

Natural Obsession

by Marina Veronica

When visiting Provincetown, one would expect to find eye candy - traditionally executed paintings and watercolors of coastal nature, inspired by French Impressionists, who accentuated colors found in natural light, and the American painter Winslow Homer, who bowed to the forces of the sea. Like these masters, many contemporary artists bring their materials au plein air to relay their experiences with the sun, sand, ocean water, and sea climate. Dan Ranalli and Maryalice Johnston, two artists intimate with the Provincetown landscape, address transient aspects of nature in their works yet boldly break away from traditional forms of representation.



**Dan Ranalli and
Maryalice Johnston**
Artstrand
53 Bradford Street
Provincetown
July 1 to 14

Dan Ranalli's photographs, visual documentaries of performances, record aspects of his one-on-one zen relationship with natural forces within the Provincetown dunes. His "Snail Drawing Series" photographic works comprising two to four images, record time sequences while humorously exposing his limited control over a group of live snails.

In "Pythagorean Theorem," a work composed of two silver-toned prints, pieces of eel grass, assembled from the dunes, are used as a geometrical structuring device. The first photograph shows four snails, each placed within a separate part of the drawing. The second photograph records the snails post movement, after marking paths emerging from their own free will.

Like the powerful ocean in Homer's paintings, the snails reflect their own force, pace and direction of movement.

Ranalli "choreographs" their starting positions within wet sand drawings. Over time, while the snails move at "a snail' space", Ranalli meditates patiently with a watchful eye through the camera lens.

The works of Dan Ranalli and Maryalice Johnston, despite their imposed order and structure, ultimately transmit the absolute truth: Everything changes, moment to moment.

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