

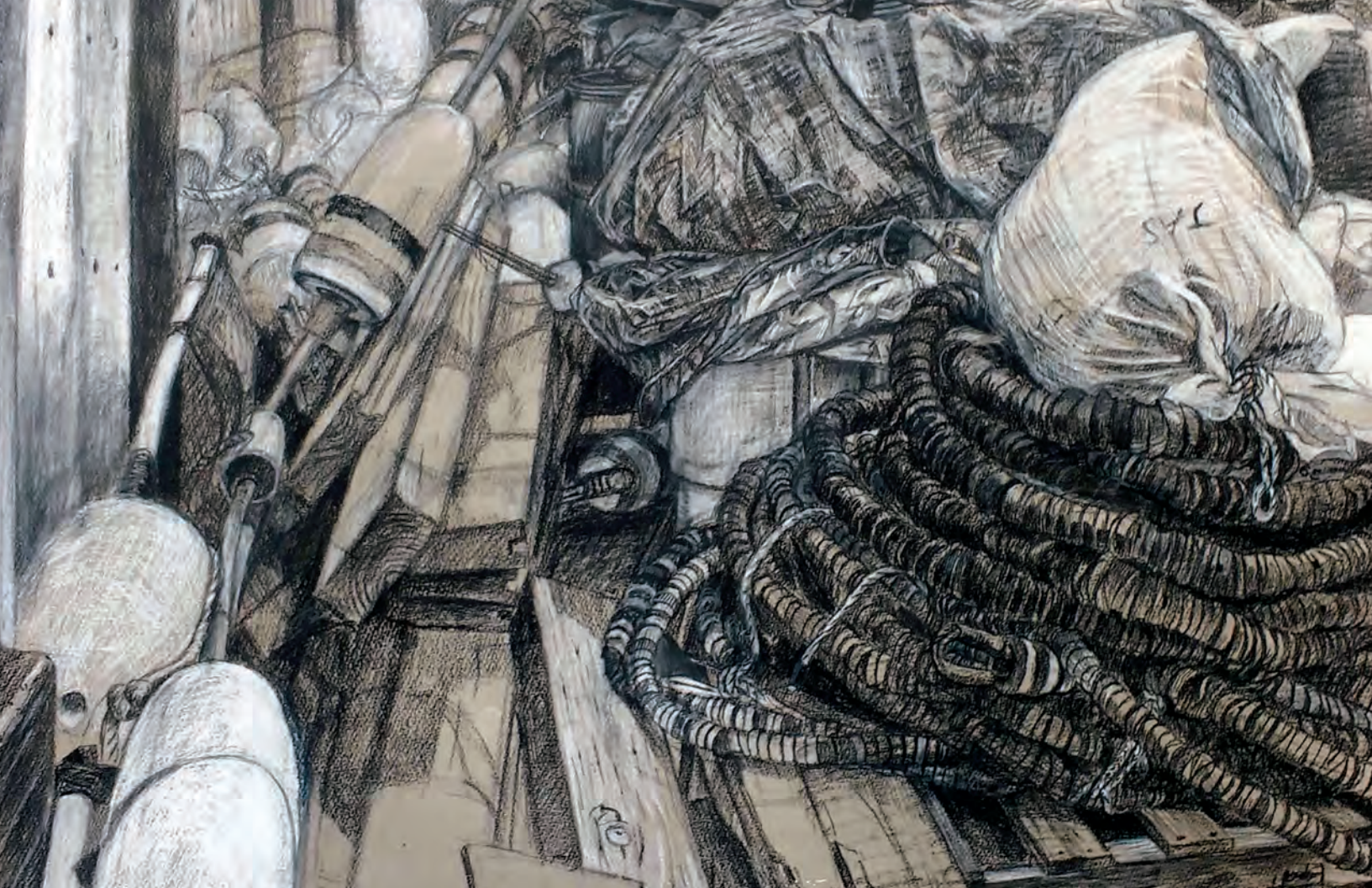


gone...  
**FISHING**

JEFFREY MARSHALL | CAPE ANN MUSEUM

AUGUST 10 — NOVEMBER 25, 2018





# curator's STATE- MENT

The Cape Ann Museum is pleased to host *Gone...Fishing*, a special exhibition of recent work by Jeffrey Marshall. The exhibit reflects the Museum's ongoing commitment to spotlighting the work of contemporary Cape Ann artists.

