

manocchia-adriano-2016-03-06.mp4

[00:00:10] Probably not. One particular story but I think what I probably in my art. The thing that evokes that feeling for me the most or my still life paintings. I guess I'm a bit of a romantic and and look at the past a lot more than the future and I feel that some of my angling still lifes try to recreate this nostalgia of the past when there was the camaraderie and the The Passion of the sport. And to me that's really what I feel my my love of fly fishing is all about and my art too I think to to sort of. Intertwine. I think it's a phenomenal idea and program. I would love to be able to come back 100 years from now and go through the archives and see what was happening today and compare it to what's happening 100 years from now. And I wish something like that had been available in the eighteen hundreds to really see what fishing was like back then. I mean we've got writings that we've got some margin and that sort of thing. But to really see what the angling world was like. I mean I'd love to know what it was like to fish the bad kill you know the in the eighteen hundreds and there really isn't that much of the history. You get some local newspaper clippings and that sort of thing. But to be able to go back and see what it was like to see what the sport was like what what it was like as far as the the health of the rivers and the fish population. So I think what you're doing is phenomenal to be able to have that history to amass that that that history of the angling world today and then to be able go back 100 years from now or 200 years ago and see what what it was like. I think it's phenomenal.

[00:02:18] I think I'd have to ask permission to say that there's truth to particular that just part of. I grew up. I was born raised in New York City and as far as my fishing experience goes it was. Getting a few worms and going to City Island and fish for you know try to catch a flounder so I mean my my outdoor.

[00:02:37] Angling experience as a young person was quite limited. Where I grew up when I when I married my lovely wife Teresa and we moved just north of the city to Westchester County and a shell. I was fortunate enough to meet a fellow who introduced me to a fly fishing and in particular the Croton Watershed. And that was pretty much it. You know I'd have I had to drive an hour and half to get to a river to fish. So 13 years ago we decided to leave the city and we moved three hours north to a small agricultural community still in New York State and on our on our farm we have a a small stream stream that runs through the property called the owl kill. And the first five or six years I literally would go every night or every morning before work I'd run down back and I'd fish for some of the bookies in the stream. And to me just the idea that you know at this point in my life unfortunate enough to have my own little river on my property and to be able to go out whenever I want to fish is just so phenomenal for me. So to me the owl Kill is probably at this point one of my favorite streams. I don't fish it as much and fortunately it's just been kind of physical issues. But I would have to say just the fact that I have so close to this I could just literally walk out my door fished. So to media will kill is one of my favorite places.

[00:04:11] The other favorite spot is a stretch below the under fire hole in Yellowstone. I don't know why but the first time we went to Yellowstone back in the early 80s my wife and I were driving through the park and I stopped that I pulled off at one spot on a on a road and walked the little stretch of the fire hole and it was just so magical for me.

[00:04:37] And every time we go back and make it a point where I have to get there before sun up and just walk that stretch of river and just it's spiritual. It's like going to church with me that I mean every Yellowstone is beautiful no matter where you go. But this particular stretch of the river is is special to me for some reason. And even though I don't get the fish

eat that often though I'd love to. I would have to say that's probably one of my favorite spots that I've ever been to.

[00:05:16] Probably my bucket list would be totally would be New Zealand. We got a couple of friends that live in New Jersey that are avid anglers and they were fortunate enough to build sometimes two or three times a year to New Zealand and I got to see some of their videos and it's just I mean the colours the landscape the rivers are just phenomenal so that's probably a place that I'd like to get to. Who knows if I ever will but that's that's one place and Yellowstone. I am just in love with that entire landscape and we try to get back every couple of years so that that's a little more tenable that goal to get back here and fish there but probably New Zealand would be at the top of my list.

[00:06:06] Some stock there's some native there it's it's kind of a guess. One of the problems with New Jersey is that there's too many people so it's very crowded. Fishing is crowded but if you know where to go you can find some spots that are just gorgeous. And I met a lot of paintings from Jersey and he was kind of funny like my buddy would tease me and say Don't tell anybody this is New Jersey you'll never sell those paintings. But up the road in the big flat Brooke I mean near some. Some stretches of water that are really gorgeous. We've we fish for native Brookings Bear Swamp Creek that might my fishing buddy is is an interesting person. He's is has an ability to find something. Twenty years later you can drop them in the middle of a forest and 20 years later go back there. So he I remember where we go we were at that rodeo with the official there so I mean he knows every little nook and cranny in New Jersey Steve fished it may have since he was a little little boy and I got to see some really really gorgeous spots in Jersey. One of my favorite was the route and river. Ken Lockwood gorge. There is some really really awesome spots do you think of an ability Adirondacks or.

[00:07:31] Near the Adirondacks. So there there's some really gorgeous spots in Jersey blue skirt. Yeah. I. I am not a patient person and I think both the art and the angling have taught me patience and my wife wouldn't agree to that really. Chief goal but there is a lot of similarities to it. There is the preparation there is the the process and the conclusion and I think I find a lot of a lot of similarities in in the two to arts. Yeah. When I first started painting I was a photojournalist. I was a photographer in college and when I got out of college I worked for a union for about eight years and then had my own photo agency and it just got tired of the travel and the business and I decided I wanted to give painting a try which was a crazy thing to do without the background and without really knowing I was in my early 30s at the time when a. Young child at home and everything but I I. I felt that.

