread and butter. She does commissioned portraits as well as charcoal or pastel sketches at the children's summer programs at the Cape Playhouse in Dennis. She has painted portraits from old photographs, too, including a 24" x 20" oil painting based on a small picture from the early 1900s. "She can get a likeness just like that," says gallery owner Elizabeth Rowley, snapping her fingers.

For years, collectors have been buying Gilmore's lively expressionist and impressionist landscapes, still life oils, and watercolor works. Gilmore says, "Some people say they can tell my artwork right off the bat. Some say they like the colors."

Gilmore's embrace of bold colors is evident in works like *Provincetown*, an 18" x 24" oil painting that recreates the flavor of Cape Cod's outermost town, complete with fluttering banners, sidewalk cafés, bicyclists and pedes-

by susan spencer



Provincetown, oil on canvas, 16" x 20"

trians maneuvering down Commercial Street; or *Valentine's Day*, a 16" x 20" oil painting featuring a lush setting of roses, a heart-shaped candy box, and a glass of red wine.

Two or three times a summer, Gilmore demonstrates painting outside the Rowley Gallery, often doing a still-life. The artist is a real crowd-pleaser, according to Rowley, who says, "Janet's really good at teaching and having people watch her. The connection's nice, and people like to meet the artist."

Both the technique and intangible aspects of painting intrigue Gilmore and guide her experienced hand as an instructor. "You never know how it's going to turn out, but that makes it interesting," says Gilmore, who teaches at the Cultural Center of Cape Cod, the Barnstable Senior Center, and other locations. She tells her students, "Art's the only thing we can do that is creative and isn't mass-produced, that you can put your own stamp on."

Gilmore can paint just about anywhere, but her favorite places to set up an easel are in her backyard overlooking Dinah's Pond, or on a Nantucket beach. She says, "I like painting on the spot. I like to see the colors as they are—to enhance color, probably like the Impressionists did."

The freedom to paint what she wants and the desire to make the next painting better than the last keep Gilmore upbeat about her career as an artist, in spite of the sacrifices she has had to make along the way. "As an artist, you really have to have self-confidence," she says. "If you don't, you're lost."

Janet Gilmore's art can be seen at the Rowley Gallery, 84 Route 6A, Orleans, MA, 508 255-3690, www.elizabethrowleygallery.com.

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