

# Canvas

COMPLIMENTARY

CANVASLI.COM JULY 2007



MAX MORAN

Printed on recycled paper



## Artistic Environment



### Upcoming Exhibitions:

**May 18–August 31**

Rosalie Dimon Gallery  
Exhibition of Plein Air Paintings  
**The Jamesport Manor Inn**  
370 Manor Lane, Jamesport  
(631) 722-0500

**July 7– July 27**

Opening Reception July 7, 3 to 5 p.m.  
Exhibition of Drawings and Studies  
**Quogue Library Gallery**  
90 Quogue St., Quogue  
(631) 653-4224

**August 11–August 17**

4th Annual Exhibition of Paintings  
Gallery One—Martha Clara Vineyards  
Opening Reception Aug. 11, 5 to 8 p.m.  
**Martha Clara Vineyards**  
6025 Sound Ave., Riverhead  
(631) 298-0075

canvas magazine and Max Moran are offering 20 signed giclée prints of this month's cover for \$200 each, with all proceeds to benefit East End Disability Associates ([eed-a.org](http://eed-a.org)), an organization that provides services, including learning programs and crisis intervention, for those with developmental disabilities. To buy a print, call Footprint Gallery at (631) 351-6480. Prints will be sold on a first come, first serve basis.

For this East Ender, cover artist **Max Moran**, there's social power in a paintbrush.

Four years ago my husband started spending Saturday mornings away from home. It wasn't until he suggested we take a drive "out East" one fall day, that I learned the truth.

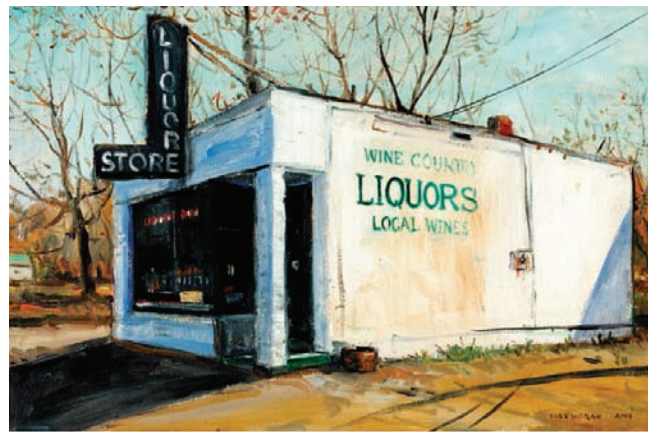
We cruised by the local farms harvesting their season's last and admired the richly hued autumn trees. At a coffee stop in Mattituck, JP paused at the window of the frame store on Love Lane, peering adoringly inside. I followed his gaze, and I saw her: what had taken my husband's attention for so long.

"She" was an old lobster boat rendered on canvas, simply titled "Blue Boat." "Beached" on a field of yellowed grass, the muted hues of the paint-worn old boat were captivating and moving.

We moved reluctantly away, JP sighing as we went. He would have loved to own that painting but it wasn't in our budget at the time. Driving home, I resolved to contact the artist, Max Moran. If he'd made prints of the piece, I could give one to JP for Christmas.

After a couple of e-mails, we finally spoke by phone. "Blue Boat" wouldn't be printed until February but somehow the conversation turned to land use on the East End, environmental conservation and truth in the pursuit of art. We chatted for nearly an hour.

"You know what?" he said in his gently resonant voice. "I'll make a card saying he'll be getting a print. That way you'll have something to



wrap for Christmas."

True to his word, he sent a lovely card, with a color image of "Blue Boat," announcing that a print would arrive in February. When JP opened the package and saw what was inside, he was surprised, overjoyed and even tearful. And when the print came, the artist had been kind enough to give us the No. 3 remarque.

This story is, perhaps, the best way to begin a conversation about this month's cover artist, Max Moran. An accomplished painter whose work encompasses life on Long Island, Manhattan and Martha's Vineyard, his true artistry is in his thoughtful observation of people and culture.

Speaking with Moran is not simply to talk about the mechanics of his works or even the stories he hopes to convey for now and tomorrow. Moran is a thinking man's artist, reflecting on issues beyond the walls of his studio with an almost philosophical slant. He mulls the future of next generations, our society and land, but chooses not to presume on any impact his work may make. "We can only look at the past and see what has stuck to the wall. [Artist] Julian Schnabel would know something about that," he says.

Moran, who lives in Baiting Hollow, visited Long Island for the first time in 1991, moving to the North Fork in 1996, where, he says, the architecture and the land felt like New England. Yet as that landscape changes Moran comments past the confines of the canvas by participating in talks and fund-raisers to benefit land conservation on the East End.

"I live near those big box stores on Route 58 and when they were being built I went to look at them. Their steel frames were almost like steeples shining in the sun," he says. "I thought,

### Good Advice

Left—N. Volpe Collection

### Wine Country

above—Ahrens/Prestwood Collection

"These are the new churches."

Documenting what went before in this era of overdevelopment is a subtle yet ever-present part of Moran's work, whether a lonely boat foundering in a field, a streetscape of beloved village landmarks or the cool tones of a rainy Manhattan street.

"A lot of things that start out as being innocent and observation-cute have implications more than simple observation first reveals," he says. "It's a conversation the artist is having with the viewer; how much you want to listen and understand is up to you."

The smaller pen-and-ink drawings designed especially for this month's cover are also part of his artistic process: quick gestural studies, which allow him to capture how people move and to use that knowledge in his finished work. "They're really just notes for my paintings," he says. "Every one of those people on that cover are real people."

Sometimes those real people are also those closest to him. In "Good Advice," the sailor on a New York street is Moran's son Phillip, on shore leave during Fleet Week.

"You can't imagine a father's pride as people—New Yorkers—walked up to my son to show their support," he says.

Asked to consider why he makes art, Moran's immediate answer is quietly emphatic. "Well, if you took it away, I'd die. It's like breathing," he says. There's also a practical angle: "I really don't know what else to do. I don't think the world needs another lawyer."

—Ramin Ganeshram

For more information and to view more work, go to [maxmoran.com](http://maxmoran.com)