Working in a variety of materials such as oil, pastel and conté, ink and grease pencil, Jeff has recently ensconced himself in a small studio overlooking the Morse-Sibley Wharf in East Gloucester. It is one of the few remaining wharves from which Gloucester's dwindling number of day-fishermen continues to work. Jeff has discovered a world littered with the detritus of the working waterfront: old buoys and nets, twisted cables and rusted engine parts, the ubiquitous bright-blue plastic barrels, dumpsters and storage containers, and, of course, pickup trucks of all shapes and sizes.

In recent years, pickup trucks seem to have come into vogue, replacing family sedans and small cars. Trucks have of course long been a mainstay for people working in the trades, including the fishing industry. However, increasingly the bigger the better seems to be the norm with extended cabs, oversized wheels and super-sized engines appearing everywhere. Parked on the old Morse-Sibley Wharf, the vehicles seem out of place and time. And yet, there they are,

serving as mobile offices, providing a warm spot to enjoy a cup of coffee, and offering a quiet place to pass the time of day. The scene, and in particular the trucks, have inspired Jeff who has a talent for creating beauty out of the most unlikely of subjects.

The Morse-Sibley Wharf is a special place with important ties to the history of Gloucester and Cape Ann. During the 19th century, the wharf was home to John F. Wonson & Sons which in 1830 made the first trip to Georges Bank to fish for halibut. Nearly a century later, the site was where a band of young fishermen, most from the town of Charlevoix on the shores of Lake Michigan, set up their gillnetting operations. For decades, their tall wooden reels used for drying and mending nets were a familiar sight on the wharf. With the paintings and drawings he is creating today, Jeff Marshall is depicting the latest chapter in the history of one of Gloucester's most venerable landmarks.

**Martha Oaks**  
Curator, Cape Ann Museum

## OPPOSITE

RONNIE'S A BULLDOG.  
CONTÉ AND INK ON PAPER.  
32" X 48". 2017.

# artist STATE- MENT

The contested landscape has been my subject for over a decade, from the post-Katrina neighborhoods of New Orleans to the coastline of Massachusetts. I look for imagery that echoes the complex social and environmental issues of specific places that I love. The subjects I choose are often overlooked, revealed as thematic possibilities only after intense visual research of a site.

When I moved into my studio at Morse-Sibley Wharf in East Gloucester in 2016, I spent months drawing as a way of taking inventory of my surroundings, much of which I was lucky enough to view from my windows. This long process of drawing and painting from observation has allowed me to focus on what seems to drive the work, friendships, family, and struggles of the fishermen and lobstermen who show up to this place every day. Artists in Gloucester often include boats, docks, and other classic representations of its fishing industry. After looking, drawing, and painting for a year, I found myself most often watching the trucks, almost always trucks, that filled the parking area under my studio like fish in an aquarium. Over time I began to sense the rhythms of the wharf: where trucks pull up cab to cab to talk, or haul gear, and staying for hours, days, or minutes.

Working with a subject that moves, changes color with the day, reflects its surroundings, and is so specifically designed, is the kind of impossible challenge that keeps me returning to these pickup trucks. Every day, whether working outside or in my studio, brings unique visual situations and encounters that make their way into the work. The contents and movements of these machines suggest the life inside, and I have tried to give the drawings a similar energy.

I am an intensely private person, and my art has become a way to push me into relationships and encounters I would otherwise avoid, because the work demands me to say hello. As a New York City kid whose father took him fishing once, in a swamp, I have very little in common with the men and women who work on the sea. My hope is that through drawing and respecting this small element of a fisherman's life, I might create stronger connections with this city I call home. This is an exhibition of trucks, and I hope it is also a document of Gloucestermen.



# morse- SIBLEY WHARF

BY KEN RIAF

## The Wharf

Jeff Marshall's studio sits above the tide on Smith Cove and overlooks a truck corral down at the Morse-Sibley Wharf. It's where fisherman hitch their workhorses for however long it's gonna take to get the fish from out there to back here. The ancient pilings driven deep into clay centuries ago and sistered to newer stringers and planking form a solid structure akin to the old utility knife that over time acquired two new blades and three new handles. The wharf clings hard to these beaverized timbers and moaning spiles that shape a dank cavern of wooden stalagmites below. Yet despite its picturesque decay it still lives on as a place to go fishing from.

