

Marine Arts Gallery

Presents

RALPH CAHOON (1910-1999)



Nantucket Sled Ride

Oil on Board, 22x28, With Frame 29x35

Ralph Eugene Cahoon, Jr. was born in 1910 in Chatham, Massachusetts (Cape Cod). A direct descendant of the first Dutch settlers, his father emigrated in the 1660's from Scotland directly to Cape Cod. As a boy he played close to the harbor, fishing, and digging for clams or scallops. The "mermaid" became Ralph Cahoon's hallmark in the 1960s. This was firmly established and his style was definitely his own. Many artists would feel constricted by such a limited choice of subject matter, but Cahoon's creativity within this genre exploded. His mermaids do everything imaginable; they knit, play golf, fish, hide in trees, pose for photographs, and are generally up to every conceivable sort of hijinks. The classic setting for Cahoon's mermaids is a typical New England backdrop of ocean and lighthouse, and also of hot air balloons. His palette had evolved and tended towards more intense, jewel-like tones. His work encompasses the qualities of the primitive in combination with the decorative style, all imbued with a unique perspective. His work is well-seasoned with this special sense of humor and displays a cohesive vision of fantasia.

26 Atlantic Avenue, Marblehead, MA 01945

781-631-0100