

Bridget Galway

Presenting Artist LOUIE DOUCETTE



For quite some time now I have been casting my line out to **LOUIE DOUCETTE** to reel him into sharing his art with the readers of Wilderness House Literary Review. I have known Louie for over 20 years. Composing what I know about Louie is challenging in so far as our history living in and around Provincetown is almost one in the same.

Louie is a fisherman, artist and musician. Louie embodies the history of Provincetown which is steeped in the life of commercial fishing and the artistic bohemian culture.

Louie Doucette
song: Notion

Some of our readers may not be familiar with the history of Provincetown. I feel it is important to describe through my personal experience, along with its

changing history.

For two hundred years Provincetown was one of the biggest ports for commercial fishing. I am so thankful I once worked on the wharf when it still was. We would sit and wait for the boats to come in with their catch after a week or two at sea. I sometimes would spend hours standing on a mountain of ice in the ice house, shoveling ice down a shoot into the boats getting ready to go to sea, or working the winch for the ones just returning. The winch brings the containers of fish up to be emptied onto a metal ramp, and sorted by a crew who were the toughest, foul mouth, and hard working guys in town. The fish would be slid down into boxes, sometimes my job



charcoal: fishing boat at dock

was to shovel the ice on top and nail the covers on and hand truck them to the trucks that transport them to fish markets, and restaurants.



Off Shore Cooking

There was a term for the ones who worked the wharf, and that was "wharf rat", I was dam proud to be considered one. I can still remember the smell of the sea in a fresh catch, the feeling of the salt air dry on my face, and the good bruises.

Because of regulations on the fishing industry and the stress of over fishing; this put a lot of boat owners out of business; fishermen whose families lived off the sea for generations.

In the 35 years that Provincetown was my home base; two fishing boats and all its crew were lost to the sea. When this happens a quiet comes over the

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town, except for the sound of grieving families, and the bars; which become memorials for quite some time.

When the Eugene O'Neil Theater burnt down, that created a shift in the artistic community. The Monument Museum exhibits its history as a fishing town through art, memorabilia, and information about important people and characters that were part and parcel to the uniqueness of Provincetown. The Fine Arts Work Center and the Provincetown Art Association and Museum still support the artistic community and history of the town.

Louie came to town, and immediately found his place in the artistic community. He felt the pull of the sea in more ways than one. What I mean to say, is as much as his art was inspired by its beauty and changing nature, is as much as he wanted to live a life with the sea, the life of a fisherman.

I have known many fishermen, some could be real bastards when they were tired from days out at sea, and decide to celebrate their land legs getting good and drunk. I felt a kin to them, and they always treated me nice; except when I was put on the bad winch. I would beg not to be put on it. It had a tendency to drop the containers of fish back on their deck, and then any good manner they had towards me went to the wind; replaced with "what the fucking hell are you doing....." If they were Portuguese I did not need an interpreter. I learned to suck it up, shake it off. The time they spent on an ever changing sea came through any bad nature.



Maggie and Louie. Song: Winters Gone

Louie's return to shore was often times spent painting or playing his music. These days at low tide Louie works picking oysters and clams in the wild and on his farm; this means he has a granted bank where he can harvest shell fish. His art and music continues to be inspired by the beauty of the elements and the colors that create the nature of the Cape.

Having the opportunity to exhibit Louie Doucette's art is particularly meaningful to me. It has brought up memories which will be forever in my heart, and define a life well lived.

The link to Louie's music is at the bottom of his statement. The song "Notion" appears under his portrait and it is one of my favorites.

I am so pleased to be a part of sharing Louie's art, life and music on The Wilderness House Literary Review.

Louie Doucette's art is in private collections; it is most likely that his out at sea paintings will be added to archival collections which depict the life of a Provincetown fisherman.

Louie Doucette



“Memories of Mallory Square”
song “Change On”
16x20 acrylic on canvas

“Memories of Mallory Square”

This painting was done Memorial Day. I feel it is more like an illustration. I painted it very fast. It is a memory of me and one of my friends. A little paint and a couple of hours, and 33 years seem like yesterday. Spontaneous, its great when that happens.

I was born in Beverly MA in 1953. Family moved to Miami in 1960. I was a crafty kid that worked at my dad’s gas station and played guitar on the streets.

I finished school at seventeen, with the lure of adventure and the need to get away from home I headed out with pen in hand, my guitar, a back pack and tent. I set my sights on Key West, I knew it was a place where a free spirited musician and artist such as me could exist with little in my pocket and no need for a roof over my head. There I found the world as my stage.

I arrived in Key West with the anticipation of a new life. Malory Square is where people gathered to listen or play music and dance to celebrate the sunset into the sea. I still feel the beat of the conga drums in my heart, and see the colors and life constantly changing.

I met a girl friend in Key West who was born and raised on Cape Cod Ma. She was from Provincetown, it is the last town situated on the very tip of the Cape.

We decided to head out to New Orleans for the Mardi Gras. After that experience she said she wanted to hitch hike back to Provincetown.

We arrive in Provincetown the winter of 1978. Many of you might remember the blizzard of ’78.