[00:08:57] One the the the angling gave me the opportunity to paint the subject I really wanted to paint. I started painting aviation or Marine art automotive art wildlife you know I went through this phase of all of these different subjects till. I discovered fly fishing and then it was the subject I really wanted to paint. I just realized that water and angling and the outdoors was the area I wanted to paint so I think the fly fishing got me into the direction of the art that I really felt that I would love to spend my career doing and the painting gave me an excuse to spend more time on the river. So I think to two really really work hand-in-hand but the angling being on the water finding that solitude and peace and the enjoyment of angling was what then brought me to what I am painting today and what I enjoy doing the most. It's wonderful. Again probably two people. When. When we moved to New Rochelle back in the early 70s my wife and I opened an art gallery and one day a fellow came in and go on a dance Carollo. Came in and we started talking about my my art. And he. He was an avid hunter and an angler and he also collected a lot of western and angling.

[00:10:38] Farmer and asked me when we started talking about fishing and hunting and asked me if I had ever fly fished. And I said you know I was just starting to get into it I picked up a rod and reel and was just learning the art. So he was using. He asked me if I'd like to excuse me if I'd like to go with him up to the Croton Watershed to fish for trout. And I hadn't been up there was unfamiliar with the area. So a couple of weeks went by we we took a ride up to the east branch to Croton and we sort of introduced me to that whole watershed and the art of angling and it's kind of funny it really isn't part of your question. But that first experience with them was kind of funny. I'm out there trying to figure out what to do and Dan's about 100 feet up river from me and every cast is catching a trout. Wow. What do you put your flyer using. I'm using a real wolf to my box find out why Wolf. Nothing nothing. Dan's catching fish. The fish are like wow this guy's really good. I've got a lot to learn. And then I started thinking something's not right here and I'm going to be catching so many fish and I'm asking him what fly he's telling me it's not working.

[00:11:54] So I said I'm going to go down river a little bit go ahead. So I went down and I got out of the river and walked back up around him on the road. I came back in kind of close and I'm watching him and what he was doing he was clipping a piece of water in his pocket he was putting it on flying his kids catching fish and I was like OK. That's how it works. But Dan introduced me to the sport into that whole watershed which is quite beautiful quite interesting. So I'd have to say Dad was the one who first introduced me introduced me to fly fishing. The other person is Ted paddling who is my fishing buddy from Jaws is my fishing buddy. Ted is a phenomenal flight Tyre and an incredible fisherman. I mean I learned so much with him over the years. And we got to fish every puddle from Connecticut to New York to New Jersey. It's just unbelievable. His passion for the sport. Up till today he moved a couple of years ago to Cape Cod. And every day he'll go on Fish upon his stripers aunt and he'll be fishing upon for bookies and he's just so passionate about the sport. And I really learned a lot from him on the art of fly fishing and flight time. So I think those two people were really instrumental in getting me into the sport. That's right. You said you grew up in the city is a craft you grew up with one and you Manhattan moved to the Bronx was a couple of years old there.

[00:13:21] Did your family fish at all you see imagine going for flounder with worm. You know I would go and my my good friend Luke we'd find a way to get the city Island when we were younger and fish there or we'd go over to. Watch a beach fish from the jetties a little bit. But it was limited to the fishing that we were able to do. No it's funny Mike my dad is a time in and grew up in a beautiful beach area in Italy. I don't think he's ever been to the beach. He's not much for fishing and water. Well. I think a couple of things one is they both teach patients which I mentioned before is important. They also. Teach you by. I really believe if someone is painting a realistic subject written about contemporary work that's what if you're painting really as a realistic subject. I think you need to know your subject. I've seen so many people try to paint sporting scenes without really knowing the subject. And it shows if you know that particular sport. And so I believe if you're going to paint fly fishing you really should know how to fly fish. You know if you're going to paint some shooting scenes you should really know which end of the gun at. And I think so many people paint subjects that they are not familiar with and I'm not talking about you know doing a landscape with a bar and it's sort of that I mean I'm doing some marine paintings this past winter I'm doing a number of marine paintings as I love to paint coastal scenes and in all honesty I'm not a sailor I really don't know much about sailing and that sort of thing. So I'm really picking the brains of a couple of friends of mine who are avid sailors and have lived their whole life on the ocean and really know what you know what a boat you look like and how it should lay in water. And so I think you need to know your

subject. And by spending so much time on the water I think I've kind of gotten the idea of what water looks like and where an angler would stand and how he would pose. And so I think you need the knowledge to accurately portray your subject. If you're doing a specific realistic subject other than that I think again going back to the fact that you I've learned a lot about patience would boat painting and fishing and I think the detail that you learn in fly fishing has also helped me with my understanding of painting. It's not just about putting paint on a palette and painting. I mean I think so many artists that don't really spend the time to learn their trade their technique. There's so much to know about paint and how it dries and how it how you mix them in and surfaces and just all that the entire realm of what you're your field is about. And I think by understanding fly fishing and spending so much time doing that I've learned to spend the same amount of effort and time with my art. So I think the two have kind of helped along.

