



# Kurt Giehl

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by Joanna Gmuender



Kurt Giehl. Courtesy of the artist.

Kurt Giehl is an artist residing in East Hampton, New York. Giehl is a painter using a combination of oil and acrylics. After a successful 23 years on Wall Street, Giehl decided to leave his financial career behind and pursue his passion for art full time. Having only dabbled in art while on Wall Street, Giehl and his husband relocated from Manhattan to East Hampton to fully immerse himself into the East End art scene. Primarily self-taught, Giehl has benefited tremendously from the welcoming Hampton's artist community to develop and guide his creative journey.

## Seascape Paintings

Avid fisherman, Giehl and his husband spend much of their time on the waters in and around East Hampton. His seascape paintings are inspired from the numerous fishing trips in local waters on the East End of Long Island. His seascape paintings highlight the subtleness of horizon – where air meets land meets water. Each painting is orchestrated to not only capture the physical beauty of the East End, but to also capture a state of mind, atmosphere and aura of the images captured on these fishing trips.

Giehl's seascape paintings are intended to induce a level of calm and tranquility. An exaggerated version of the image inspiration, both from a color and composition perspective, Giehl's seascapes draw the viewer into a surreal and somewhat otherworldly scene.

Giehl utilizes a combination of acrylic and oil to create his seascape paintings. Each painting starts with a base layer of acrylic paint to enhance the depth and ultimate hues of oil paint. Use of brayers are an important aspect to the process Giehl utilizes to create his seascapes. Particularly when painting the sky, painting with brayers adds a level of abstraction to the composition. The imprecise nature of layering paint with brayers forces Giehl to embrace the unpredictability into his paintings. Giehl's deliberately subdued palette and simplicity of subject is decidedly modern in look and feel.

## Abstract Paintings

Different from Giehl's seascape paintings, his abstracts explore the process of applying paint through more non-traditional methods. Using an array of self-built tools and palette knives, Giehl smears paint across the canvas to render organic color combinations and form. The process of adding and removing layers of paint creates depth and abstractions that ultimately dictate the composition.

Giehl approaches each abstract painting as a dynamic puzzle that unfolds itself over the creative process. Here again, he challenges himself to embrace the whimsical nature of blurring paint while seeking structure through use of grouped canvases or geometric outlines within the painting. Inspiration behind Giehl's abstracts is not an image, or concept, but rather the process of the painting itself.

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"Bostwick Bay" by Kurt Giehl, 2019. Oil on canvas, 60 x 72 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



"Graphic Shape II" by Kurt Giehl, 2019. Oil on canvas, 48 x 30 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



"Graphic Shape 1" by Kurt Giehl, 2019. Oil on canvas, 48 x 36 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



"Malibu" by Kurt Giehl, 2018. Oil on canvas, 36 x 48 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



"Lily Pond" by Kurt Giehl, 2018. Oil on canvas, 48 x 48 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



"Dark Shadows" by Kurt Giehl, 2019. Oil on canvas, 60 x 54 inches. Courtesy of the artist.