

# New England HOME

Celebrating Fine Design, Architecture, and Building

Cape  
&  
Islands

## Water's Edge

Luxe coastal living





***BETWEEN  
DREAM AND  
REALITY***

Jessica Pisano marries the representational with the abstract in her luminous paintings of birds, trees, and the sea.

BY PAULA M. BODAH

*Garden of Gold,*  
40"H x 40"W,  
oil and gold leaf  
on panel.



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** *Dream Space*, 48"H x 48"W, oil on panel. *Flight Pattern*, 48"H x 48"W, oil on panel. *Calm Waters*, 36"H x 36"W, oil on panel. *The Moment Time Stands Still*, 30"H x 48"W, oil on panel.



**Jessica Pisano has been**

hearing the siren song of Martha's Vineyard for most of her life, starting with childhood summers followed by year-round living off and on beginning in her teens. A look at the Vineyard Haven artist's paintings shows that, indeed, the essence of the island has worked its way deep into her heart and soul. "I find endless inspiration here," she says.

That said, don't look for literal pictures of the Vineyard among her paintings. Yes, the bird or tree or seascape—the three subjects she paints most

frequently—may have been spotted out the window of her Vineyard Haven studio or on a drive around the island. But her intent goes beyond depicting something beautiful. Pisano's fascination for nature as a subject lies in exploring its smallest details. It wasn't always so. "A long time ago I did contemporary landscapes," Pisano says. "But as I evolved as an artist, I got more granular in what I wanted to depict."

She also began to lean toward the conceptual. "I made a gradual transi-

**TOP TO BOTTOM:** *Through Time and Space*, 30"H x 48"W, oil on panel. *Daybreak*, 40"H x 40"W, oil on panel. Artist Jessica Pisano.



tion to marrying the traditional with the abstract,” she explains.

Instead of a broad landscape, she will now paint a single tree or a pair of hummingbirds. And while the tree or birds will be rendered in precise detail, the background will be abstract, even dream-like, with a hypnotic, otherworldly look. Similarly, her seascapes focus on a close-up view of gentle waves that blur into a misty horizon line and luminous sky.

Pisano’s paintings have a deceptively delicate look that is the result of painstaking work and an adherence to old-school techniques she learned in college in Portland, Oregon, at grad school at the Art Institute of Chicago, and while studying in Florence, where she mastered the exacting craft of metal leafing.

On oversized wood panels, Pisano applies layer after layer of translucent oil paint, often over a base layer of gold or silver leaf. “It’s a lengthy process, but it builds beautiful depth,” she says.

As fascinated as Pisano is with nature’s details, exploring the finer points of her craft is equally important. “I can always learn new ways of applying paint,” she says. “It’s an inner challenge that I love.”

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** Jessica Pisano welcomes visitors to her gallery/studio by appointment. To make an appointment or to see more of her work, visit [jessicapisano.com](http://jessicapisano.com).

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—Artist Jessica Pisano