Shortly after my arrival in Provincetown I was fortunate to meet Malcolm Newman; owner of The Starving Artist Studios of Greenwich Village and Provincetown. I showed him some of my pen and inks of New Orleans. I was surprised that he liked them so much; he said if I did some of Provincetown he would print them up and give me my own gallery.

I created many pen and inks of Provincetown.

I became the owner of “Gallery in the Alley”. I expanded my medium from pen and inks to watercolor and oils. One form of art that was very popular with the tourist; was connecting different colored scraps of shag carpet to create wall hangings of sea and landscapes.

The gallery was a good income for three years. My life was set on an-

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other course when the building that created the alley burned down. Gig over.

It was then that my life as a fisherman began.

I started out as a cook on a Scaloper; we would be out at sea sometimes a week, sometimes two. I like being out at sea, and the money was good, every trip was an adventure. However it did not leave much time for my music and art, and my hands were so sore from shucking scallops they weren't much good for anything else.

I worked my way up the ladder and eventually became the captain of my own boat.

Sometime between the Alley and the sea I met Maggi Flanagan, she had a one year old daughter Mikaela. We have been together a couple of decades. Our life together has been the anchor which supports all I need to be.

She is an advocate for the homeless, and there couldn't be a better person to do this.

She has tough Irish roots, street smart and savvy.



"Oyster Creek"
song "River"
14x20 acrylic on canvas



"Captain Jack's Wharf"
Donated to Homeless Prevention Coalition
16x24 acrylic on canvas

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When I was 45 on a trip 55 miles from shore the phone rang, it was Maggie calling to tell me she was pregnant. We had a son, Zack.

After Zack was born I stayed on the beach awhile and oystered. Off-shore the money is good but there is not much time spent at home. I had plans to go back to running my friend's boat when the closed area for scalloping opened, there would be an abundance of catch and the money would be great.

A terrible misfortune struck. Two weeks before that opening my son and I were in a bad car accident. Fortunately my son was not injured. I suffered three compacted discs in my neck and one in my back and was left with concussive syndrome. Brain damage, no more being the captain. Life changed.

I was all jammed up with pain, it hurt to think. The neurologist told me music and art help heal the brain. Oh boy! The cure was what fishing got in the way of. Its funny how things have a way of fixing themselves, what's meant to be happens.

I continue to paint the beauty of the land and sea, these elements create the richness of color that surround and inspire me. My art and music are inspired by my life as a fisherman, and the places I have been.

Thank you for your appreciation and the opportunity to share. This is an honor,

Peace - Love,

Louie

www.reverbNation.com/louieandfriends

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Keep it Gentle

He is signaling the winch man to gently land the Scallop dredge on the deck in a heavy sea.



Louie painting
"Scalloping the Great South Channel"

"Scalloping the Great South Channel"

This is one of those you have to be there paintings, and I was. This is one of those paintings that tell the story of a fisherman's life. (I like it)



"Scalloping the Great South Channel"
30x40 acrylic on canvas

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"Wellfleet Pier"
Donated to Homeless Prevention Coalition Auction
to support needs of the homeless.
8x10 watercolor pen and ink on paper



"Across the Way"
36x48 acrylic on canvas

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"Pump House"
Song "I Miss You"
36x48 acrylic on canvas



"F/V Cape Star"
36x24 acrylic on canvas

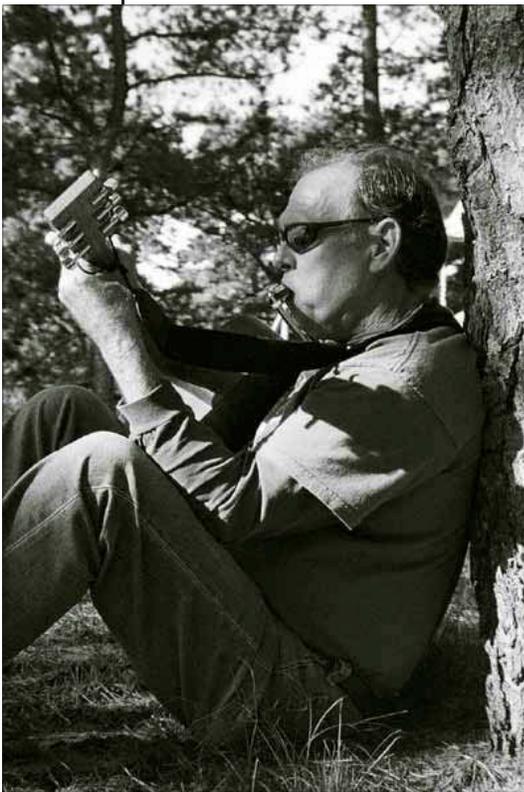
"F/V Cape Star"

This painting has a story. After I painted it; my friend Jerry was checking it out. I said "Jerry that painting is just like us. It's beaten from the sea, just like us." We both scalloped on that boat in its heyday, and took part in beating it up. It's a self portrait."

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"Oyster Man"



Louie in peace with Harmonica and Guitar



"Black Fish Creek"
16x20 oil on canvas



"Four Guitars"
24x30 acrylic on canvas