



CHRISTINE LAFUENTE

# Colors of the Day

Joseph M.W. Turner (1775-1851), the great English romantic painter, wrote, “My business is to paint what I see, not what I know is there.”

Christine Lafuente, who spends winters in her Brooklyn studio and summers painting on the coast of Maine, comments on Turner, “He painted the sea but also the experience of moving atmosphere and moving light. The way he painted his seascapes, the sea and sky become a living, breathing entity. The sea has its own personality; it’s not just static. One day it can be glassy and reflective, and another day it can suck the form out of everything. Some days, with the tides, there’s gesture and movement. In the fog and haze the horizon kind of dissolves.”

“Turner was trying to make paint express what he was experiencing visually. It’s not descriptive but experiential,” she continues. Lafuente finds the same approach in paintings by Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (1796-1875), stating, “Corot would paint a big mass of tree leaves and branches with hazy, broken brushwork almost like a Color Field painting. It’s no longer descriptive of trees or leaves but



the experience of looking into a forest with light coming through.”

She says, “I’m a sensory, sensual person,

an epicurean. I have an appetite. I like music, food, a massage. I like to experience sensations. Oil paint has a huge range. It can be like cement or frosting. If it has a lot of oil it can have a whole other fluidity to it. The range of viscosity is very satisfying. It also has a life of its own. Rarely does it do what I want it to do. I’m trying to make the paint really express what I’m seeing—to make the paint express a visual phenomenon.”

Her latest work will be shown in the exhibition *Colors of the Day* April 12 through May 4 at Somerville Manning Gallery in Greenville, Delaware. “Each day we’re given a key for that day,” she explains. “On one day there will be a whole kind of mood. Just for that day. Each painting is an opportunity to connect with that specific moment, to that visual experience. Painting from nature we’re given a set of relationships, the weather and atmosphere, the light and time of day, how I’m feeling. It forces you to be in the moment. Then it’s gone. In the studio, the flowers only last so long and then they die.”

In *Wildflowers and Boat*, she combines





3

her winter mode of painting flowers with her summer mode of painting the sea. The color of the flowers is becoming more saturated in her latest paintings and provides a vivid contrast to the hazy sea. The viewer can revel in the surface of the painting and the frozen viscosity of the paint while still being aware of the visual depth of the scene from the proximate flowers to the distant islands.

Lafuente explains, "My intention as a painter is to express something I'm inspired by so someone else can have a feeling of seeing what I see. I'm trying to share an inspiration." ●

*"While many collectors are familiar with Christine's work, her recent evolution of larger compositions, more luscious palette and tactile brushwork are allowing the viewer to experience her paintings in an all-new way."*

— Rebecca Moore, director, Somerville Manning Gallery

#### Somerville Manning Gallery

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(302) 652-0271 • [www.somervillemanning.com](http://www.somervillemanning.com)

- 1 *Peonies, Ribbon, and Scissors*, oil on linen, 18 x 24"
- 2 *Seawall, Tide Coming In*, oil on linen, 11 x 14"
- 3 *Wildflowers and Boat*, oil on linen, 10 x 10"