

Pucker Gallery, Boston



A Sparkling Life Force

*new paintings
by Jeffrey Hession*

Riffin' in the Landscape



Vibrations, 32 x 39 1/2", **JH607**

Front Cover:
Distant Field, 35 x 51", **JH611**

All works are oil on canvas.

Design: Jennifer Bennett
Editor: Destiny McDonald Barletta
Photography: Leslie Ann Feagley, Max Coniglio
and Gilah Yelin Hirsch

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I called him "Monet." As I looked out my studio window each sunny morning, I would hear Jeffrey Hessing whistling, humming or singing, dressed in full *plein air regalia* - hatted, (wide brimmed), portable easel on his back, heading out to the site of the day: a new vista on the Danube, a field resplendent in summer greenery, an expanse of verdant shrubbery punctuated by wildflowers, the large pond reflecting surrounding trees illuminated in the sunlight. Occasionally I would catch his eye as he cheerfully strolled out. I would call out my window, "Bonjour, Monet! Off to whip out another masterpiece?" "Yup," he would always answer, grinning. And sure enough, he would come trudging back around three in the afternoon, a little less jaunty of gait than in the early morning lope, but tired and certainly happy.

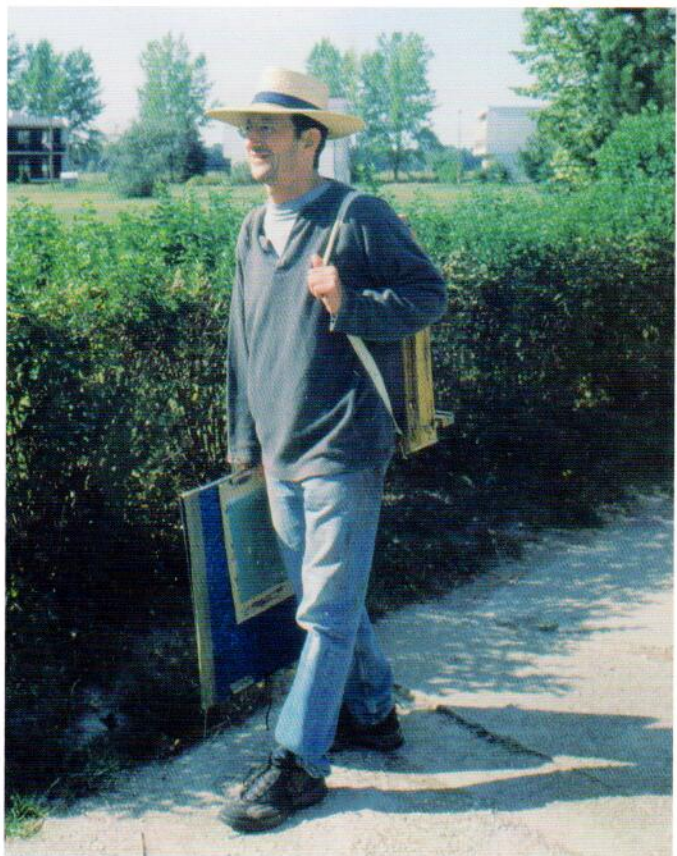
"Hey, Monet! Did you whip out another masterpiece today?" I'd trill out my open studio window, having painted indoors all day. "Yup!" Monet would invariably crow back, the 'masterpiece' surely wet, barely visible to me, attached to the exterior side of the portable easel. He never seemed to have a bad day.

Sometimes I would be out in the field, photographing, when in the distance I would spy a lone painter in his spot set up a la 19th Century, the easel planted firmly in the grassy land holding a canvas, and a story-book-style oil palette in his hand. He was clearly in his own world, focused, concentrating, painting. Bent on my own visual mission, I would not have dreamed of disturbing Monet.

We were both privileged to be Fellows at an invitational international painters' symposium, the 10th Annual Sympat, in Patince, Slovakia in September of 2004. We met the day we both arrived and instantly struck up a friendship which solidified during the four weeks. It was not just that we were the only Fellows whose first language was English, but we had similar backgrounds. I had left Eastern Canada to live in the West of the United States, while Jeffrey had left the Eastern United States to live in the South of France. Because of our shared language and North American Jewish origins, Jeffrey and I also shared perception and interpretation of the Slovak culture that embraced us for a month, as we lived among those who met at what I came to call the "Table of Babel" – 22 artists representing 14 languages/ cultures/ countries. As visiting artists in a new and different world, we had many opportunities to discuss our lives and art.

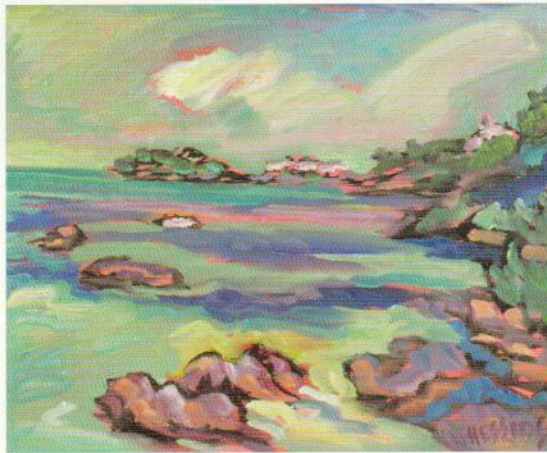
One works alone during a residency. It is only on invitation that one visits another artist's studio. Thus, although Jeffrey's studio was directly above mine in the building which housed the studios of artists from Greece, Switzerland, Slovenia, Hungary, Cyprus, Slovakia, Germany, France and Iran, I had only sidelong glances of the paintings he carried back to his studio from his daily excursions. It was several weeks before I was invited to view his work directly.

Jeffrey's studio was buzzing with color and light. A vibratory shift had taken place in the formerly Communist, drab and unmemorable 1940's room. The paintings blazed





Château La Napoule, 11 x 14", **JH587**

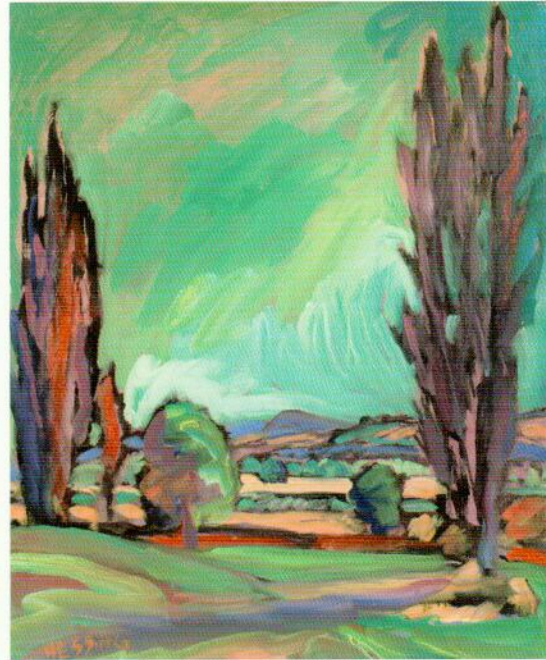


Tidal Pool, 11 1/4 x 14", **JH577**

with hot chromatic shifts - turquoise blues countermanded by persimmon oranges, candy apple reds juxtaposed with periwinkle violets. Oil paint was swirled, sexy and slurpy, with wild and erotic brushstrokes. And all this sensual heat was articulating what in reality was a very gentle, mid green, peaceful landscape.

It was obvious that Jeffrey was not painting portraits of the landscape, but that he was painting the living world from the inside out. His landscapes were about the upward and downward rush of phloem and xylem that created the turgidity of trees, the dauntlessness of erect plants dancing boldly in the sunlight, the coalescence of trees full of leaves turning into anthropomorphic and zoological-looking entities. The paintings were about energy that catalyzes biology, the cosmic wind which in Cabalistic terminology would be called *ruach* (a Hebrew word that means both *wind* and *spirit*).

I kept thinking, "Jeff is 'at play in the fields of the Lord!'"



Green Sky, 18 1/2 x 14 1/2", **JH590**

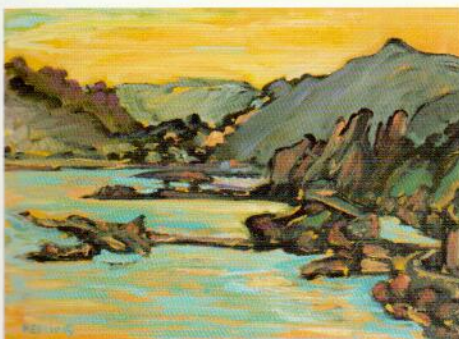
I have found it ironic that novice painters assume that landscape is the easiest of all subject matter to paint. Yet because it can be the most prosaic, it can be the most difficult to personalize. And yet, given the fact that landscape is certainly one of the oldest, and most familiar of genres, was there something anachronistic about this artist, his style, his choice of subject matter, his *plein air* approach to working, in the fourth year of the 21st Century? After all, our world is one of technology, e-mail, and Discovery Shuttles into outer space!

