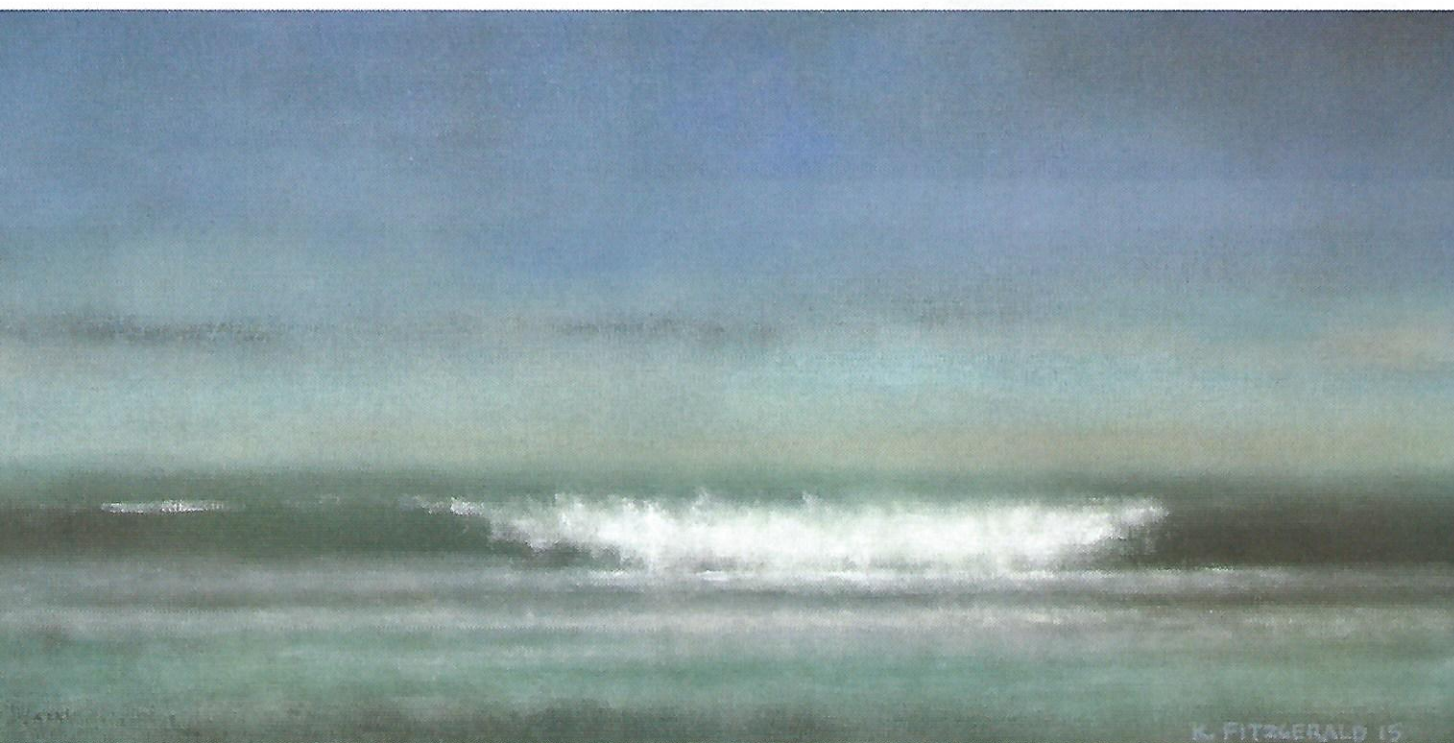




KEVIN FITZGERALD

# Suggestive scenes



Kevin Fitzgerald is drawn to the landscapes outside of his native Washington, D.C., though he doesn't have to travel far. Heavy and tonal in nature, his paintings evoke the flat, muted horizons of the landscape near Maryland's lower Eastern Shore, where he currently lives. But unlike the Shore, the topography around the nation's capital doesn't allow the viewer to see great distances at a time.

"There is always a hillside, or buildings," says Fitzgerald, who will have about 30 of his latest paintings featured in an exhibition, March 18 to April 12, at Principle Gallery in Alexandria, Virginia. "It dawned on me. I used to always come to Ocean City. I realized you can get that here, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland...You can peek through these places that are very suggestive to me."