## The Lot

Pick up trucks rest on a scrapple of broken asphalt penned-in by rusting equipment, cargo containers, bins and dredges laced with Tansy gone to seed. There's a hogged wooden hull up against a battered wharfhouse whose padlock gets shielded from the weather by a leather flap above the hasp. Decomposing memories of fisheries past – a Gillnet dries on a wooden spool and a stone-age winch nearby is ready to start a new life as a mooring stone. In earlier



THE HISTORIC PHOTOS OF THE MORSE-SIBLEY WHARF AND BILL SIBLEY WERE OBTAINED DIRECT FROM WALES THROUGH AN EXTENSIVE EMAIL EXCHANGE WITH THE SIBLEY DESCENDANTS.

times a telephone pole spiked with store bought and makeshift signs warned unwary interlopers: *We've Seen Your Approach Now Lets See Your Departure* and *No Trespassing means Go Away, Go Away Means You* or the ever popular *I Gave At The Office*.

### **An Old Horse Knows the Way**

The classic wharf truck hauled and dragged whatever needed hauling or dragging from A to B and sometimes as far as C. In a time when working folks understood one another's burdens and the beasts that carried them, a yellowed inspection sticker or expired plate were often overlooked by law enforcement with a friendly nod as good as a wink. In a world of rusted chassis and midnight commutes the unwritten waterfront code of live and let live was the grease that made the dockyard's hum. A point of pride was seeing just how long one could keep the heap. Could you coax that last exhale of blue gray smoke to be at the junkyard gate? That would stand testament to the Yankee way of using what you have until it's spent. The Morse-Sibley corollary to Murphy's Law "If it ain't broke don't fix it" was – "I know it's broken but it works all the same."

### **Outside of a dog, a pickup truck is man's best friend – inside of a dog it's too dark to drive**

Everything has at least two sides to it from dishes that need washing to the great philosophies. The wharf truck, no different probably has at least four sides, those being inside & out and top & bottom.