This Hessing hailed from the lusty portals of Provence, and in some sense, he is a contemporary descendant of illustrious Fauve forebears such as Matisse, Vlaminck, Derain, Dufy, Van Dongen, who were 'children' of Van Gogh. While these and other artists were 'wild beast' (the French word *fauve* means *wild beast*) landscape painters, Bonnard transferred that unmistakable body heat into luscious figurative work, and Kandinsky and Kokoschka brushed that chromatic fervor into German Expressionism.

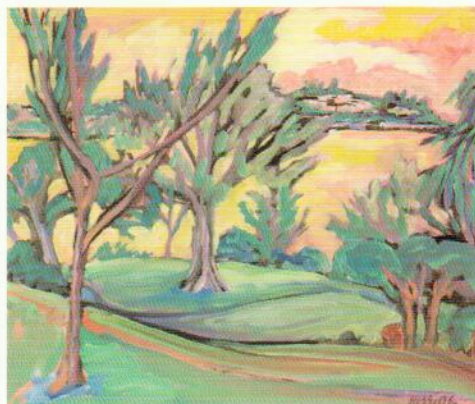
Looking at Jeffrey's work, I was impelled to think of others who had dared enter unswervingly into the beating heart of landscape. Canadian artists such as Emily Carr and the Group of Seven interpreted their landscape in entirely



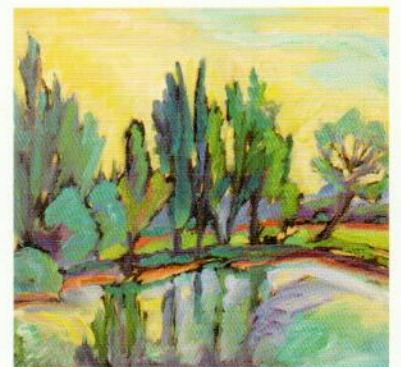
Red Pond, 25 1/2 x 32", **JH606**



L'Aube, 9 1/2 x 13", **JH585**



Bermuda Cedars, 15 x 18 1/2", **JH563**



Sunrise, 12 x 12", **JH617**

individuated ways, ranging from the mystical to the sexual, often merging the two into an overwhelming wonder.

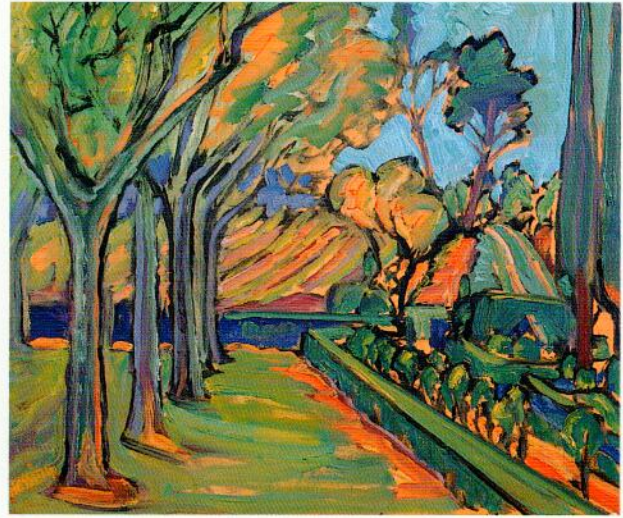
Rather than working in a historical or borrowed tradition, it was clear to me that Jeff was working in a personal vein. He was his own man. He may have come of age in the

psychedelic era of the 1970's - and surely his color choices can be seen as originating in that context - yet I understood his coloration to be more aligned with his other passion than to art history.

As it happened, many of the artists at the Sympat were



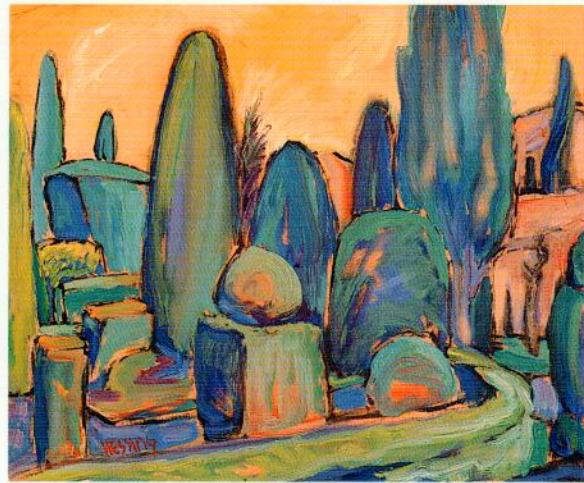
Allée dans les Vignes, 10 1/2 x 13 3/4", **JH551**



La Ferraude, 18 x 21 1/2", **JH554**



The Long and Winding Road II, 15 x 18 1/2", **JH557**



Morning at the Château, 15 x 18", **JH553**

also musicians, and jam sessions became nightly obsessions. No matter whether the origin of the artist was northern, eastern, middle-eastern, western, or southern, everyone responded to Jeff's blues. As a singer and guitarist, Jeffrey wails in the urban white American Blues tradition. It occurred to me that, if anything, his paintings were congruently related to the unexpurgated, below-the-belt desire and angst - expressed in the lyrics and music of Black and Blue American greats, such as B.B. King, Otis Rush, Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, Albert King, Mississippi John Hurt and T-Bone Walker. His hue choices reflect his musical awareness: when he brushes Cerulean Turquoise mixed with a touch of Chrome Green, he is visually orchestrating a 7th chord; when he swirls Cadmium Orange sweetened with

Alizarin Crimson, he is hitting the emotional high of an intoxicating Mozart refrain. He often punctuates his landscapes with a single tree, much like a plucked string or a slap on the frets, highlighting an emotional strain. And those rolling, often roiling skies are like undulating chords defining the underlying rhythm of both the music and the paintings.

Hessing practices his surreal visceral vision of landscapes in various parts of the world. Whether the catalyst is in France, Italy, Slovakia, Bermuda, Boston, New York, or Shanghai, his signature hot pink-oranges, tip-the-spectrum turquoises and metallic greens dominate the palette. Works such as *La Ferraude* and *Allée dans les Vignes* (France) (JH554, JH551) ripple with heated alizarins mixed with white



Breakfast in Tuscany, 28 1/2 x 39", JH549

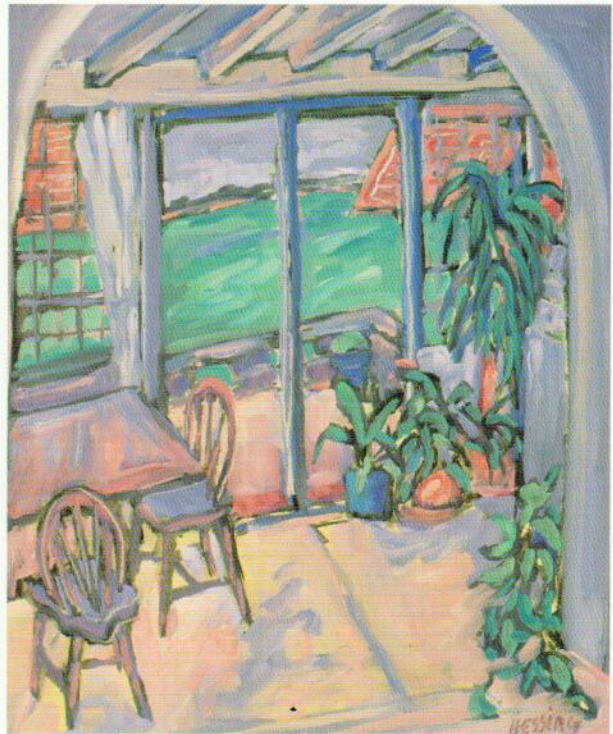
and cadmium yellows. *Allee* boasts quick, loose and slippery brushstrokes defining both light and leaves simultaneously, while *Morning at the Chateau* (JH553) plays visual puns as Hessing translates boxy shrub pruning into Cubist topiary. *The Long and Winding Road II* (JH557) is hardly a usual landscape as the central blue tree departs its mooring, seemingly swaying down the road in a ghostly manner invoking Munch's *Scream*. Even *Breakfast in Tuscany* (JH549) defies compositional norms - a symmetrical scene of pink ground and blue trees flanking the almost caricature-like central 'guru' tree. And something as innocuous as *Willows, Boston Garden II* (JH556) makes us wonder about the nature of the event the couple is witnessing across the path. Are they trees or tree hallucinations?

