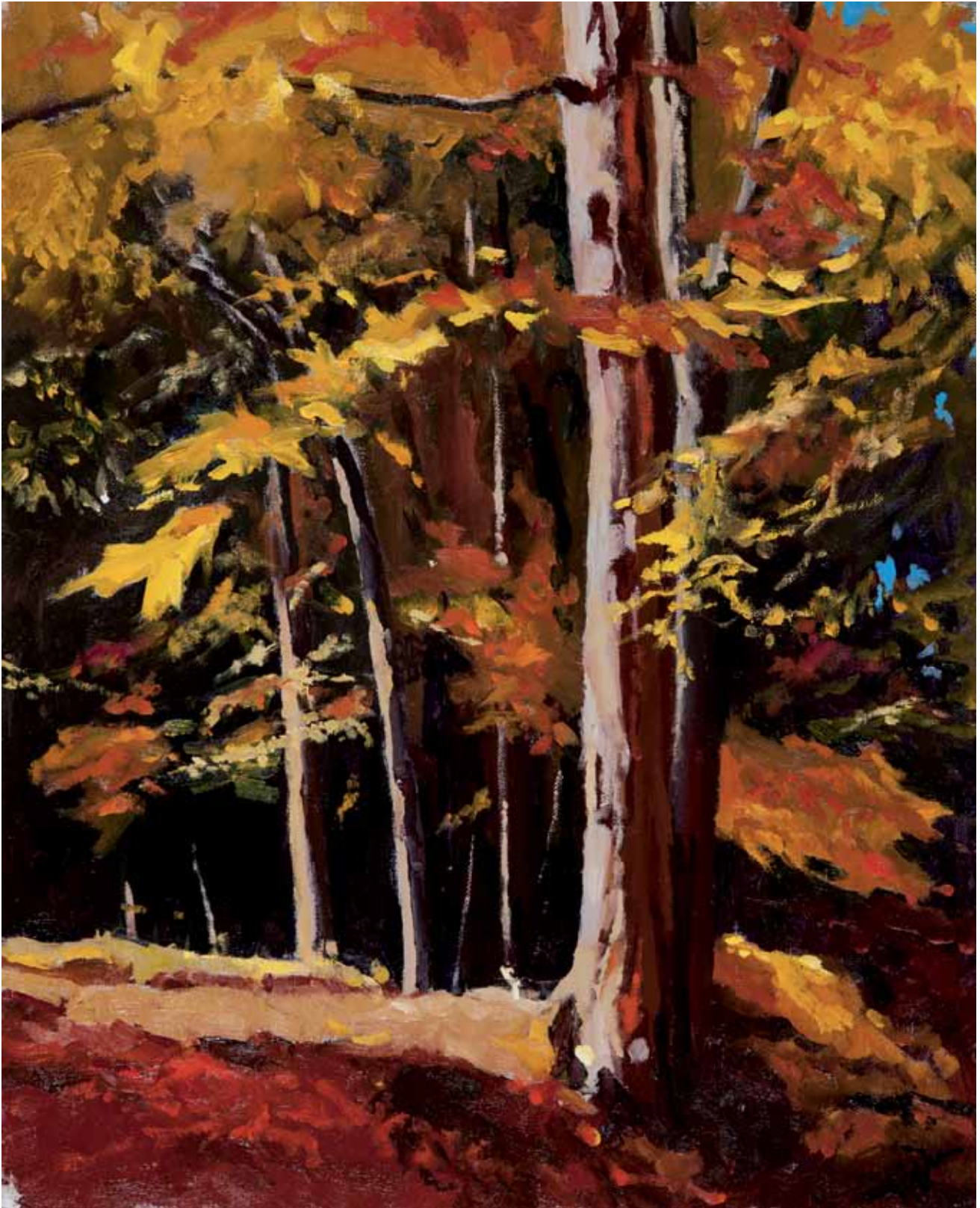


In Pursuit of Poetry : A Discovery
GEOFF DUNN



PUCKER GALLERY : BOSTON

A Surgeon Paints

My vocations, painting and surgery, commenced as rescuing epiphanies during distressing times in my teens and twenties. Initially I didn't see their similarities despite having grown up in an environment deeply grounded in both. As a young painter, I aspired to celebrate and revere the beauty of nature. As a young surgeon, I aspired to respond effectively to human suffering in all its dimensions. During my apprenticeships in both, I failed to reconcile them in my heart and mind. A college professor noted in an evaluation: "Dunn seems conflicted and pained by his dual identity of artist and scientist. This will hopefully resolve as he matures." Fortunately, "resolving" never occurred because both identities shared the same brain and heart. Theodor Billroth, a towering figure in the history of surgery and a close friend and fellow musician of Brahms wrote, "It is one the superficialities of our time to see in science and in art, two opposites. Imagination is the mother of both."

As a child, I imagined myself as a knight, the image of which was Dürer's *Knight, Death, and the Devil*. The narrative I adopted for my imagined *Heldenleben* came from Wolfram Von Eschenbach's *Parzifal*, the medieval poem about the Arthurian hero's search for the Holy Grail. It illuminated for me the spiritual dimensions and purpose of the conflicted hero's search for meaning. The *Parzifal* legend complemented oriental medieval teachings I discovered that later shaped my therapeutic and aesthetic philosophy. These included the concepts of *Bunbu ryōdō* and *wabi-sabi*. *Bunbu ryōdō*, the way of the pen and the sword, was a model to inspire balance for those involved in military-related activities with literary-cultural studies, including painting. The concept has