[00:16:41] Yeah I think it really captures kind of the serenity and peacefulness. I mean it's more than just just fishing it's it's being that you know that kind of a serene environment and what I find kind of funny is when you will only several clubs you can you take my son fishing or French fishing and know they're younger than I am and you can see they're so anxious to catch that fish you know and it's kind of hard to say hey just step back and listen to the birds and listen to the water. Look at the colors and just relax it's not about just catching fish but I guess after 30 years of 40 years of doing that you get to that point but in the beginning it just so so wrapped up in wanting to catch fish and I found that too Wood painting you know I would want to rush to a painting to get it done because I felt they needed to get it done. Well you know what. Maybe it needs to sit for six months and just think about it and then maybe throw it out or maybe go back and rework it and that's what I learned in my friend Teddy you know people get in the river and he just start casting it. And I would watch Ted he get in the river and he would spend quite a bit of time just looking around and checking his fly box. And I knew what he was doing. And he'd say well you guys go and I would go down river up I'll be with you in a minute. And he would take three steps up and catch a 19Mr. Brown under a log. Nobody thought about it looked at. So you know you begin to understand there's more than just making a cast. And so you sort of try to study your surroundings in the same with the painting you know you really really spend more time now studying the subject before you begin to put paint on a brush.

[00:18:19] And I think you're right especially with trout I tried to add a photograph or in a painting or whatever. It's hard to capture the real beauty of a trout. When it first comes out of the water I mean that there are just such the key whether it's a brook here brown or a rainbow. They look so much different you know in that instant one. And when they rise out of the stream versus an hour later or on a super market shelf or whatever you know it's it's up and think being there you have to be there and really see that and be able to reproduce an art. And it's funny because a lot of people ask we will why don't you paint big rivers. Why don't you paint more salt water. And I think it's my temperament. I would trade any Big River or any surf fishing for a small mountain stream the solid to the quiet the beauty of the surroundings is what really excites me and that's what I try to paint. It seems to come out of my painting. I would I would paint ten small quiet streams as opposed to you know crashing surf because it's it's more of what I feel. So I think that's something else. You know that that what I enjoy fishing kind of comes out in what I like to paint the type of scene I enjoy painting. Yeah it would be a wild bookie there. I just love their attitude. Yeah they are crazy little guys like okay. You get one shot and you miss you're done and it's just there's just something about you know chasing little wild bookies. I would take them over salmon any day.

[00:20:11] We have a couple of really beautiful small streams both on the New York side and on the Vermont side we're about six miles of border there's a stretch of the Green Mountains called Kelly stand and there is a spit tic tac Müller stream called rowing branch which comes out of the mountains is a number of ponds and comes down and runs it and it actually hooks up to the bad and. And I would just go up there and you would find a pool turquoise colored pool and you could just spend a half an hour chasing these little bookies one after another and you know you could put the biggest dry fly on and these little guys would come up and just whack it thinking they were Godzilla and to me there's nothing like it. And I've got a fishing buddy in town who just loves chasing little wild bookies and he'll ask you where you got this is I want to fish the bad kilt tonight. Oh let's go get some bookies and it's just so much fun. The only thing I'm finding as I'm getting older it's a lot more work. It's so much easier to stand in an awkward stretch in a bath with nothing behind you and cares that a big pool you know instead of climbing under brochure or try to fight it out of the trees. You know when you when you're chasing you little fish but there's not. I think there's nothing like wild bookies and the colors are just spectacular especially around here in a fall. I gotta get these colors that like you say. Cameron just can't reproduce the beauty of the. Oil. I think I guess I'm I'm not much of an optimist. My wife says I'm a pessimist but I say I'm a realist. I've I've seen a deterioration. Now I can only speak about my surroundings the fish efficient and I really don't know what's going on in other areas of the country but I have to say that there has been a deterioration in a number of aspects. One is the quality of the fishing. And I can only talk about the bad and kill in some of the smaller streams in my area. And one of the things that I find very discouraging disappointing is the is the attitude of anglers today. I remember when I first started fishing. If you walked up to a pool and there was somebody fishing near you said hello and you moved on to other spots to fish. Today there is no river etiquette anymore. I mean I could be fishing the pool and two minutes later as a guy. There is a guy there and it Carson over your line. And I find it very annoying very discouraging. Maybe it's maybe it's a commentary on our society. I don't know. Maybe it's just the way people are. I can understand you know when I'd fish down in New York in Chroma watershed or in Jersey with my friend or pensively. These were crowded areas. You know you had millions of people living in a small area. And so there was a lot of competition to find a spot to fish. I mean you go to the Catskills on opening day it's a zoo. But I was thinking that up here being away from that there would be a little more understanding about how to. Be on a river. And so that's something that really annoys me. And I'll go out at night and I'll really make sure I go to a spot on the river would. Well I'm not going to find anybody because I find I find it to be terribly annoying when you're out there fishing trying to enjoy a pool. Next thing you know you've got a guy in the earning idea. So I find that there's very little respect on a river as far as other anglers as far as you know the health and the conditions of the river. I can't I've been up here 13 years and I can only go by what I hear the older anglers talk about and how the river was you know 20 years ago 40 years ago 50 years ago. There seems to be a decline in the quality we've got a lot of problems with.

