

Mark Beale

Tonalist painter (b.1962)

Mark Beale grew up exploring the creeks and rivers of Tidewater, Virginia. Forty years of boating, and later intensive study and practice, has formed the basis of his art career.

“The water gets in your blood,” he says. “I didn’t know it at the time, but early on I was falling in love with the coastal landscape”.

At the age of 14, he began attending workshops conducted by Barclay Sheaks and later studied with Theodore Turner at the University of Virginia.

From Sheaks, Beale learned patience in developing his artwork and the importance of “lying in the marsh,” rather than just looking at it. To Beale this came to mean immersing oneself in the sights, sounds, feel and smell of the marsh, to become absorbed by it and literally become part of it.

After seeing the Tonalist paintings of George Inness and Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, Beale had an unwavering desire to pursue the Tonalism style. He first went to the Met to see the Inness works, exploring even work in the process of restoration in the backrooms of the museum. Beale then contacted the Spanierman Gallery in New York City and was allowed to hold and study under magnification many of Inness' private works in the gallery's collection. Later being invited to exhibit at New York City's Salmagundi Club became one of the first pinnacles of his career. “Having my work hanging next to a glass case with Inness' palette in it was nothing short of surreal” he says.

For the past 25 years, Beale has lived in Charleston, South Carolina with his wife Terri. His painting style continues to draw from the 19th-century Tonalist and Impressionist Schools and from his formative experiences boating, fishing, and painting on-location.

Beale's work has been selected for numerous juried exhibitions and earned many awards, including awards from the National Parks Foundation. In 2012, two of his landscape works were chosen for the National Parks two-year traveling exhibit. At each venue on the tour, his painting “Wadmalaw River Moonrise” was the painting displayed at the exhibition entry. In 2013, he won first prize at Magnolia Garden's national landscape competition and his work “Creekside Dusk,” which was purchased for the Magnolia Plantation permanent collection in Charleston.

Notable exhibition credits include The Gibbes Museum of Art in Charleston, South Carolina, The Coutts Museum of Art in Eldorado, Kansas, The Wildlife Experience Museum in Denver, Colorado, and the historic Salmagundi Club in New York City. His paintings are in public and private collections around the world. Beale work has also been featured in many publications including *Fine Art Connoisseur* and *American Art Collector* and he is listed in *Who's Who in American Art*.

Beale is a member of the American Society of Marine Artists, the American Impressionist Society and Oil Painters of America and he has served on the Board of Directors of the Charleston Artist Guild, which conducts charitable workshops for school children and patients with Alzheimer’s disease.

“My goal is to express an emotion with each painting, a sense of atmosphere and mood. I want the viewer to feel an enveloping air and be drawn into the painting. Ultimately I would like my work to remind others of the feelings that God’s creation inspires in us.”

Beale is represented by Reinert Fine Art in Charleston, South Carolina and Blowing Rock, North Carolina. His portfolio can be viewed at bealefineart.com.

Andrew Webster

Editor, Fine Art Today