The artist's softened landscapes serve as a reminder of the inexpressible force and beauty that can reveal itself in unexpected moments. "We all have the ability to look at visual situations, and we feel a certain response from it," says Fitzgerald, of Berlin, Maryland. "It affects our feelings and our emotion. But there are other

arrangements of visual facts that can be presented, and the audience or the viewer somehow picks up something that is more than the sum of its parts."

*Summer Promise*, showing a distant rose sky and a wave in the foreground, is an attempt by the artist to balance the elements of water and air. In general, Fitzgerald says he tries to create a visual experience that, citing Henri Matisse (1869-1954), provides "a soothing, calming influence on the mind, something like a good armchair which provides relaxation from physical fatigue."

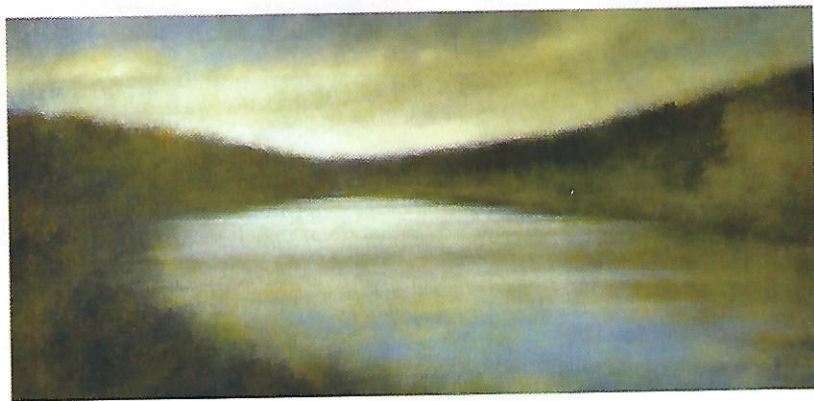
Fitzgerald, who earned his Master of Fine Arts from George Washington University, prefers the suggestive over the particular, saying the universal nature allows for greater interpretation of his works and the arts in general. "Think of classical music, listening to Mozart or Bach, or even a great piece of instrumental music today," he explains. "That's something. You can have that in the background and still work. You hear it and your stomach and your chest falls."

Deborah McLeod, writing for the *Star Democrat* in Easton, Maryland, describes Fitzgerald's paintings

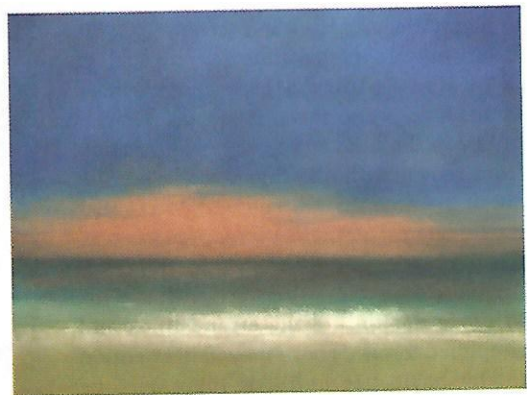
- 1 *Ocean Twilight*, oil on canvas, 12 x 24"
- 2 *Rose Dawn*, oil on canvas, 30 x 40"
- 3 *Lake Shore*, oil on canvas, 18 x 36"
- 4 *Summer Promise*, oil on canvas, 30 x 40"



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at “post-experiential,” noting that “they transform something seen, perhaps vividly, perhaps not, into the distant recollection of it.

“This is rather like the sound of faraway things that connote a meaning of many things,” McLeod continues. “For instance consider the muted sound of a train whistle or a mourning dove, or a buoy in the fog.”

Fitzgerald names a major influence in William Woodward, a painter and professor emeritus at the Department of Fine Arts and Art History at George Washington University.

Woodward writes that at the university, Fitzgerald “honed his craft inspired by the techniques he admired in the quiet landscapes of Thomas Eakins,” adding

that his former student “has established his own milieu in carrying on the tradition of American landscape painting while imbuing it with his own distinctive palette.”

Fitzgerald’s colors are jewel-like and run the gamut from citrine to even metallic hues of copper and tarnished silver, he says. “This renders his work its distinctive, unmistakable aura,” Woodward adds. ●