[00:24:19] Runoff from farms. I mean you could see some aerial photos in the spring of the ban kill and you just see the field goes right up to the edge of the river and is just for that runoff when there's a heavy rain. We have a huge problem with McGann CSRs on a river. Huge problems. You never forget one day I was. It was early morning I was fishing the river it sounded like a helicopter was landing behind me I turned around. There were 18 Morganza is across the river just making your way up river. What are their fish eating birds. Ducks OK. Yeah. And they will destroy a river they will take you know that size fish that you need for a good healthy river and it will take the huge huge fish and you won't take a little weasel take that middle area and they will clean out a pool in a day and they have huge they reproduce like crazy to laugh. Twelve 14 15 babies at a time and I think

they do it twice a year so there is a huge Morganza problem which is really doing a number on the fish population in fact a couple of years ago we were fishing up in the Adirondacks and a fellow who was one of the big mucky mucks with DC in this region said to me so what do you think about the band. Can we think the problems are as well. We had a runoff problem you've got a Morganza probably going to be poaching problem. He says well we've done a five year study and we we feel that one of the biggest concerns of the Morganza is unfortunately guys won't hunt them because it tastes terrible and nobody really wants the feathers in there in the river where there's a lot of homes around there. So it makes it logistically a little difficult to even hunt them. We have a huge poaching problem. They'll stop the river and you'll go there that afternoon it will be guys with two dozen fish on the bank. And unfortunately D.C. is so shorthanded as far as manpower that they can't do anything about it.

[00:26:11] We have I think a climate problem. I don't wanna get into the politics because I know not everybody agrees with what's being said but the last two or three years by July the river is a trickle and it's boiling hot. And if you don't have good cover and you're long stretches of the baton kill it are just flat with no trees because a lot of the canoe companies have cut them down illegally to make it easier for their customers. You have a problem with the river getting very hot and you know if you go. July August September what no water and hot river that's going to impact officials of so all I have in the years I've been up here I've seen a decline. But again I've only been up here a short period of time but I'm not terribly optimistic about you know the health of the river. I hope it changes. We don't get much support from our local. Politicians. They don't see the benefit the economic benefit of a healthy. Really good fishery. Date on the Mustang. I mean you've got hand it to Montana and Wyoming. I've understood how much money. The sportsmen can bring to a to a region. They don't understand that they want to promote fishing in a bank. Well there is no fishing in the bank. So why is someone from downstate or New Jersey or Boise going to come and spend a day and beat himself to death to catch a fish. When and it's expensive to come up here when they're when there really isn't that much available. So I think there's a lot of a lot of problems that aren't being addressed. I don't know how the how you would address them but I think there is there's a lot of issues.

[00:28:02] I would have to say it's climate change. I would have to say that if we don't start to appreciate and respect what resources we have we're going to lose them. It's probably not a fair commentary and I'm sure a lot of the local people would get very upset for me saying this but I'll go out in the summer and I won't fish on the weekends anymore. I made it a policy less a friend comes up and wants the fish I'll stay away from the river where the river is on the weekend because it's a zoo. The float tubes the kayaks the canoes the amount of traffic that you see on the river in the summer is unbelievable. You would say where all these people coming from. I mean it's like a float Teyla if you're on a river and you're fishing in the morning by 9:00. You have to get out because you can just see them coming down river and the amount of garbage that they dump in the river an amount of destruction that they do is unbelievable. If you go to one of the covered bridges and we're we're kind of blessed to have I think five or six covered bridges in this part of Washington County and a quite beautiful I've tried to paint all of them because it really sort of an interesting historical part of this area. But if you go to one of the covered bridges that the kids that are swimming in the river that are just nuts in a would swim in river they should enjoy the resource as much as anybody else. But the destruction that they do what they leave on the bank at the end of that Sunday night is unbelievable. Nobody cleans it up unless it's some of the local residents that are just tired of seeing this in there. They're getting annoyed with this too. But the destruction and the fact that in our case here the locals. Don't appreciate the magnificent resource that they have in front of them. They just

they take it for granted. If you say maybe why don't you join Trout Unlimited in the spring when we do a river cleanup.

[00:30:12] Why. I literally watched. We were fishing one day and I watched a couple of guys come down and a look to and they were drunk out of their mind and they just started throwing cans at some of the fishermen. And I'm saying to myself if if the locals don't respect the resource what what chances it have of surviving that. Would hoo. There's a group in this area called the Banfield Conservancy may get together a couple of times a year to do a river cleanup. One year I couldn't believe what they pulled out of the river refrigerators toilets. It was just unbelievable what gets dumped into this river. And I've got to say it's a beautiful river. It's a beautiful beautiful resource and it's a shame that there is no respect for it. And I think if you don't have that if the locals don't care about it you're you're fighting a losing battle. We have we have zebra mussel. In the river. We have rocks not and I guess you'll be talking to Jamie later and I guess he will be. Or Gary there. He's a biologist he'll be able to tell you more about what's going on in the river as well. Other than that I really don't think there's much else going on. But they'll they'll be able to tell you a little more about what's happening to do I know for example the acoustic which is down river from here. They're getting a lot more bass in a river and less trout because of rivers is warming up considerably in the summer. But they have made they have the best me I've always been near I don't know. You know I can't I can't say but other than the zebra mussel in a rough not I really don't know if there's any other invasive species.

[00:32:07] Have you seen many signs of the zebra mussel I know when they came into the Great Lakes. When I was a kid. Within a decade it was just it was incredible the number of isolated would say I have not seen them in the bank will I have seen them in local lakes. We have friends that have houses on some of the local lakes hedges Lake and Lauderdale. And you know you could literally see them attached to the docks. I mean it's huge numbers of them. So in the lakes I have seen them but I have not seen I've seen the rocks not in the bank. But I have not seen the zebra mussels but it's been reported by some of the local biologists that have done some studies now and it seems like once they get in there. I think one of the things that I've noticed what a lot of the younger guys when you meet him on the river is there they're pretty introvert. Don't be afraid to talk to somebody older guys and ask them what they're using you know what's the best place to fish. I think they'd be surprised at how much we enjoy telling them about the river and about the fishing and what to do. I mean I so many times you'll see some younger people in the river and say hello and try to strike up a conversation and a new I won't have anything to do with it. Which is a shame because I think they're losing an opportunity to learn something firsthand. The other thing is to learn about your your sport. Know it takes some time to really learn about the history of it. Don't be afraid to experiment. That's what I learned a lot from my friend Teddy. I mean he would he would tie the craziest flies and I'd look at say what are you nuts. You want to see how this works. And I'm like wow yeah. And it makes sense. So don't be afraid to experiment and and stop and enjoy the beauty of the sport not just going out to catch fish. I think that's important.