been recently applied to another discipline associated with blades—surgery. *Wabi-sabi*, a world view centered on acceptance of transience and imperfection, derived from Buddhist teachings of impermanence, suffering, and absence of self-nature.

Painting and surgery have had a yin and yang relationship in my life. However, both involve a subject, a plan, observation, instruments, and a future. After a prolonged period of not painting while operating, I noticed my painting had become better once I resumed it. Over time, the dimensions of my canvases had unconsciously shifted to those of the operative field. Operating on and caring for patients had improved my painting skills. When operating, I experienced the same relief once the incision was made that I had felt after the first brush strokes had been made on a bare canvas. In both undertakings, when becoming lost, rather than becoming panicked, a spontaneous and novel solution emerged that saved the day. Painting and surgery have taught me creativity is our brain's gift to us in a time of trial.

The knight, the surgeon, or the empowered within us seek to understand what life, the uncompleted canvas, expects from us.

Like dew that vanishes,
Like a phantom that disappears,
Or the light cast
By a flash of lightning –
So should one think of oneself
— IKKYU

—GEOFF DUNN



RED OAKS (PRESQUE ISLE)

Oil on canvas

24 x 30"

GD4



SWAMP BIRCHES, FAIRVIEW

Oil on canvas board

11 x 14"

GD15



NORWEGIAN SPRUCE, LATE MORNING

Oil on canvas board

20 x 16"

