

 WATCH 10 VIDEOS IN THIS ISSUE SEE PAGE 34

AMERICAN
art
COLLECTOR



*Also Showcasing
Glass, Ceramics & Wood*

MARK BECK

Of the ocean



1



2

Painter Mark Beck is landlocked with more than 400 miles of open desert between himself and the nearest ocean, and yet his Albuquerque, New Mexico, studio is filled with works of oceanscapes, crashing white-tipped waves and crumbling rocks battered by the ceaseless breathing of the ocean.

“Funny thing is that I’ve lived in Maine and in Santa Barbara, California,” says Beck. “And when I was in Santa Barbara, I never painted the ocean. Now I miss it. I remember when I lived in Portland, Maine, and I would go down to Two Lights [State Park] in Cape Elizabeth and watch the ocean. The Atlantic has such a different look than the Pacific. I just loved it.”

Beck says the ocean is truly a limitless subject. “I often go for the subtext of what’s going on in the world or our country, or the subtext of what’s going on in my personal life. I respond well to those two ideas,” he says. “But the ocean can mean or be anything. It’s laden with symbolic content. It’s a symbol for life itself.”

In his new solo exhibition at Tree’s Place in Orleans, Massachusetts, Beck frequently paints a red-roofed house with tall narrow windows that look out onto the crashing waves. He does this in *Lookout*, with an expanse of clouds tiled above the horizon line; and in *Little Red House*, in which the house, the red now transferred from roof to walls, is positioned on a point surrounded by churning seafoam and spray. In *High Water*, we look from the house’s window out onto a rocky promontory surrounded by a swirling mass of water.

He could assign a narrative to these works and their mysterious imagery, but he prefers to save some of the story for himself. “These scenes don’t exist in other places. It’s only there, in my paint or in my head,” he says. “As an artist, I’m supposed to make it mean something to someone else, but all I really care about is making it mean something to me. It’s there to enrich my own experience. But then it also communicates to others, as well, which I’m always grateful to hear.” ●



3



4



5

1
Mark Beck at
work in his
studio.

2
High Water,
oil, 22 x 26"

3
Water, oil on
linen, 22 x 26"

4
Little Red House,
oil, 22 x 26"

5
Seven Crows,
oil on linen,
40 x 52"