

ART

By Tamar Russell

Islander as icon

To avoid absolute sentimentality, let's just say, we are getting a new ferry. Out with the old, in with the new. C'est la vie.

In homage to our long-lasting ferry the *Islander*, the Red Barn Granary Gallery in West Tisbury threw a superb bon voyage party last Saturday night. The party included 19 Granary Gallery artists and six Field Gallery artists.

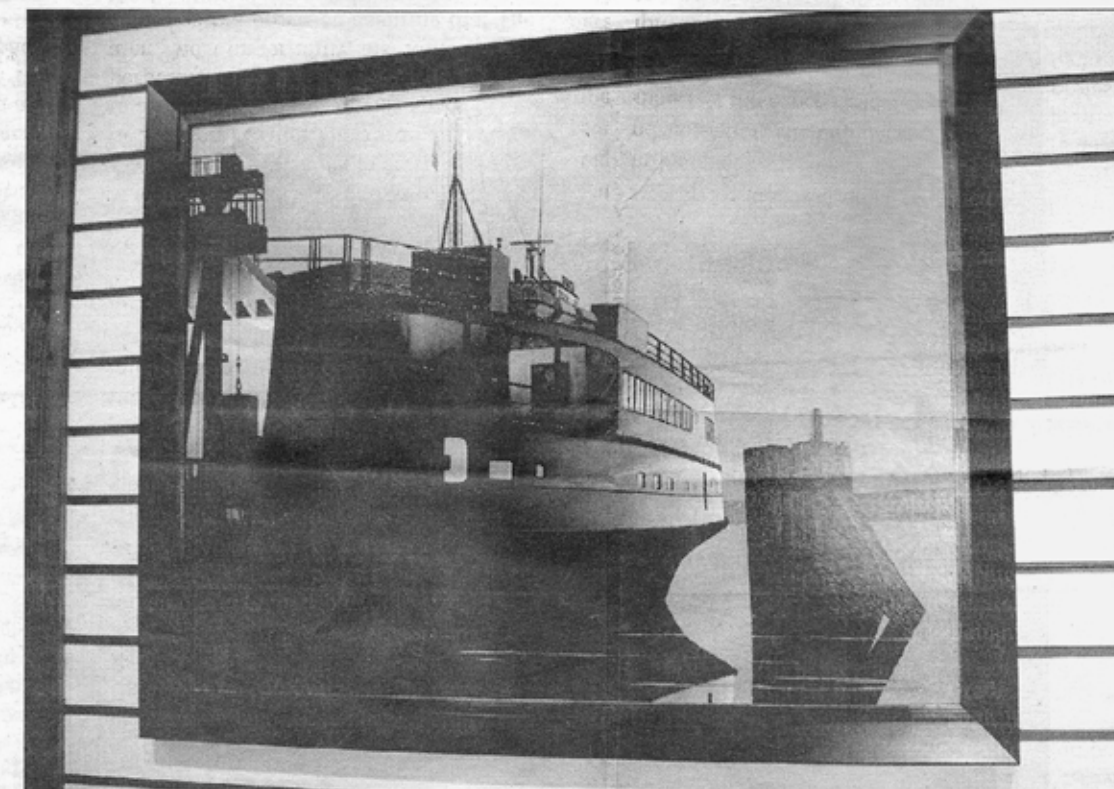
The *Islander* was launched Feb. 21, 1950 at the Maryland Drydock Company in Baltimore. This vessel was built for service between Martha's Vineyard, New Bedford, Nantucket, and Woods Hole.

At the Red Barn last Saturday evening, David Dandridge, one of the Steamship captains, displayed a reception brochure from that launching. Cathleen Cagney, daughter of the late actor James Cagney, christened the vessel. The reception was in her honor as sponsor for the *Islander*.

Capt. Dandridge also had an old line drawing from that event showing the ferry in clear simple detail. He related how the Woods Hole end is the bow and the location of the anchor. He said few people know this because visually the bow and stern are not that different.

This conversation made it obvious that this art opening was more than just an exhibit of fabulous art. It was a piece of history itself.

Vanessa Earl, one of the gallery's



PHOTOS BY SUSAN SAFFORD

Scott Terry's "Glory Days," an oil painting on board that is lightly lit with sunlight.

The invitation to the *Islander*'s launching in 1950.

and the response was prime.

This year it seemed natural to include more artists, and Ms. Nagle thought with the ferry retiring it would be fun to see how the artists would react to the *Islander* project. The invitations to participate went out in October, so the gallery was unsure how much art would be ready for the show.

The response was incredible.

Upon entry to the gallery the first massive image on display gave the show its mood. This large-scale giclee print by Jeff Serusa, "Seasmoke," prepares the viewer for the rest of show.

Near this piece is a full area of bright, pop oil paintings by Claudio Gasparini. Filled with multiple colors, the ferry comes to life in a vast assortment of settings.

Steve Mills, with his intense sense of detail, gives us a ferry "Departing" with a lively deck full of people, and even the rust on the ferry dock is visible.