Hessing's unmitigated ardor - his love of the world and love of life - resonates from his sensual paintings. His color and stroke evoke a fertile, richly orchestrated world. Matched with his subcutaneous vision, is his respect and humility in the face of this treasured universe - or from the painter's eye, universe of treasures. In a highly technological age of war and careless destruction of the earth, Hessing's intimate relationship with nature is not only essential but necessary. It is precisely this unabashed portrayal of sparkling life force as felt through the sensibility of the human condition that makes Jeffrey Hessing's work so accessible and delightful, memorable and unique.

Gilah Yelin Hirsch
Venice, California - August 2005



Springtime Terrace, 24 x 19 ³/₄", **JH598**



Storm Approaching, 18 x 15", **JH575**



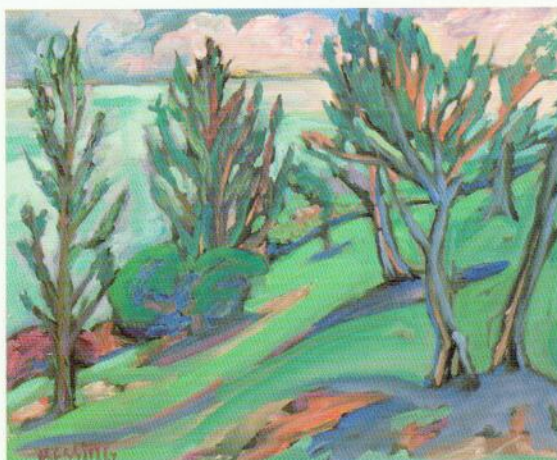
Lonely Tree, 17 ³/₄ x 21 ¹/₂", **JH593**



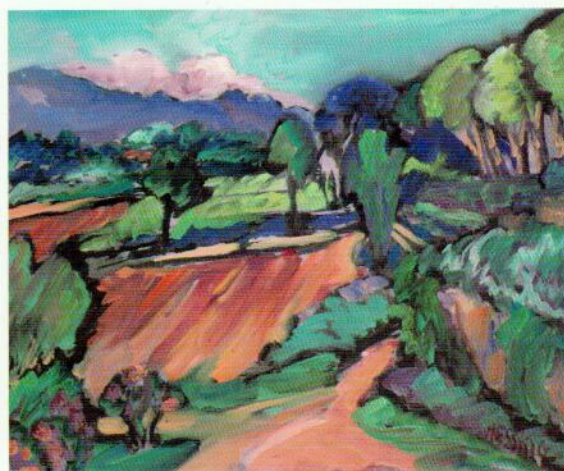
Coline, 18 x 21 ¹/₂", **JH592**



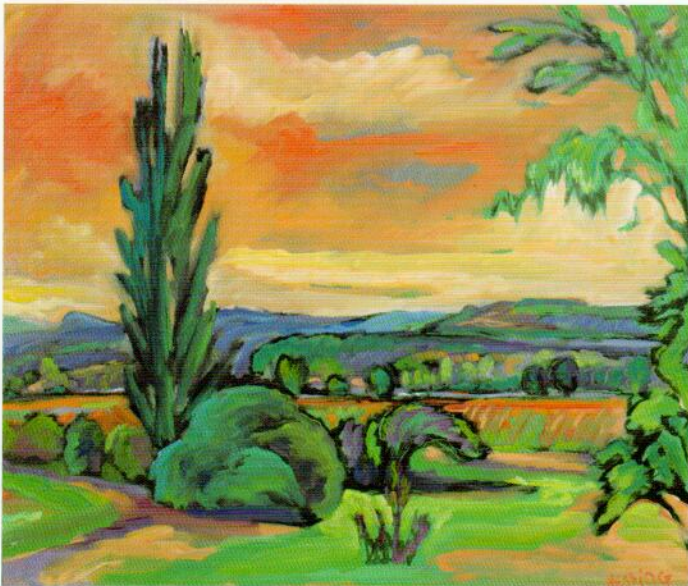
The Column and Door, 32 x 25 1/2", **JH609**



