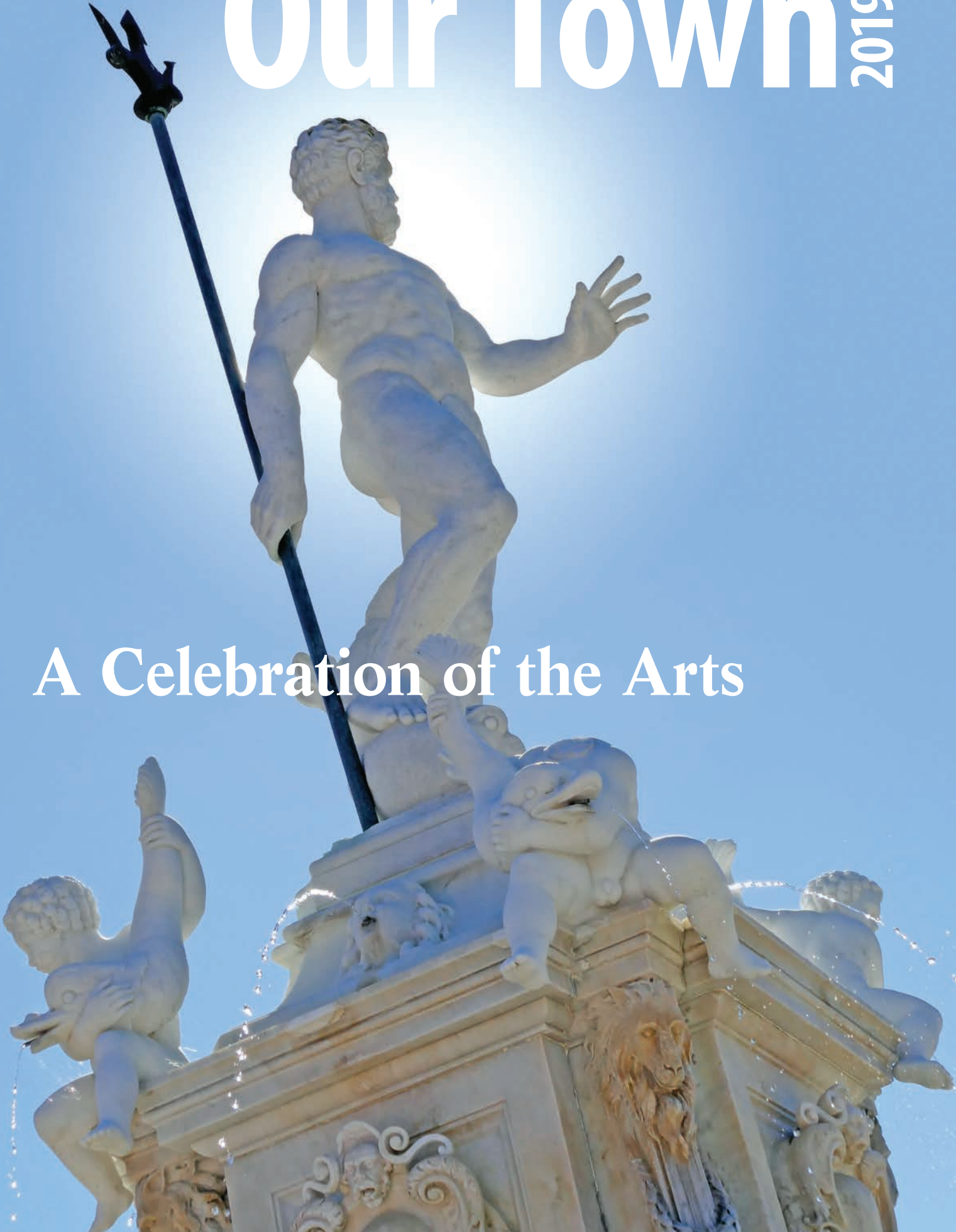


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Our Town²⁰¹⁹

A Celebration of the Arts



DAN DEMPSTER:
**Exploring the beauty
of the Pacific coast**

By Genie Davis

Dan Dempster is an artist who's made a major transition: from longtime Boston-area resident to the west coast.