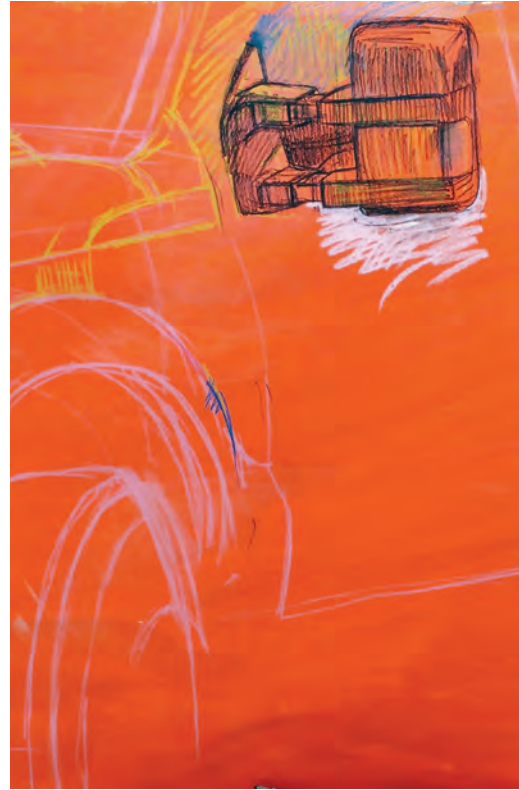
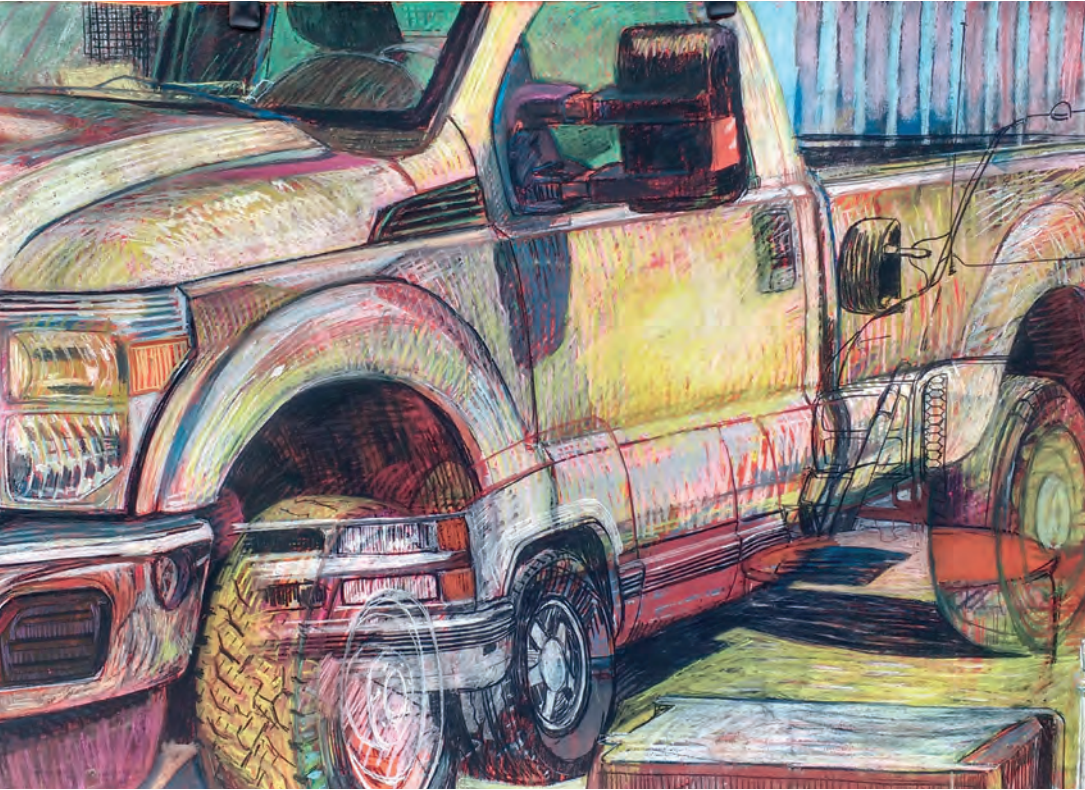
The truck's cab is a place to get out of the weather while your docked craft idles awake. Often it's a smokey, fishy, coal-tar pitch and oakum museum of the trade littered with tide charts, fused with fish scales, a landfill of coffee mugs, catalogues, lines and tackle. Retired oilskins hang here, some mending needles stashed there, a candy dish of melted treats on the dashboard and bits of old lunch wedged in the visor.

Its bondo'd roof patched with red lead filler and gray primer lists to starboard above balding tires squared at the bottom from sitting, these are topsides and keel. A land scow that the family nick-named "Our Shame". And what of lost mariners who never return to claim their mounts? Keys dangle in the ignition because who would want to thief this? The morning's newspaper splayed to the sports page beside a crushed pack-o-camels, a bottle of Moxie and a half ate lobster roll. These things happen.

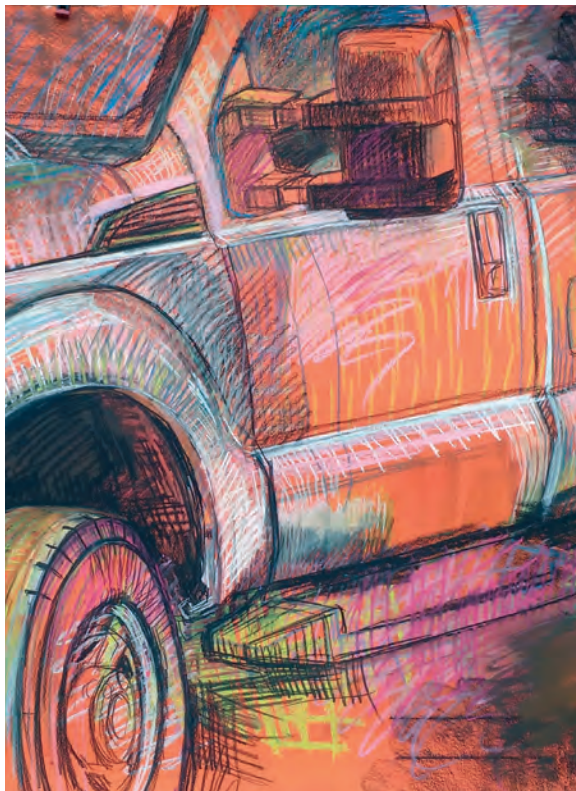
In Fishtown one might refer to someone not entirely tethered to his mental moorings by genteelly suggesting that the poor fellow's wharf "doesn't go all the way down to the water". Well the Morse-Sibley Wharf does go down there and has been doing so since the age of sail. Generations to come of friendly competitors will continue to parley at the lot sheltered in the lee of their circled steeds to talk weather, the price of fish and about the new electric pick-up they're gonna get someday.