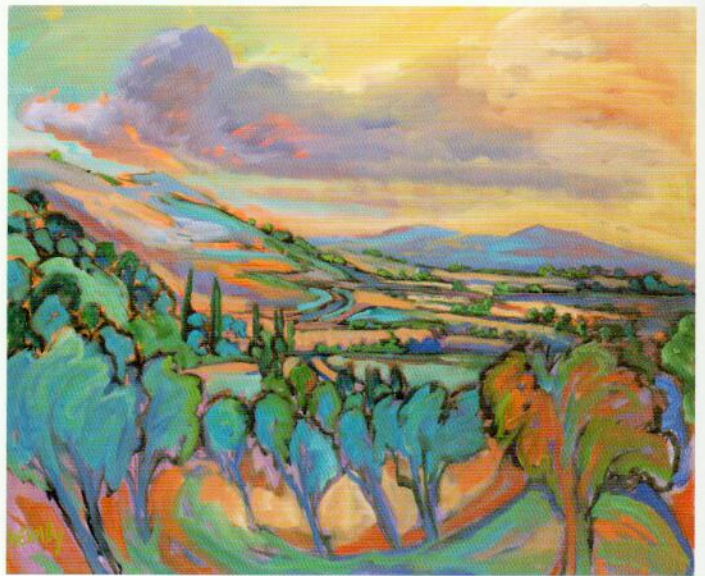
Cedar Hill, 14 x 16 1/2", **JH568**



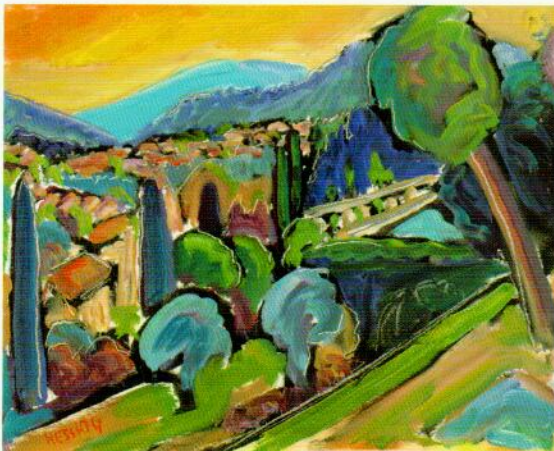
The Var, 14 x 17", **JH596**



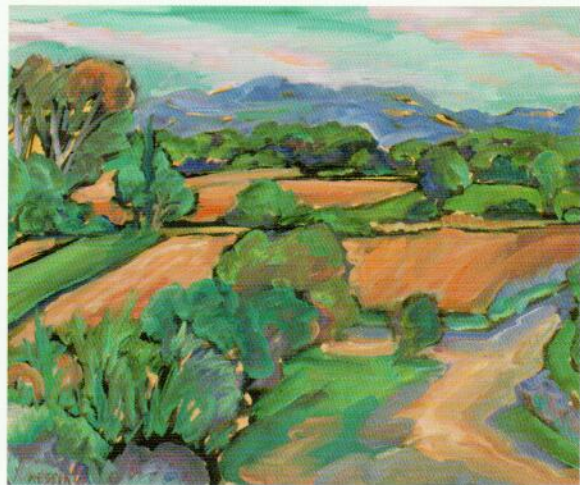
Cornfields, 19 x 23", **JH623**



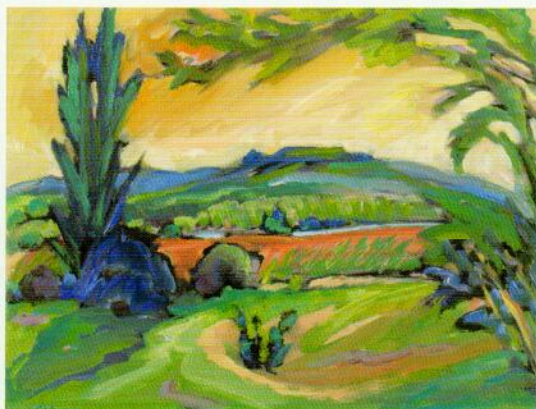
Tuscany, 23 1/2 x 28 1/2", **JH603**



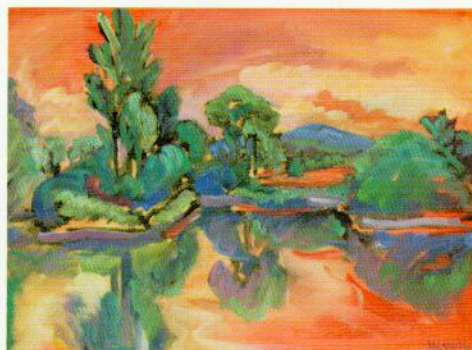
Overlook, 13 x 16", **JH588**



Dancing Distances, 15 x 18", **JH597**



Distance, 11 1/2 x 14 1/2", **JH614**



Red Reflections, 9 1/2 x 13 1/4", **JH586**



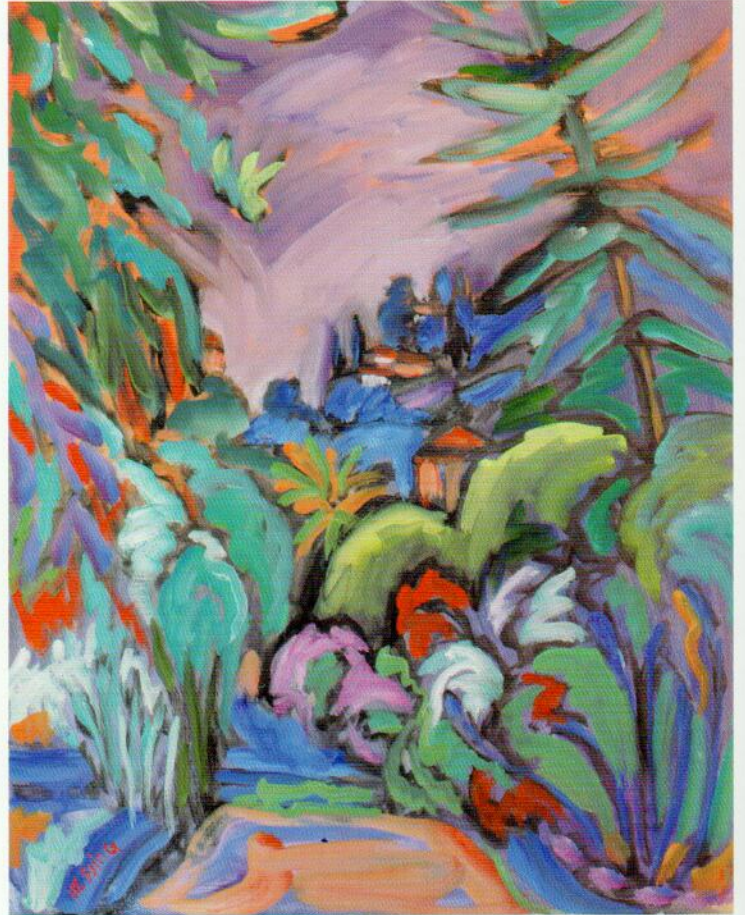
Tuscan Hills, 51 x 63 1/2", **JH612**



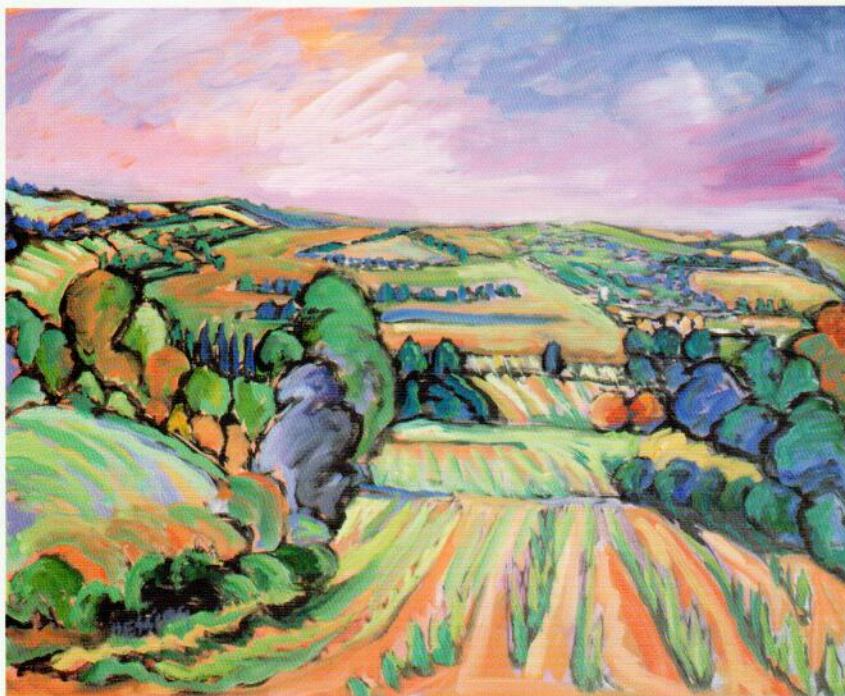
Red River, 18 x 22 1/2", **JH594**



Ascending Pools, 24 x 19 1/2", **JH602**



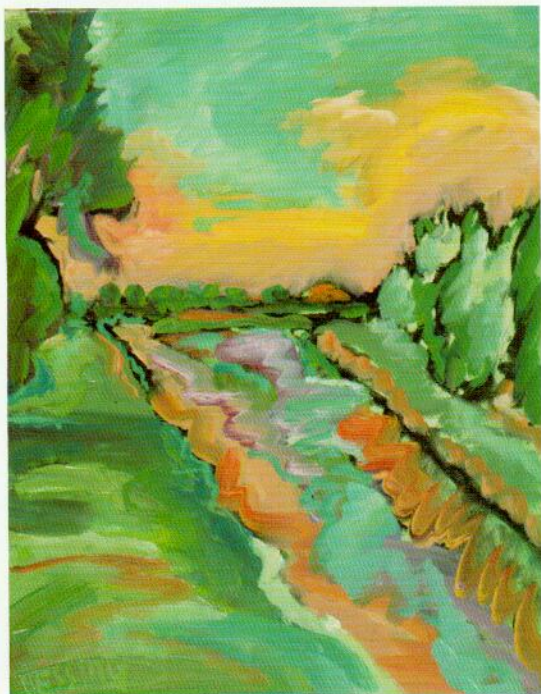
Nature's Riot, 24 x 19 3/4", **JH600**