"Glory Days," an image by Scott Terry, depicts the ferry at dawn (or is it dusk?) with soft pink light glinting on the ferry's windows. Mr. Terry's bio describes his painting as an "ongoing struggle," where neither complacency or self-satisfaction can exist. That ideal makes for a very progressive, fun piece.

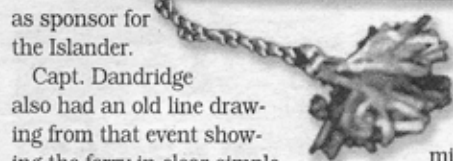
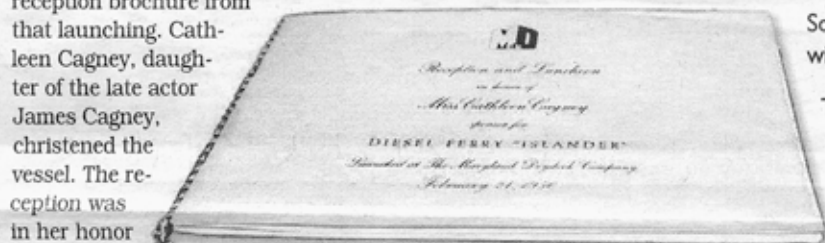
The photographic element was evident in the show as well. David

Fokos has a whisp, a breathing blur of the Martha's Vineyard in black and white that tells the story of quick trips to the mainland, in keeping with his premise that "our impression of the world is based upon our total experience." This experience of travel that we all know living on-Island, is made beautiful by his lens.

The sister photo to Mr. Fokos's "Incoming Ferry, Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts" is a piece by Alison Shaw. Her images, well-known on the Island since 1975, also give evidence of our ferry experience. Her photo, "State Beach 2006," another blur of blues with hints of black on the ferry, again captures the travel experience that is now passing.

The parking lot was full and the departure of the *Islander* seemed like Mr. Serusa's fanciful elegant *Islander* in the mist — a distant thing full of meaning and yet somehow a weighty piece of fading Island history. ♦

The show will run in its full form until Dec. 17. The Granary Gallery is located at 636 Old County Road, West Tisbury. 508-693-0455. Hours are daily 10-4 and Sundays 11-4.

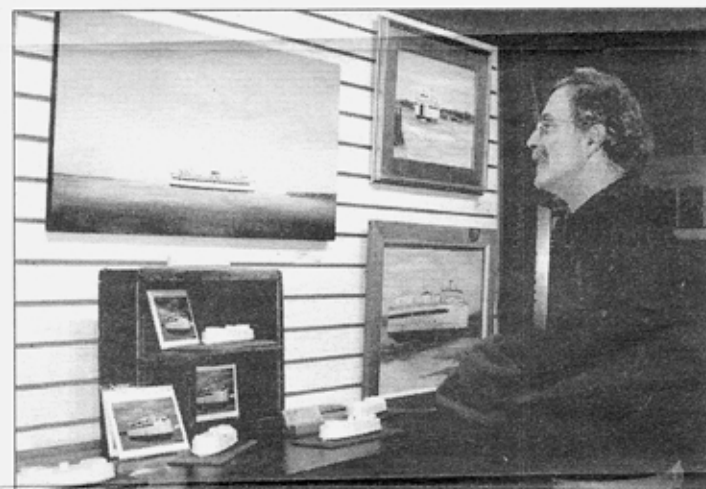


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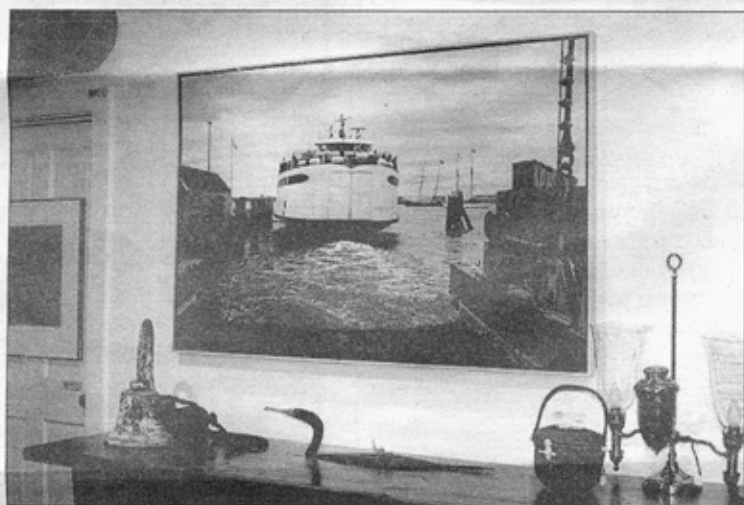
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David Dandridge gazes at one of his favorite pieces in the show, Doug Kent's mixed media piece, "Islander off East Chop."



Steve Mills's clearly detailed oil, "Departing."



Jeff Serusa, who has been with the Granary Gallery since 2005, standing in front of his giclee on canvas "Seasmoke on Canvas" shot in January.