So now comes Jeff Marshall to set himself, easel, paints and tools at the hub of this sometimes milling often solitary station where the fishers hitch their wagons, cast the line and slip to the fog in the great salt sea. These warhorses that bring them to the front are Marshall's subjects and he well knows the situation and terrain where they reside.









PROCESS SEQUENCE OF  
MONSTER TRUCK #3.  
CONTÉ, INK AND PASTEL  
ON ARCHES PAPER.  
32" X 53". 2018.



TRUCK BED #25.  
GREASE PENCIL ON YUPO PAPER.  
7" X 11". 2017-18.



TRUCK BED #1.  
GREASE PENCIL ON YUPO PAPER.  
7" X 11". 2017-18.

OPPOSITE  
MONSTER TRUCK #2.  
CONTÉ AND PASTEL ON  
ARCHES PAPER.  
32" X 53". 2017.



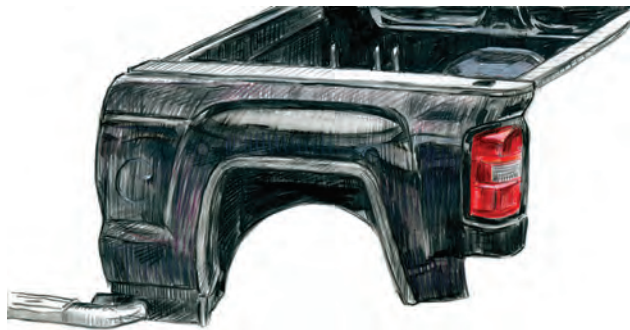




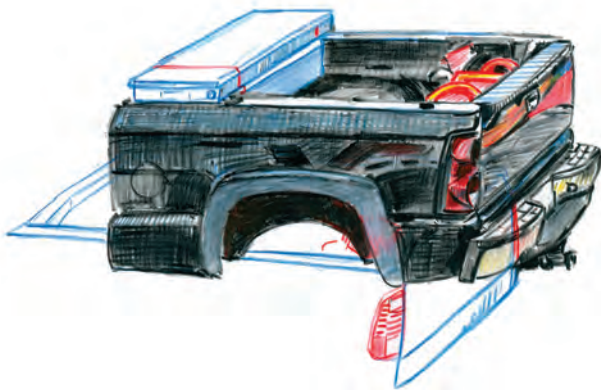




COMINGS & GOINGS #1.  
CONTÉ, INK, AND PASTEL  
ON ARCHES PAPER.  
32" X 48". 2018.



TRUCK BED #12.  
GREASE PENCIL ON YUPO PAPER.  
7" X 11". 2017-18.



TRUCK BED #2.  
GREASE PENCIL ON YUPO PAPER.  
7" X 11". 2017-18.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

TRUCK BED #15.  
GREASE PENCIL ON YUPO PAPER.  
7" X 11". 2017-18.

TRUCK BED #16.  
GREASE PENCIL ON YUPO PAPER.  
7" X 11". 2017-18.

TRUCK BED #22.  
GREASE PENCIL ON YUPO PAPER.  
7" X 11". 2017-18.