Les Vignes, 25 1/2 x 31 1/2", **JH605**



Distance, 23 x 28 3/4", **JH608**



Canal, 14 x 11", **JH616**



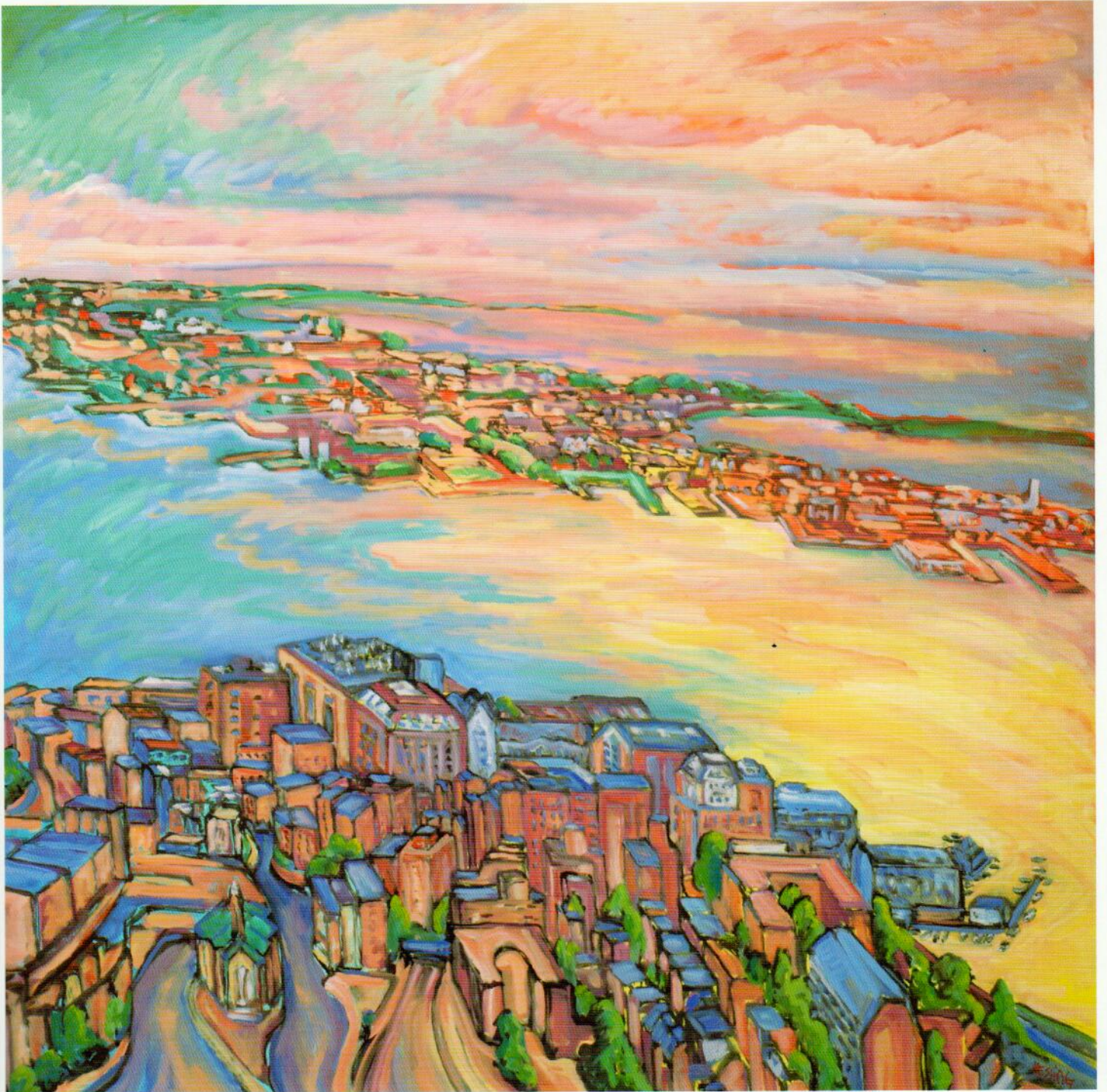
Martine Pine, 21 x 18", **JH591**



Willows, Boston Garden II, 23 1/2 x 28 1/2", JH556



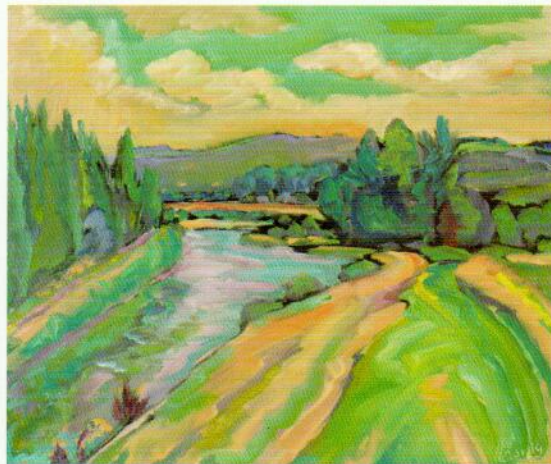
Canne, 23 1/4 x 29", JH604



Boston Harbor, 59 x 59", **JH583**



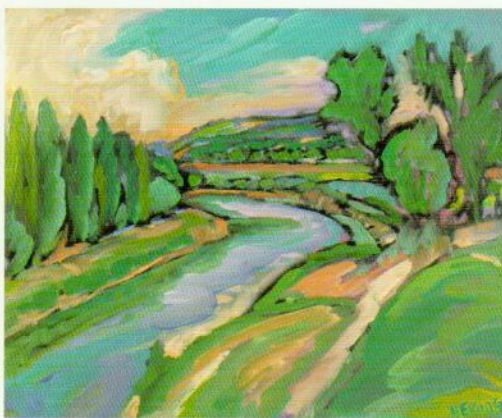
Approaching Storm, 19 x 22 1/2", **JH622**



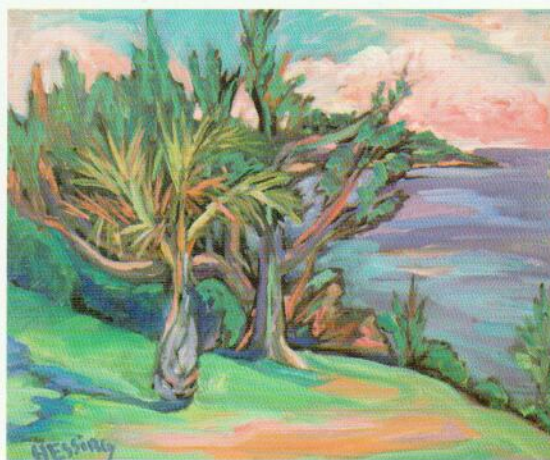
Flowing, 19 x 22 1/2", **JH621**



Dockyard Trees, 21 3/4 x 26", **JH578**



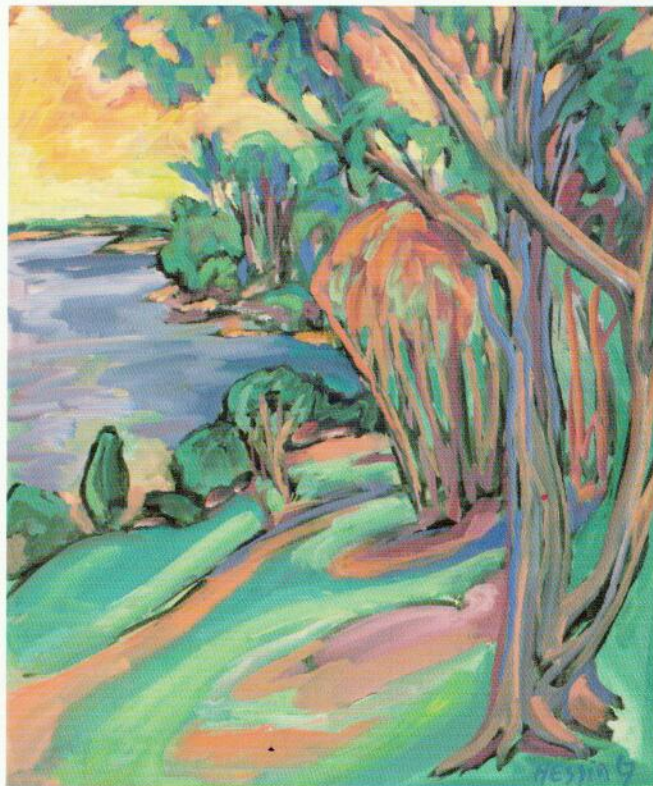
Žsitva, 13 1/2 x 16 1/2", **JH618**



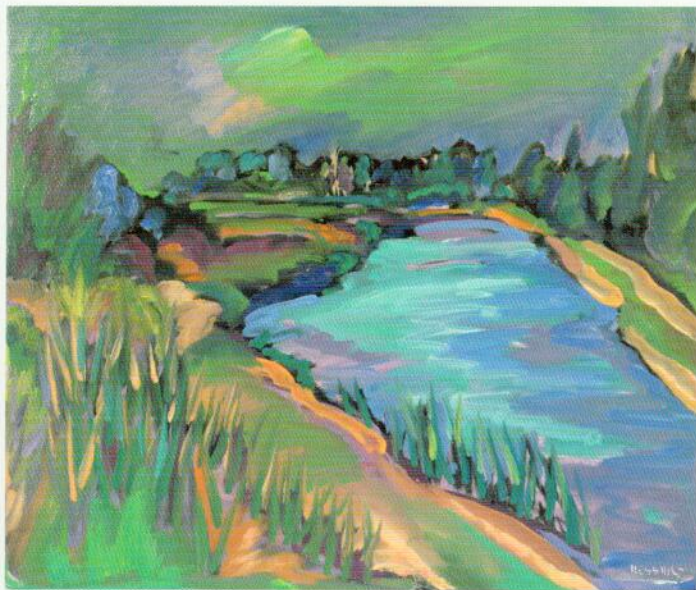
Palmettos, 14 x 17", **JH564**



Dusk, 28 1/2 x 11 1/2", **JH625**



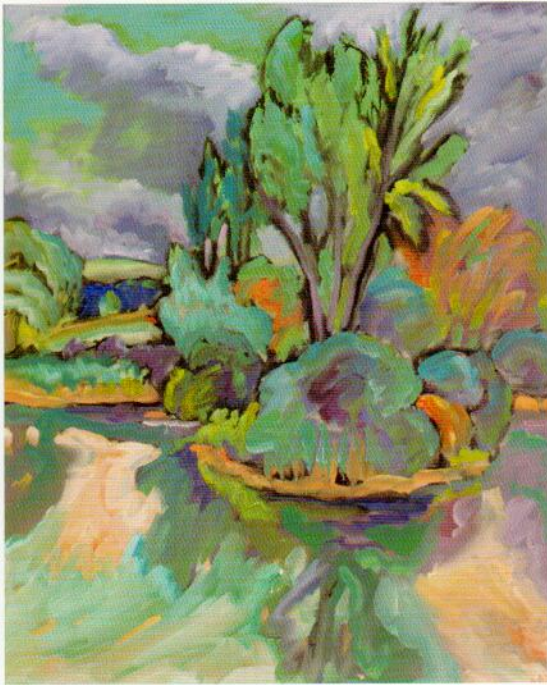
Cedar by the Sea, 18 1/2 x 15", **JH562**