GD11



GOLD VINEYARD
Oil on canvas
30 x 24"
GD10



RAIN TONIGHT
Oil on canvas
16 x 20"
GD23



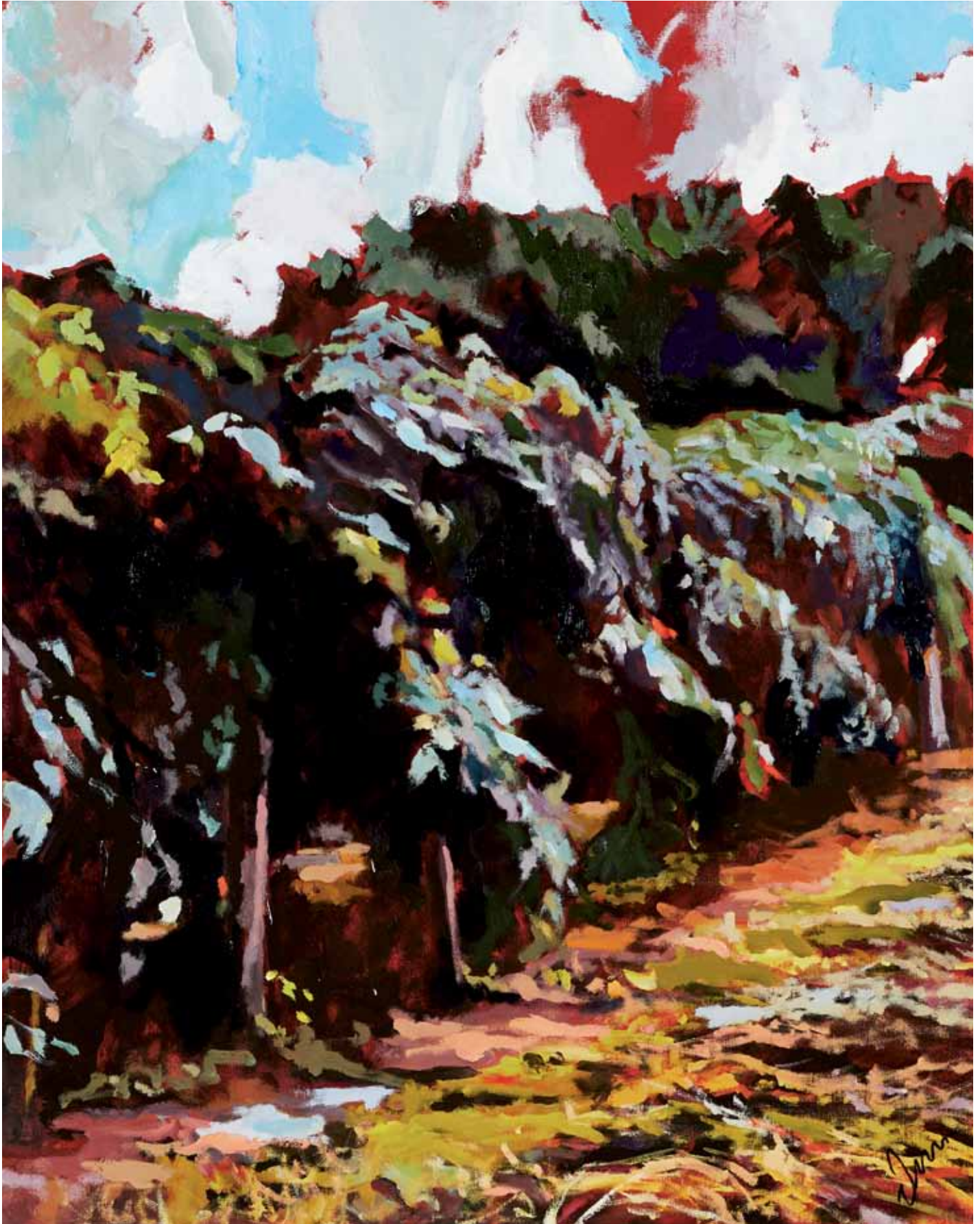
GOLDENRODS, PRESQUE ISLE
Oil on canvas board
12 x 9"
GD29



