

BY FRANK BORDEN HANES, SR.

Evening Hatch

For Hugh G. Chatham

I still walk, an old spine straightened
tread fragilely among slick stones of the four-foot river
and drive pale knees upstream against its young spring surge
I cast a big Adams into the wind wristing it low, mending over the swirls
These old motions yet abide
And, if the legs grow stiff and I can hear resentful bones
if eyes need a stronger magnifier to surgeon on a 5X tippet
I still shove out amidst the hatch of the great Green Drake
to lay my stubborn parachute along hollows of current
And see an old magic work
The rise and take, the hook-set on the turn, and thence combat
for me flailing off downstream like a one-armed whirlygig
As that silverbelly spears skyward showering in its moment . . . magnificent as a tarpon
And being eighteen inches, three pounds plus, runs me with screaming reel
among scum-skinned boulders to punishment
for whatever victory awaits a ten-minute war
Rod-raised arms, hullabalooing, trembling, in extremis
to lift at last this trophy from its pool and assay the spent glory
tail-curved, slow-motion, gasp of gills, gleaming crimson streak.

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



Ripple Effect (oil on linen, 10x8) by Fen Rascoe



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

On the Fly (oil on linen, 10x8) by Fen Rascoe

Her eyes on an alien truth, wary, powerless, without fear
 And I lay her down in the soft eddies, hold her for a spell under the belly
 until upright again, she glides off in her own foredoom
 The vest grows heavy. We gather and go
 hearing a late grouse thumping the hills like a one-cycle lawnmower;
 see tanagers flash, buntings and grosbeaks hook on corn
 hear legions of warblers about me in the laurel, as a fighter plane kingfisher sirens the river
 My own life, a fainter surge but willful still in this rare midst
 Go on rage on in the current top-country while old friends go away
 from all our songful moments here where we shared the good hours after dusk
 boasted conquest laughed at loss, upbraided politics of the lesser sacrosanct
 told tales filled with mythic sexual farce
 And that old moist exuberance of the eye: fervor, favor, and affection . . .
 Echoes on a breeze
 Wade on a ways now for the unreturned
 Throw and mend and for them work one more water
 Squint out the small stuff, hold breath, thumb to vice and the thick lens
 trying to focus for a tie. One more time, Boss.
 let it flow, let it sing – and settle, without a sign
 And then welcome the new comrades. For on and on – it goes and goes.

FEN RASCOE grew up drawing and took several art classes in high school and college. He earned a BA at UNC Chapel Hill and an MS in Science Administration at ECU. It was twenty years until he would pick up a brush again in the winter of 2010. Since then, he has studied under nationally and regionally known artists and has spent much of his time Plein Air painting in North Carolina.

He has been recognized in a number of competitions, most recently in the 2021 Annual Edisto Plein Air Paint Out, and his art has been featured in numerous shows. He is a member of the American Impressionists Society. A sole proprietor farmer, he lives and maintains an art studio in Windsor, NC. See more of his work at fenrascoe.com.