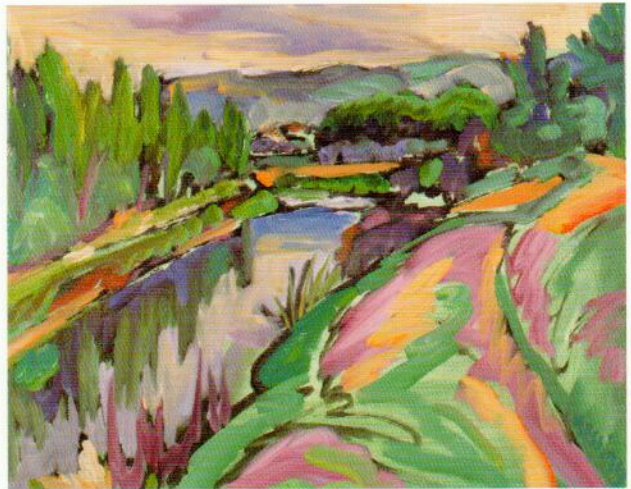
Žitava, 16 x 18", **JH619**



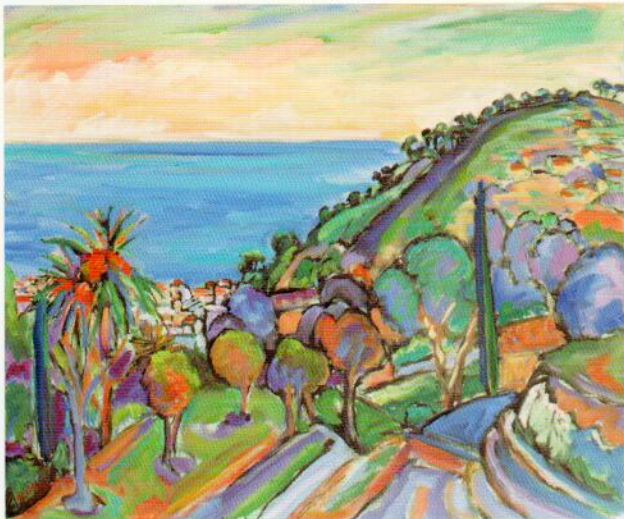
Afternoon, Green Sky, 16 x 18", **JH620**



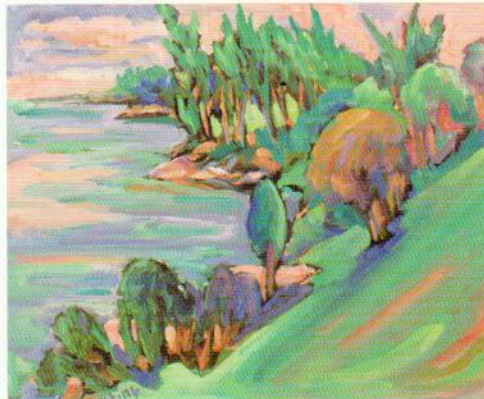
Reflection, 22 1/2 x 18 1/2", **JH624**



River Run, 11 1/2 x 14", **JH615**



The Bay of Angles, 21 x 25 1/2", **JH601**



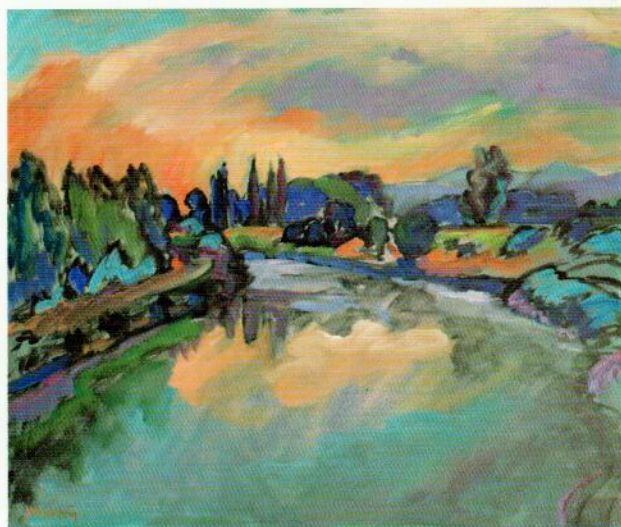
The Slippery Slope, 11 3/4 x 14 1/2", **JH565**



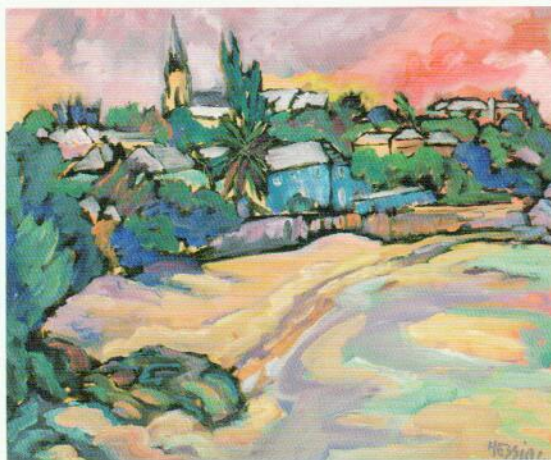
Cloud Reflection, 11 x 14", **JH613**



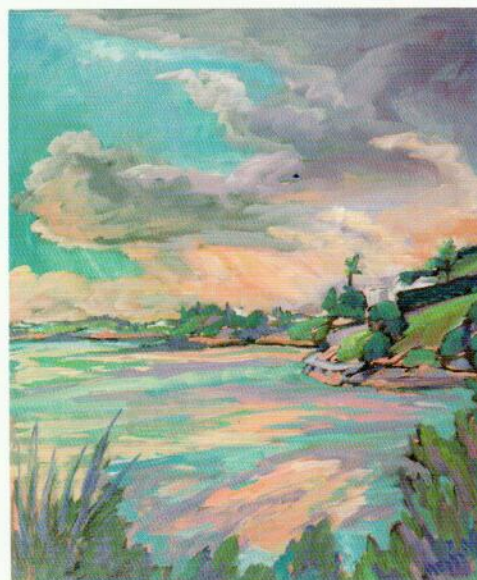
The Pond, 19 1/2 x 24", **JH599**



Le Canal a l'Aube, 18 x 21 1/2", **JH595**



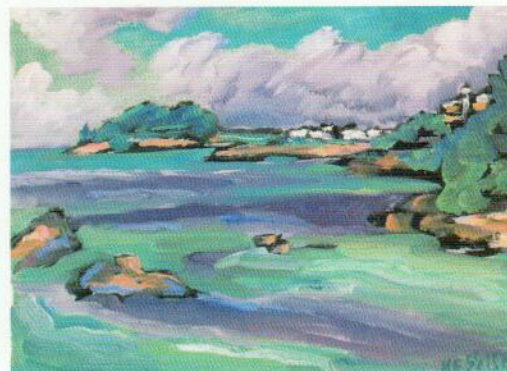
Blue House, 15 x 18", **JH573**



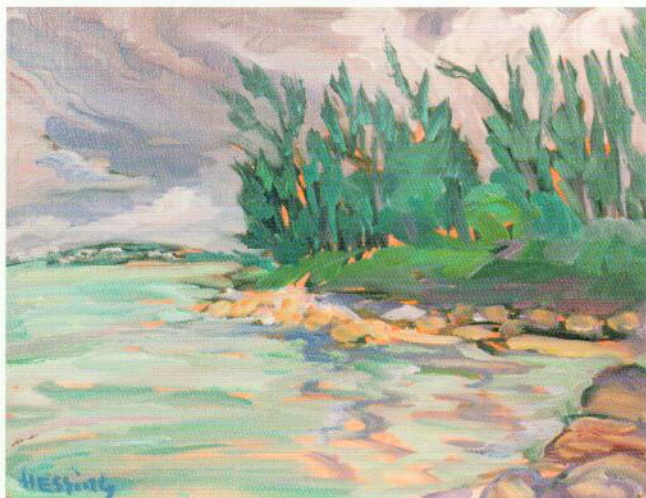
Looking to the Sea, 18 1/2 x 15", **JH574**