[00:34:13] I think it it all comes down to chemistry. I think if you're on the same wavelength you'll you'll enjoy. Your time together. The I think one of the things that that I always required from a fishing partner was patience. I'll clarify that. But why my dear wife and Ted really put up with a lot of. For me over the years well especially in the beginning when I go fishing I would not only be going fishing but I'd be thinking about a painting and come home. So I would drive them both crazy especially Ted. He was a saint. To me it really should be canonized. I mean we'd be we'd be walking down a river and it'd be fish rising in a pool. But I just didn't see a painting and it's a no no. Come on let's go. Down river up

river with this fish right now we've got to find a better spot and Teddy the is not a tall fellow in the water would be getting higher and Teddy can take one more step you're not in the light a little bit more I need you in the way I want to dress. One time we were fishing around in New Jersey and we're walking and it's about a 10 foot drop. The road is about 10 foot drop from the river and as we're walking up I see this huge lead at an across the river over this dark dark pool and I'm saying Wow. That would make some painting. Can you just see angler know standing on that log fishing upriver and we're walking and I'm I'm talking to myself and I kind of random Teddy would you go. And I hear how's this. And he had climbed onto the log in the middle of this. Like. Oh my God what do you do when you gonna fall when you're going to drop.

[00:36:02] Come on take a shot at me and I know ran down river and I got the most fantastic shots and ended up doing a painting which the Catskill fly fishing said they used on one of their poses. You know Kerry cast him standing on this log. So I mean I I put the guy through a lot over the years and you know we had a lot of laughs and we enjoyed it but I think it's finding that person that you just want to spend the day fishing wood or you're on the same wavelength. And and it doesn't work with a lot of people as some people that you know some friends that'll come up and I'm like Oh God I'm going to go fishing with them. They just you know either they're just too excitable or you know it's it's gotta be I think it's all about chemistry it's about finding a person of the same temperament that that you can put up with and they can put up with you. That's good. Years ago I remember when I'd go to Yellowstone. I would literally take you know close to 10000 pictures. I don't have the temperament to do plenty of painting. I have some friends here in town and have plenty of artists and they can set up their easel and spend an hour painting a scene. I don't have that temperament. I want to see as much as I can and experience as much as I can't so I'm I'm having a background in photography I do depend on the camera a lot. But now as as the years have gone by I won't take as many pictures. I will spend more time looking as opposed to shooting and then looking I will really take the time to look at the light and the color and I kind of know what what works at this point and what I'm trying to say. So what I do is I'll bring my camera and I'll bring a sketch pad and if I'm going to a spot that I've been to I kind of know what up what to expect. If it's a new spot then I'm really just going to spend the time to look around and see what the river looks like and see what what works and what clicks with me on it it is. It really isn't. It's it's what strikes me at the moment you know if I see a pool or a rock formation or the light like the bad kill for example is it. I find that a difficult river to paint. It's a very beautiful river but the light doesn't necessarily work that well because of the mountains on both sides. It gets dark pretty early and you lose that light. And in the morning it's more of a morning river than an evening river to paint but the light in the morning is sometimes very flat. So it's not the most photogenic as far as I'm concerned to paint but there are other places like for example drawing branch which every corner. You're finding another beautiful pool and the light is really spectacular. So it's really just trying to find that that combination of light and geography and water flow that I look for what I do is I'll take photographs I'll come back I'll put him on a computer I'll take a look at them and see which one. I think works then I'll do some thumbnail sketches work on the composition you know not because I photograph that a certain way doesn't necessarily mean I want that as my final composition so I'll do some thumbnail sketches to to figure out what the composition might be and it may have an angler may not it may just be a river escape or it may have a wildlife included in the scene once I've done my thumbnail sketches and I'm happy with that then what I do is I think about what size I'm I want to paint some scenes work better smaller more intimate some scenes work better larger so I'll think about the particular scene then I'll I'll sketch it on a board I paint on board very smooth just a board and then a block in the painting at that point what I do is I use three colors white for CNN an ultra marine blue and I just do a

lot of very loose blocking in of the painting I don't put a lot of detail in at this point do I did in the beginning I would spend a lot of time doing the detail in it's that particular phase but now I just basically block it and that gives me an idea of the contrast at darks the lights the composition you know once that's done I'll put it aside and I'll look at it I'll leave it there for a while and I'll decide whether or not the composition really works. I mean cut the board down at that point or I may throw it out and start again once that's done and I'm happy with that particular phase and the painting is dried and I start to put in my color and then at that point it's almost the you know just a very mechanical process you working top to bottom dark to light so I think the most important phase for me is one I've blocked in the painting and I look at it at that stage and I feel as if I if I achieved my my goal does it have the right composition the right feel for that particular stream and a lot of times painting its own way at that point and I will proceed any further because I feel it's not worth it.