NORTHEASTER, PRESQUE ISLE
Oil on canvas board
14 x 11"
GD27



LATE OCTOBER, CANADIAN HIGH, DUNSTAFFNAGE
Oil on canvas board
14 x 18"
GD18



RED VINEYARD
Oil on canvas
30 x 24"
GD9



SPRING FLOODING

Oil on canvas
18 x 24"
GD5



ANCIENT DOGWOOD, DUNSTAFFNAGE

Oil on canvas board
9 x 12"
GD28



LILY POND, ADMIRAL

Oil on canvas board
11 x 14"
GD16



MIDDAY SPRUCE
Oil on canvas
20 x 16"
GD7



LAKE EFFECT SNOW, CHRISTMAS MORNING
Oil on canvas board
16 x 20"
GD19



STREAM AT DUNSTAFFNAGE
Oil on canvas board
20 x 16"
GD1



THE EMPEROR
Oil on canvas board
20 x 16"
GD21



NOVEMBER OAKS, DUNSTAFFNAGE
Oil on canvas
14 x 18"
GD2



BLOWING CLEAR, PRESQUE ISLE BAY
Oil on panel
16 x 20"
GD17



WETLANDS (PRESQUE ISLE)
Oil on canvas
20 x 16"
GD8



OCTOBER LAGOON, PRESQUE ISLE
Oil on canvas board
12 x 9"
GD25



SPRING PLOWING (PRESQUE ISLE)
Oil on canvas
9 x 12"
GD6



OCTOBER WETLANDS, PRESQUE ISLE

Oil on canvas

12 x 16"

GD24



HERMITAGE

Oil on canvas board

16 x 20"

GD13



ANCIENT MAPLE, ADMIRAL
Oil on canvas board
10 x 8"
GD20



GIANT CEDARS, MORNING
Oil on canvas board
8 x 10"
GD26

Goeffrey P. Dunn, MD, FACS, is an Emeritus member of the Department of Surgery of UPMC Hamot, former Medical Director of the Palliative Care Consultation Service there, and has been a visiting professor in India, Great Britain, Canada, China, and Norway.

Painting has been an important activity in Dunn's life ever since it was recommended it to him at age 13 by his mother when he was confined to quarters for misbehavior at school. Upon graduation from high school, he had a one-person show of his work, earning him the school prize in fine arts. He also received the school's prize for best historical essay in which he chronicled the development of American landscape painting during the nineteenth century. In college, Dunn majored in religion and minored in fine arts, studying with the Dutch painter Charles Stegeman. Professor Stegeman first suggested to Dunn a career in medicine: "You are a very competent painter and do fabulous work, but I believe your heart



is elsewhere. I think you should be a doctor." Dunn continued to study privately with Andrew Sanders, then after a long hiatus resumed painting during trips to the Georgian Bay region of Ontario, where he was strongly influenced by the Canadian school The Group of Seven. During the late 1990s Dunn recognized a deeper and more spiritual purpose to painting through

the inspiration and counsel of Brother Thomas. At that time plein air painting had increasingly become the counterpoint and catharsis for Dunn's career in hospice and palliative care and the substance of much of his professional writing and lecturing.

Dunn has had solo exhibitions at Glass Growers Gallery and the Erie Insurance Group's gallery and exhibited at the Mercyhurst faculty exhibit and the Erie Art Museum Spring Show. Dr. Dunn is a member of the Northwest Pennsylvania Artists Association and in 2012, he was accepted as a non-resident artist member of the Salmagundi Art Club in New York.



PUCKER GALLERY

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Boston, MA 02116

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GALLERY HOURS:

Monday through Saturday

10:00 AM to 5:30 PM

Sunday

1:00 to 5:00 PM

We are open to all and taking the necessary precautions for visitor and staff safety. We welcome appointments to maximize visitor experience.

Pucker Gallery is a member of the Boston Art Dealers Association and the New England Appraisers Association.

CREDITS:

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John Davenport

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GEOFF DUNN

DATES:

10 September through 9 October 2022

PUBLIC OPENING RECEPTION:

Saturday 10 September 2022, 3 to 6 PM

The artist will be present.

ONLINE EVENTS:

Please visit www.puckergallery.com for a list of virtual gatherings and events accompanying *In Pursuit of Poetry*.



PERFECT MORNING, PRESQUE ISLE

Oil on canvas board

14 x 18"

GD22

Cover:
FALL MAPLES, DUNSTAFFNAGE
Oil on canvas board
20 x 16"
GD12

Please visit www.puckergallery.com to view current and past exhibition catalogues and subscribe to the *Artwork of the Week* email list.