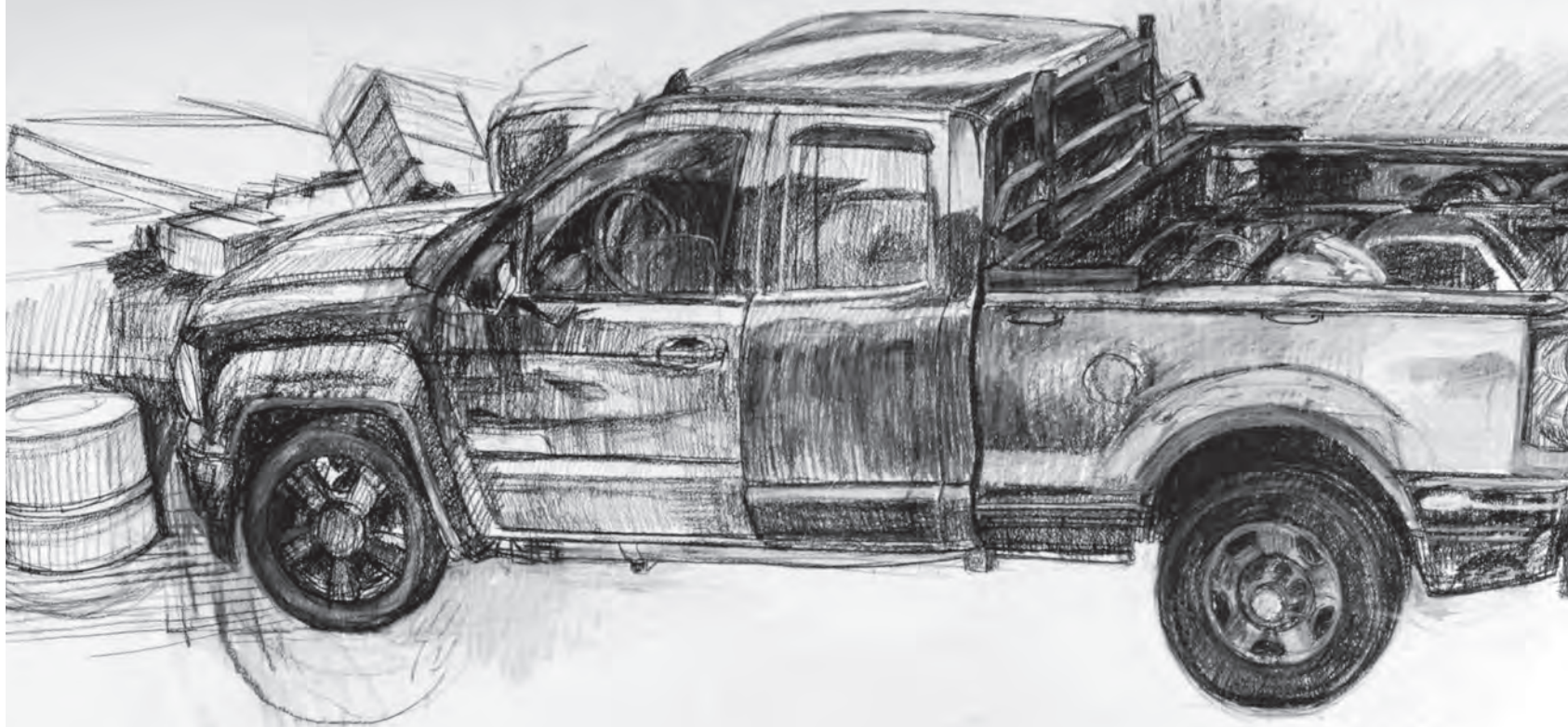
OPPOSITE

MONSTER TRUCK #1.  
CONTÉ, INK, AND PASTEL  
ON ARCHES PAPER.  
32" X 48". 2017.











STUDY OF MONSTER TRUCK.  
CONTÉ ON PAPER.  
32" X 48". 2017.



TRUCK BED #23.  
GREASE PENCIL ON YUPO PAPER.  
7" X 11". 2017-18.



TRUCK BED #24.  
GREASE PENCIL ON YUPO PAPER.  
7" X 11". 2017-18.



# thank YOU

JEFFREY MARSHALL

My wife Phoebe and my son Lemi for their love. Ronda Faloon and Martha Oaks for their support. Jason Calfo for his direction and Chris Lenzi for his design. Aaron Bourque and Brian Wilson for their help with imaging. Professor Alison Poor-Donahue for making this happen. Mount Ida College School of Design. The Santapaola family for their trucks. The Subways for their music. Gabrielle Barzaghi for her advice. Jim Montagnino for the studio space. Ken Riaf for the writing and research. The Sibley family for the photos. Temple Ahavat Achim for the community. Gloucester for being Gloucester.