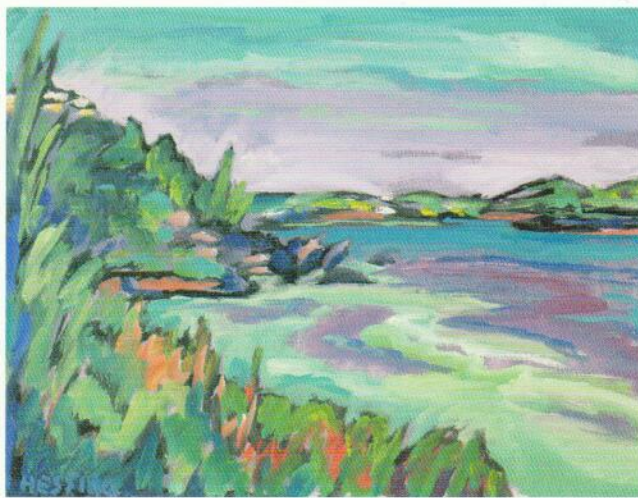
A Villefranche Winter, 15 x 17 3/4", **JH589**



Nelson's Bay, 9 3/4 x 13 1/4", **JH576**



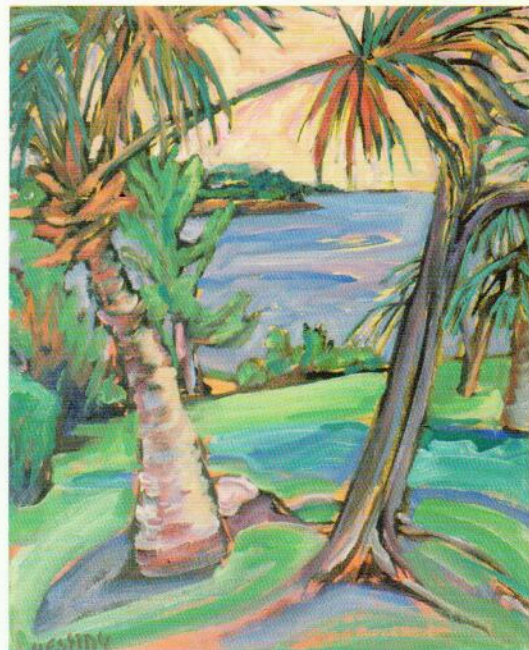
Hurricane Point, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", **JH567**



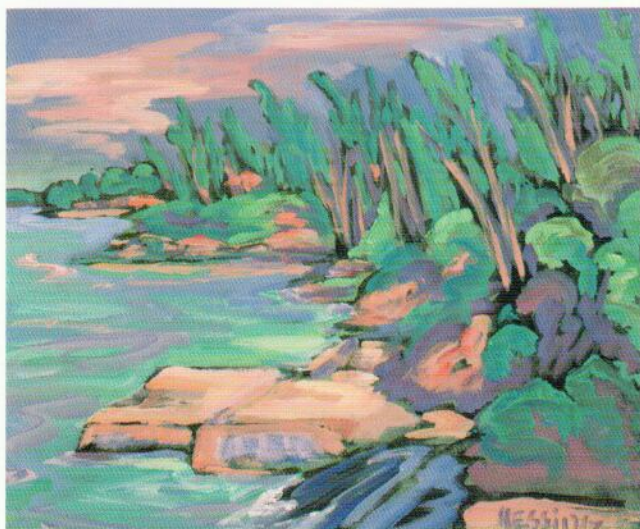
Water View, 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 14", **JH569**



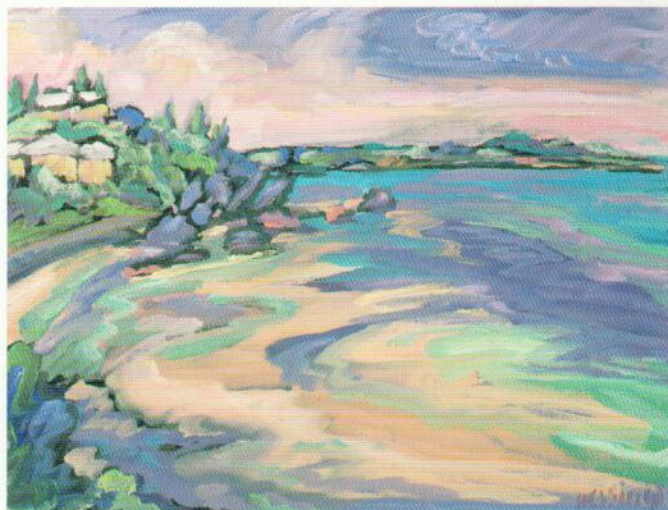
Head Lands, 16 x 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", **JH561**