[00:41:36] No I think I don't care too much. I'm not. I'm not shooting to recreate a specific pool unless a client says to me Look this is my home water this is my favorite pool I want you to do a painting of me in that particular spot. Then obviously you want to try to recreate it but I will not hesitate to change the scene if it doesn't help if it helps the composition by changing it I will or if I'm going to remove a tree or a log or a rock or whatever I will because I want the painting to work and my goal is to have somebody look at it and say oh wow I wish I was there. Yeah that that really makes me feel like I know I'm out there fishing or yeah boy I'd love to be at that spot. And no I. Don't want to brag but the greatest satisfaction is when someone says Oh well I could just feel that I could just be there now and I would love to be there fishing. To me that's when I've achieved my goal. You know if something especially an angler people will look at it and say oh it's a beautiful river or whatever but when an Anglo says to me damn well I'd love to be fishing near now. Aw yeah you know I could just I could just feel it. To me that's when I've I've achieved my goal in that particular painting. That's a tough one because I I'm not crazy about the direction that artists take him in the last 20 or 30 years so I'm not even going to comment on the contemporary mood. I'd rather focus more on someone who's painting realistic traditional work. And as far as that's concerned I say learn everything there is to learn about your trade. And by that I mean learn about framing learn about the materials you're using and why certain colors do certain things on canvas. Rockwell was a great scientist when it came to color. He knew what colors would reproduce on a magazine cover. He was brilliant when it came from things like that. I learned everything there is to learn about being an artist and even the business aspect. I taught photography for a number of years down at LSU University on Long Island and we would have seniors graduating in a couple of days and I'd say to them so what are you plans. Do you have a business card. Do you have a hobby put a portfolio together these last four years. What are you going to do and he'd sit there with this blank stare and see I don't know. And I talked to the chairman of departments. Don't you think they should take some business classes or at least have a class in how to prepare them for the real world just because they're artists doesn't mean they have to starve and not know how to survive what they're they're doing.

[00:44:30] So I think it's important for artists to understand young artists understand that if you're lucky enough to have a trust fund that's going to support you for the rest of your life. Great. But if you're gonna make a living at this really you should learn your trade. I used the show at a wonderful gallery in New York City called Jan Barfield and I was very fortunate. Literally three or four years after I started painting I ended up showing there and it was it was the gallery for sporting art. It had all the greats from Remington to Russell to plays in there to you name it they would there be frozen and I was always very fortunate to be in the gallery and I'll never forget the first time I brought down a bunch of paintings when we agreed on that the gallery would show me where I took three or four paintings

now to the gallery. And at the time my mentor John Apgar was the director of the gallery and I walked in. This is my staff. Of a few paintings for you to look at. And the owner Michael Frost was on the phone in his office. John looked at the paintings and he says let's take him in the back. OK. So we took him in the back and laid him on a table and he's looking at him and he's looking at him and I could see something wasn't right.

[00:45:43] And I said John if you don't like the paintings he says Oh no no I love the paintings he says but your framing is horrible. He says Where did you get these frames. This is well they're commercial ready made frames that you get from Mexico or China. He says you see that Remington it's one point two million dollars. Do you think an 80 dollar commercial frame would work on that. No he says that's a hand carved gold leaf frame because the painting wore its quality. If you're going to if you're going to hang your work in his gallery and you want us to put a high price on it you're not finishing the package. The frame is 20 percent of the painting. So he picked up a beautiful hand carved gold frame wasn't the right size but he could position it over the painting and saw the painting just pop like wow. He finished it. He says. You have to understand the entire aspect of the painting. Did you put a board in the back with the information when it was painted the side. No. So you really need to understand your your your field and every aspect of it and I think you know schools I don't think are teaching that today and I don't think people are going into the world prepared for what they're you know what they're doing. The old apprentice programs that they used to have in Europe they were there for a reason. I I was fortunate enough to know Leroy Neiman the great American sport artist and my dad was a journalist and he knew Leroy quite well and I go with the studio down in New York City when I used to work done and I'd spend an hour or two with him and he had a beautiful book that he was doing drawings of horses size as well. They were these are really gorgeous he says you know when I was at the Chicago Art Institute for the first two years I never picked up a brush that was draw draw draw. The only thing we're allowed to use was pencil and paper for two years. They don't do that anymore in art school today because I guess feel it's necessary but I think you really need to learn your trade. And that's the. One thing I would tell the young artist today.

[00:48:08] There is absolutely a line and it's up to the individual to decide what avenue he wants to take back in the 80s. The print world was exploding. Robert Bateman that Doolittle and I had published a saying to me if you would just paint that cute puppy chewing on a boot or if you just paid that twelve point looking behind a tree you could make a lot of money and maybe was a little bit of that stubborn Italian in me or maybe it was just my not wanting to. Agree with what they were saying but I said No I want to try and be a fine art painter. I want to paint what I want to paint. It hurt me financially. No question about it because I could have made a fortune painting those cutesy scenes for the print market. But I just didn't feel that's where I wanted to be in 20 30 40 years where I wanted to be my art. I'm not saying I reached that level but I just felt I had to make a decision do I paint what I love to paint what I really feel or do I give into the commercial market and narrow guys out there and made millions in that field. Back in the 80s and 90s but today they can't give their work away because they're now there's no more market for that. That print world or the cutesy stuff or that hyper realistic Buck behind the tree. So now there's suddenly oh I want to paint loose I want to paint artistically and it just doesn't happen you just don't make that transition after doing a circle style. You know it's like it's like you're writing children's books for 40 years and suddenly you want to write the great American novel. I think there's a big jump between the two not that children's books are called gay equality but it's just it's a totally different area. And so yeah there is there is a line and I think it's up to the artist and decide what they want to do.