Now living on the Palos Verdes Peninsula, Dempster has embraced his new home and a new approach to his artwork.

"The Pacific is an entirely different animal," he said, when asked about the differences he's found working in the South Bay versus the east coast.

"It has taken three changes of palette and three years painting en plein air to truly get my eye in," he said. "Now that I have the code, I find I am returning to my original interest in abstract realism, finding the spectacular in the mundane. If you look closely, there is abstract in the real, and the real in the abstract. The two are inseparable."



Over the years, regardless of medium, Dempster said the same theme threads through his drawing, painting and sculpture.

"I am interested in examining how our state of mind affects our perception, and how perception can affect our state of mind. I am interested in uncovering

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Inspiration Point, 24x18 oil on linen, by Dan Dempster



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clarity and vastness and re-presenting that, so that it can be experienced by the viewer.”

The artist said his work is intended to be healing.

“It’s meditative, calm. It cultivates a sense of wonder and delight about the complexity and beauty of our surroundings. The spectacular is everywhere, if we take the time to see.”

Dempster’s love of nature and the ocean itself began in his childhood.

“I was very fortunate to grow up in Bermuda, so I’ve literally spent decades studying the water and light on the seashore. It’s part of me,” he explained. “In Bermuda, we harvest the rain for our household needs. The awareness of water and its preciousness is always there.”

He said that he also developed a “healthy respect” for the subtleties of nature and its forces. With hurricanes a fact of life, he quickly came to the realization that “Nature is more than pretty. Its complexity, regardless of scale, is awe-inspiring.”

Along with creating his own work, Dempster also teaches Drawing from Life Classes.

“I teach how to see. Drawing comes later. Most people are hesitant about drawing because they think either you’ve got talent, or you don’t. They remember doing art in primary school, perhaps not very well, and that impression has stuck with them all this time. I teach people how to literally draw past their inhibitions,” he stresses. “We do so much drawing that in three weeks, without realizing it, they’re drawing without thinking about it. I see the change in their posture and know they’ve got it.”

He teaches the human figure because of its complexity.

“I feel if you can draw that, you can draw anything. I find the challenge of drawing from life, particularly the short pose drills, very useful for finding the essential line. There’s no time to get precious.”

With work that depicts coastal beauty from ocean tides to tide pools and the magic of the horizon, he creates a wonderful quality of light and motion. To do so, Dempster said he must look and see deeply to achieve that quality in his work. He said he is also strongly influenced by having grown up near the ocean, and later,



Dan Dempster with Suzan Redgate, director of the Copley Society of Art in the main gallery, on 158 Newbury Street, Boston.

from studying light and motion in graduate school courses using computer animation.

His work offers a rich, contemplative view of nature that shimmers, glows and shifts. There is a strong Zen-like quality to his images; and his palette evokes

all the colors of sea and sky and water imaginable. Both with his paintings



Prospero’s Pool, Charcoal & Conte 38x27 inches, by Dan Dempster

and drawings, there is a vast, spacious beauty that is compelling to viewers.

“Our enjoyment of outer vastness is simply our inner vastness recognizing itself,” said the artist.

Dempster moved to Palos Verdes with his wife and two sons

“Nature is more than pretty. Its complexity, regardless of scale, is awe-inspiring.”

—Dan Dempster, artist

in 2014, but continues showing his work in Boston and abroad as well as becoming involved with the local art community. He’s recently participated in shows at the Palos Verdes Art Center and the Torrance Art Museum. He’s an artist member of the Copley Society of Art, too.

Dempster is a strong supporter of the Palos Verdes Land Conservancy through art donations and by organizing artists to paint during the group’s monthly Nature Walks.

The artist will be an Invited Artist in an upcoming exhibition, Art Unites 12 at Gallery 800, NoHo in January 2019; recent exhibitions and workshops included Drawing from Life for AOG at the Palos Verdes Art Center in 2018, and exhibitions at the Copley Society of Art in Boston in 2017.

For more information and to see more of Dempster’s work, visit DempsterFineArt.com.