Twin Trees, 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", **JH572**



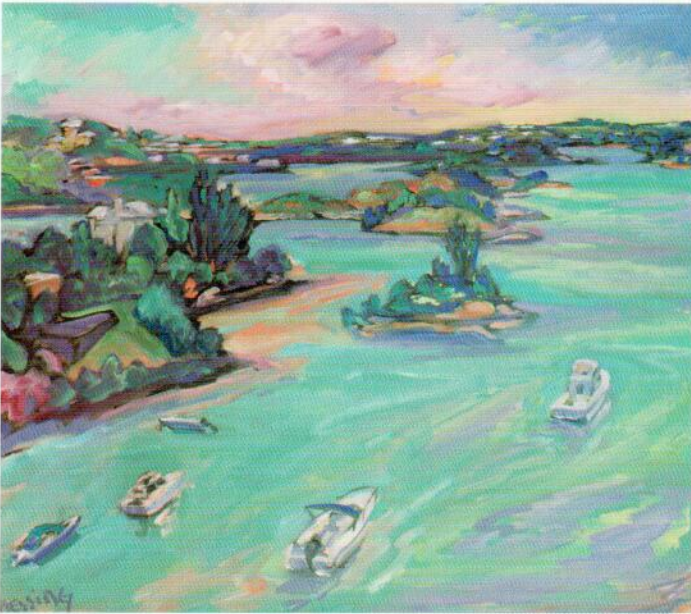
Morgan's Point, 12 x 14 1/2", **JH570**



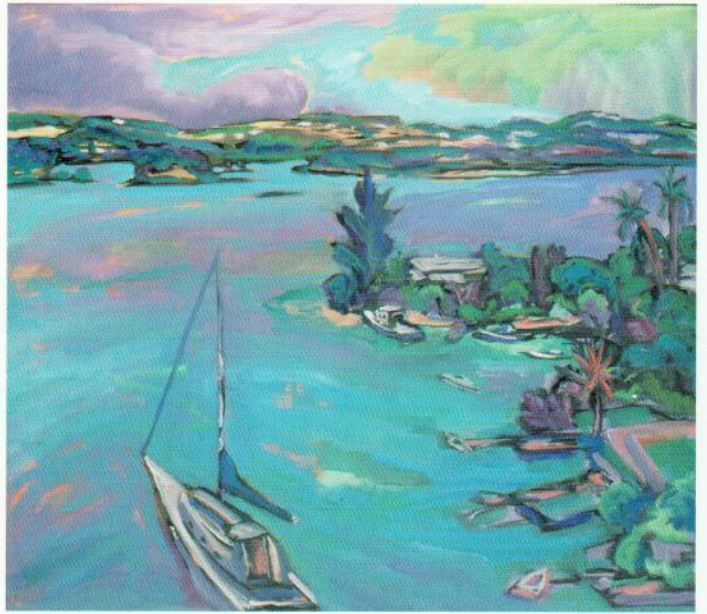
On the Sea, 11 x 15", **JH566**



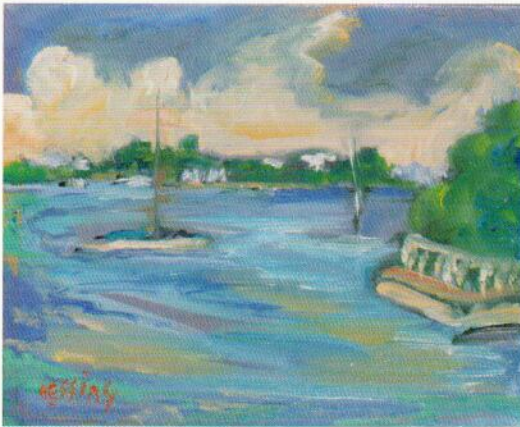
Yellow House, 29 1/2 x 24", **JH579**



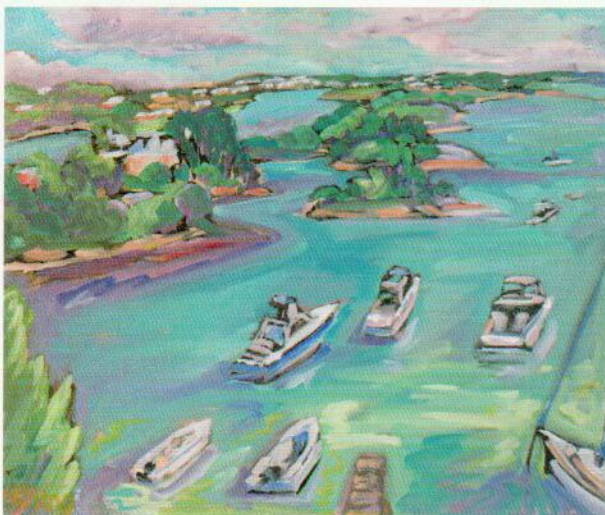
Scenic Harbor, 21 x 24", **JH581**



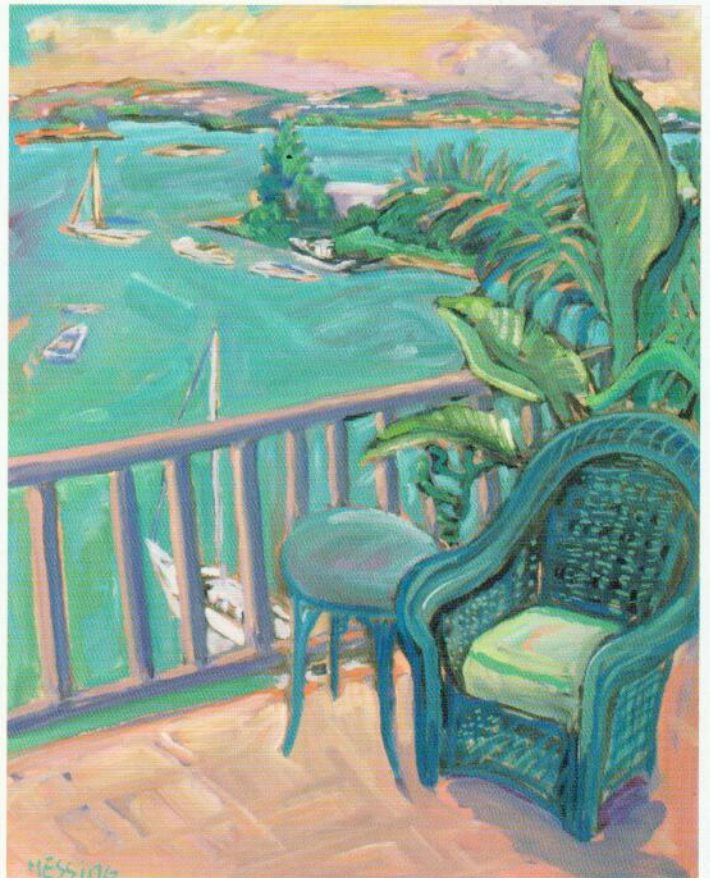
Out to Sea, 21 x 24", **JH582**



Sailboat in Saltkettle, 8 1/2 x 10 1/2", **JH584**



Spanish Point, 15 1/4 x 18", **JH571**



From the Balcony, 25 x 20", **JH580**

Jeffrey Hessing — Biography

Born in New York in 1952.
Currently resides in Nice, France.

Education

State University of New York at Binghamton, B.A. — 1969-1972
Private Study with Leonard Baskin — 1972-1973

Solo Exhibitions

Pucker Gallery, Boston, Massachusetts — 2006, 2004, 2002, 1999, 1997, 1994, 1992, 1989
Natus Gallery, Shanghai, China — 2005
Galerie Aktuarius, Strasbourg, France — 2004
Association des Jeunes Monagasques, Monaco — 2002
Le Mas d'Artigny Gallery, St. Paul de Vence, France — 2000, 1998, 1996
Maison du Portal, Levens, France — 2000
Masterworks Foundation Gallery, Bermuda — 1999
La Salle Gallery, Monaco — 1997
Val Rameh, Menton, France — 1994
Moulin des Artistes, Valbonne, France — 1994
Centre Henri Matisse, Vence, France — 1994
Villa Principe Leopoldo, Lungano, Switzerland — 1994
Galerie Musee, Nagoya, Japan — 1993
Le Mas d'Artigny, Saint Paul de Vence, France — 1992
Galerie Leo Allarmargot, Paris, France — 1991
Galerie Leo Allarmargot, Saint Tropez, France — 1991
Unisys, Saint-Paul de Vence, France — 1991
Maralyn Wilson Gallery, Birmingham, Alabama — 1990
Galerie Bleue, Vence, France — 1989-1990
Galerie Quincampoix, Paris, France — 1989
Musee Municipal de Saint Paul, France — 1986

Group Exhibitions

Galleria Limes, Komarno, Slovakia — 2004
Kato Gallery, London, England — 2004
Fine Arts, Monte Carlo, Monaco — 2004
Golf de la Grande Bastide, Chateauneuf de Grasse, France — 2001
Ora Sorenson Gallery, Delray Beach, Florida — 2000
Chateau d'Eze, France — 1999
Chateau de Tourrettes-sur-Loup, France — 1999, 1996, 1985
Galerie Mouvance, Place des Vosges, Paris, France — 1998
Evelyn Avery Fine Arts, Atlanta, Georgia — 1997-1998
Fel Gallery, Singapore — 1996-1997
Kwai Fung Hin Art Gallery, Happy Valley, Hong Kong — 1995
Caesarea Gallery, Boca Raton, Florida — 1995
Lyons Gallery, Delray Beach, Florida — 1995
Cygnet Gallery, Toronto, Canada — 1994-1995
Kwai Fung Hong Gallery, Hong Kong — 1994

Galerie Musee, Nagoya, Japan — 1993
Galerie Debut, Nagoya, Japan — 1992-1993
Hotel de Ville, Lausanne, Switzerland — 1993
Unisys, Saint Paul de Vence, France — 1993
Litho Art, Copenhagen, Denmark — 1993
R.V.S. Gallery, Southampton, New York — 1993
Center Gallery, Winter Park, Florida — 1993
Palais de l'Europe, Menton, France — 1986
Musee de Ponchettes, Nice, France — 1981
Terrain Gallery, Green Street, New York, New York — 1983, 1981
Spencer Museum of Art, Lawrence, Kansas — 1978

Publications

Pulse, "Hessing on Bermuda" — October 1999
Nice Matin, "Hessing Devoile Ses Toiles" — August 1998
New Riviera, "Art on the Move" — Summer 1997
The Seattle Times, "View Worthy" — July 1997
Outdoor Photographer, "Eos or Easel" — December 1995
Galerie Musse, catalogue — Summer 1995
Semaine des Spectacles, catalogue cover — September 1994
Art Vencia, catalogue — Summer 1994
Houghton Mifflin Company, catalogue cover — Spring 1994
Art & Antiques, "Cote d'Azur Allure" — November 1993
Original Print Collectors Group, catalogue — Winter 1992
New Riviera, "Jeffrey Hessing: Reflection on Gardens" — Winter 1989

Artist Residencies

Sympa, Ptince, Slovakia — 2005, 2004
Masterworks Foundation, Bermuda — 1999
Karolyi Foundation, Vence, France — 1980
Ossabaw Island Foundation, Savannah, Georgia — 1980
Millay Colony for the Creative Arts, Austerlitz, New York — 1978-1979
Virginia Center for Creative Arts, Sweet Briar, Virginia — 1979
Artist-in-Residence, University of Kansas at Lawrence — 1977

Select Collections

Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts
Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts
Centre Culturel Henri Matisse, Vence, France
University College of Cape Breton Art Gallery, Nova Scotia, Canada
Office of the Mayor, Seattle, Washington
Chateau de La Napoule, France
Princess Margaret Hospital, Toronto, Canada

A Sparkling Life Force

new paintings by
Jeffrey Hessing

Dates:

18 March 2006 to 16 April 2006

Opening Reception:

18 March 2006, 3:00 to 6:00 pm
The artist will be present.
The public is invited to attend.



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