[00:50:02] I want to go to commercial route or do I want to try to be a fine art painter and I hope it works. Robert Travers exurb and Norman McLean you know you didn't write a lot about angling but I think the one book is enough. Yeah. I think you know if you're if you're fortunate enough to be able to write a big check to an organization that's wonderful. No I'm not in that position. So I always felt that I wanted to help. I wanted to give something to the cause and the only thing I could come up with was my art and I hope it's done some good. But it's more wanting to be part of the cause and through my art was a way to do it. I think I worked with some great groups over the years Ducks Unlimited Trout Unlimited FSF examined Federation. More recently I'm working with a friend from Albany who runs ISC Audubon. Ron grew up in the Midwest. In. Illinois and his family had a small farm and he lost the farm. He became a biologist and one of his passions is trying to help. Small family farms because it disappeared. So we got together about a year and a half ago and worked on a project. We just came out with a small book on saving family farms and to me it's a way of of hopefully getting people to take a moment to see what the problem is. Through my art you know if someone will stop and look at a painting maybe that'll get them motivated in the cause and it's a way to raise some money for a cause like I say I wish I could just sit down and write a check but I think since I can't I think through my art as a way of trying to help some of these causes. The last few years I've kind of stepped away from. That area so I really couldn't talk specifically about projects.

[00:52:30] I know that TU you in in this area does quite a bit of work. I know they did a major or did doing a major bit of restoration work on the back and kill on the Vermont side with together with Orbis Orbis has their flagship store about 40 minutes reviewing 30 minutes from here. So I know they've doing some good local work there. Again I've kind of stepped back so I don't really know on a national level what's going on but I know you know some of the groups I worked with did some great work. I know we have a chapter of FSF over in Albany and they don't do much river rescue a restoration work but boy did do a lot. What with children you know underprivileged kids handicapped kids soldiers that have come back from the service that are that are disabled. They do a tremendous amount of work with with some of the groups and you know it's not always about doing river restoration it's you know it's about working with local groups. We're doing something next month with disabled children we're going to take it to upon and get it to maybe catch a bass and I think it's a small things that really add up. You know it's great to hear about some of the things that you know to you and all this you're doing in some of the bigger issues but I think it's it's getting down and doing work on a local level. I would wish there were more people to work with kids in our local school just tell them about the river get them out and we have so many kids I've never been somebody because I've never seen the ocean.

[00:54:06] I mean we don't live that far from the coast. We're three hours from Boston. And I I've met kids around here. Teenagers have been to the ocean and so it's it would be so so wonderful to get. Even local groups together to help.

[00:54:23] On a local level. Do you. You rarely see any young kids on a river. I could count them the number I've seen when I go fishing. And it's funny. I haven't got the efficient show in a few years and is a big one in Jersey to summer said fly fishing show a couple of buddies go down I see. Ask them when get back. How was it. Well people are getting older and grayer. You see the young people. Not that many. So it's kind of a you know it's a shame that they're not taking advantage of it and I guess it's the same in hunting. And we've got I've got some friends appeared at her avid duck hunters and decided the numbers are just decreasing. We live in Vermont and I think they sell anymore hunting licenses anymore. It's something where DC is enough a message trouble there. They're

broke because no one's buying fishing and hunting licenses. And I think Gary can talk about it but on the other hand too you know we're close to Vermont. I love to fish. Some of the streams of Vermont it's 50 dollars for an out-of-state license. So you're actually discouraging someone who might want to come up for a couple of weeks to fish make it more accessible. What young kid around here could go out and spend twenty dollars for a New York license at 50 dollars for a Vermont license and then spend what it cost to buy a rod and reel and get into the sport. It's expensive Yeah and it's expensive for young kids. So you're you're really not making it easy for them.

[00:55:54] To get into the sport. But my friend Teddy fishes Wood an old bamboo rod. That was his father's. The thing is that piece of junk and he's got an old flubber. I don't know how it's still Craig's. And Teddy will now fish. I'll put him up against anybody. It's not the equipment and I think that's one of the other problems with some of the younger kids today you know the 20 and 30 somethings they've got to go out by their thousand dollar rather you know the best of everything they used once and I've seen around here get people that I'm not going to need where they go but they'll go to a school around you and they'll spend 2000 3000 dollars on all this equipment and a fly casting lessons and I say you know what. For 200 bucks I can put you in a backyard. We could have taught you how to cast showed you what flows to use. Explain the whole thing for you and you can do it for a couple of hundred dollars but they want to be able to say look I've got so-and-so logo on my vest and I think it's it's like so many other things in our society it's just a matter of you know showing off what you have and not really knowing what what to do. I never forget many years ago at a fly fishing show lefty Craig was there and you know everybody's talking about the new rods and they got to get this and they've got to get that. So then it was kind of detrimental to his own purpose but his left the doing of casting demonstration he's got a three piece right. And he one cast he makes up.

