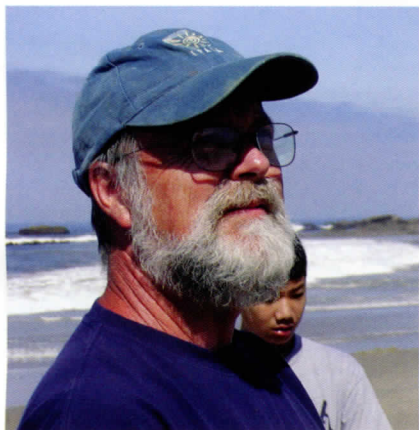




■ *Melting Snow*, 2011, oil on linen, 6" x 6"



JACOBUS BAAS

Born in the Netherlands, Jacobus Baas came to the United States at age 12. He is an essentially self-taught artist who has won numerous awards in Hawaii and California for his *plein air* paintings. Baas is a founding board member of the Laguna Plein Air Painters Association in California, and in 2011 he was chosen by the Maine Arts Commission to show his paintings throughout the Capitol Complex for their Arts in the Capitol program. Baas divides his time among his homes in Maine, California, and Hawaii. He is represented by the Dowling Walsh Gallery in Rockland, the Pacific Edge Gallery in Laguna Beach, and in Hawaii by Baik Designs in Honolulu and the Village Galleries Maui in Lahaina.

While Jacobus Baas has always felt drawn to paint, he initially designed and created jewelry to establish himself. Starting in 1978, he pursued both creative directions for a while, but he is now totally immersed in painting, especially since he discovered *plein air* painting in 1994. "It was like a new world!" the artist says.

Baas is always searching for what he considers "natural beauty that people might miss in their rush through everyday life," paying particular attention to how light strikes surfaces. His compositions are condensed into just a few elements, imbuing

the images with a sense of serenity. Baas's paintings of Maine do not necessarily depict typically beautiful subject matter; instead, the artist may paint an old barn with an oil drum out front. Houses and other buildings are kept relatively nondescript and read more like geometric shapes. Baas's brushwork too seems to abbreviate nature into feathery forms.

The artist executes small paintings on-site, which he may later expand into more detailed and complicated works in the studio. One of these small paintings, *Melting Snow*, shows a scene the artist stumbled across last fall near his home in Lincolnville. The combination of fall foliage and

the melting of an early snowfall caught the artist's eye. The lower front half of the scene is cast in shadow, supplying an enlivening contrast to the sunbathed half of the painting. The directional furrows in the ground follow the division of light in their diagonal orientation—a graphical pattern of alternating stripes of color. In the background, quick brown brushstrokes suggest trees whose leaves have turned—behind the skeletal shapes of a few already barren trees. **MH+D**

For more information, see Resources on page 106.