## PHOTO CREDITS

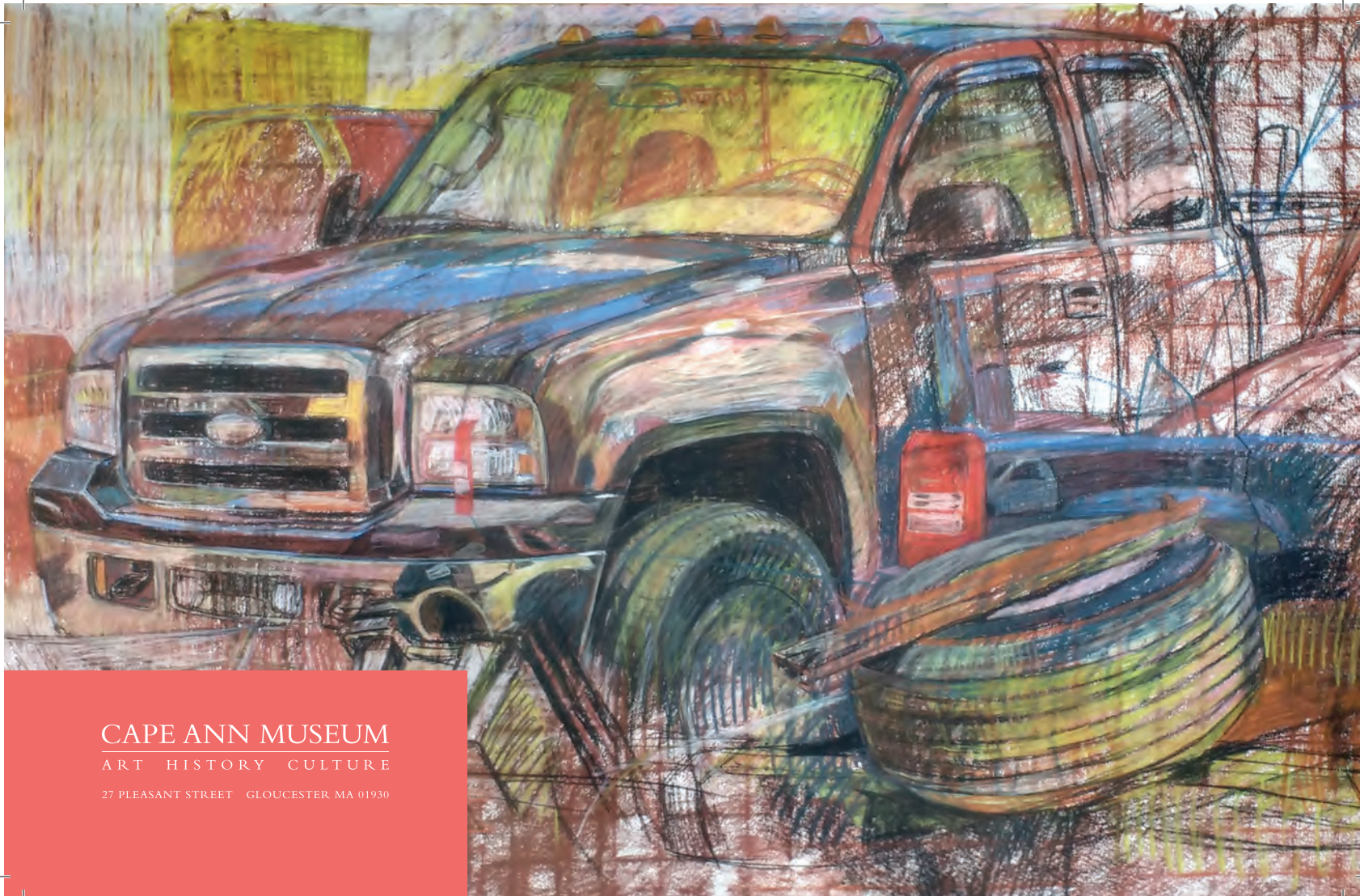
PAGE 3: BILL SIBLEY BY  
ROBERT A. MAMIS, 1962.

PAGE 5: WHARF VIEW FROM  
BANNER HILL, EAST GLOUCESTER,  
C. 1905. COLLECTION OF THE  
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