[00:57:33] 100 foot cast down upon. And he says but you know it's not the equipment because I can take off the bottom third of this rod and still make the same cast and I'm telling you it's not the equipment he takes the middle section off the rod. He makes the same cast with just the tip of the rod. Everybody's like nobody's seen anything. He says it's not the equipment. He takes the rod off he makes the cast with just a line. So it's not the equipment. I do. And it goes back to that spot on the fire hole and the funny I titled it my favorite stretch and there's no Anglo there's no wildlife it's just a very long wide painting of this stretch on the fire hole and I don't know where it is it was solid Barfield many years ago but I wish I added I made a print of it and it was so funny one day. We were at a fly fishing show and we had that painting frame that the print frame and a guy walks up to me and he looks at it looks at it kind of looks at me says that's my favorite stretch. That's not your favorite stretch. I says No that's my favorite stretch. So we started to bits and he actually actually worked in Albany as an engineer for Jeannie has a little house on a band killed. Became friends over the years. To me you know where that spot is this is well obviously if I painted it I know where that spot is where it is. So we started talking. He says that is my favorite spot too. Every time I go off the I've got to fish that spot. So he says to me Have you ever fished it as is. No I've never once fished it out walk it. I'll spend a couple of hours here but I've never fished it. So he started to show me some pictures at some of the trout pulled out of that stretch but that painting that seen that spot is probably my my most favorite of all the paintings I've done.

[00:59:34] That's wonderful. It's such a unique area. It is. I mean it's such. The Fishers adapt the type of adapting it in such a unique way. And I won one year's he so well when you were with Teddy came with us one went out there and I said you've got to get approval going to go to before the sun comes up. Why is his character. Well I don't want to

get up early at all. Believe me you want to get up we're going to go there we're going to walk alone to bank to bring my rocks is no don't even bring your ride. We're just going to take a walk. So the three of us got there we got out of the car and it's dark. Barely see what we're doing. What do we do in airports. They thought it could be fleet. So we start walking along the river and the sun's coming up and all of a sudden you're walking in the middle of a herd of elk that we're just laying there and it's like wow. And. Walk around a bend and a flock of geese take off. And you know all you hear is the noise of the birds taking off. You go a little further and you see a grizzly running across the field and we spent an hour there and then as we're walking and we're just walking along the edge you can see the trout shooting out from under the bank and we got back to the car and I says How was it he says Wow. How was work you know moving forward. And it is just one of those spots with.

[01:00:51] It's it's actually seeing how nature works and in a small micro scale we within the first time we went was the year of the great virus I think was 80.

[01:01:07] It is. Yeah I knew nothing about it. Joe Val my wife and son and we've got there is is burning and everything is grey. We stayed in West Yellowstone we still got to go in the park. We sort of fire as we saw it was just it was wild and every year we'd go back and we'd see the signs you know of the bird and the trees starting to grow back and you go back now and you see the mountains is is green again and just the you know you'd stand in a spot in the park and you look in the horizon and it's black and the storm would come through and an hour later the sun would be shining or be snowing in June and July. And to see how powerful an overwhelming nature can be. And then you come back here and you see how dorsal everything is compared to the wonderful power of nature in a place like Yellowstone. And to me that's what's exciting about it. Just nature and then and then you get you know the millions of tourists who were just this. I think sometimes the park should be closed to people. I mean I've seen some things the natives are just totally insane. So this. We stopped there was a bunch of cars we got out was a herd of elk and it was summer so the the elk were involved and there was a guy with his grandson and the little kid was maybe seven or eight years old eating an ice cream and he's pushing the kid to the elk to feed the elk icecream. This is you don't want to do that. Darryl Well he has to do is turn his head in who hurt the kid. I mean even he's in velvet. Oh no they're tame. I said no they're not tame he's a wild animals you don't go feed ice cream a little kid should Michael give the elk ice cream. Oh no there's no problem. I left. I didn't want to see what happens. But you see some of the stupidity of the people that are in the park. And that to me that's the sad part. You know the city abused the park takes it for as much as I would. Be the first one I want to go fish there. I'd love to see the parks close the people. I know it's probably a very selfish thing to say but sometimes I think we don't deserve to do it the beauty that I know that these places have for us.

[01:03:30] I really can't. I really don't know exactly what pushed me to paint but I do know that one month period I was getting burned out from the travel and we were I was in Phoenix Arizona to cover an IndyCar auto race with my wife and we stayed over an extra day and I said let's go to Phoenix so I'd like to go to the heard museum because I had always been fascinated with Western art cowboy art and the United painted really know a whole lot about it. And we went to the Heard Museum and they were having a show at the time of the cowboy Artists of America. I don't know if the group is still active today but it was it was the premiere Western artist group in the country. I mean these guys were phenomenal. What they were doing. So we went to the show and I just was blown away by what they were doing. Don't ask me why haven't I been to the Met. I been to museums in Italy I mean I had been to art museums but this particular show just did something to me

and really got me thinking about wanting to paint. And it probably was at a time in my life where I was traveling so much my son was little I was never home. The business was changing from film to digital. I wasn't thrilled about making that transition. And maybe it was just enough to push me to try something new. And so I just jumped into the idea of painting literally close the business finished the assignments I had to do and spent some time in infuse me in a library reading up on you know some great artists and just started painting so I don't know if it was a combination of things that just got me started. But I do know that going to that show really sparked something in me to see what these guys are doing.

[01:05:27] I just thought it was phenomenal. And that's you know that's why I made that transition. I hope I hope they look back at this time and say that to me even if we weren't doing a lot. We managed to save the resource. And I hope in 20 30 40 50 years from now it's going strong and people are enjoying the sport and our environment is improved. And I hope we're in a better place then. We're headed at the moment.