

Tom Maakestad works and lives in Marine on St. Croix, MN where he has maintained a studio for the past 16 years. The Minneapolis area has been home-base since 1992. Prior to that Tom and his wife Anna lived in Hong Kong for 7 years where they both had busy careers and traveled extensively throughout Asia. Trekking in Nepal, Burma, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand among other countries gave them a first hand observation of different cultures and art forms.

His college work in literature and studio art propelled him into a parallel track as a graphic designer for the publishing industry as well as a full time fineartist. Maakestad's exhibitions in the US and Asia have placed his work in many collections world-wide.

During the 1980s and early 90s he worked for the multinational publishing and trade show firm, Reed Elsevier, a fortune 500 company, and was based in their Hong Kong office. His main work was in creating trade show concepts in China, Taiwan and Hong Kong and promoting those world wide.

As a painter Maakestad's main subject matter continues to be inspired by the broad valleys and agricultural regions near his family farm in Northfield, Minnesota. These landscape paintings have been included in collections at the Mayo Clinic and many others across the US and overseas. The US State Department purchased four of his southern Minnesota oil pastels for the Ambassador's residence in Oslo, Norway.

Recently he showed in the 100th annual Minnesota State Fair Fine Arts Exhibition and received the 2nd place juried painting prize and 1st place Minnesota State Fair Foundation award for his painting "Bean Fields at Dusk." His work has been reviewed and written about in several US and foreign publications including the Minneapolis Star Tribune, Art News, American Art Collector, The Artist Magazine, News of Norway, and The South China Morning Post. His work has been in over 60 exhibitions in the US and abroad since receiving a BA in 1980.

Maakestad's main body of work originated as a series of black and white drawings initially inspired by an exhibition of Franz Kline's black and white canvases which were being shown at the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington DC during the summer of 1980. Kline's large sweeping generalizations encouraged a reduction of Maakestad's landscapes into larger masses of black and white mostly using cross hatch and blended surfaces. He has continued to be influenced by the works of Edward Hopper; Richard Diebenkorn whose light-filled abstractions echo the sea and sky; and Wayne Theibaud, who is known for his sensuous handling of paint.

An early example of Maakestad's work was included in the juried "Young Minnesota Artists" exhibition organized by the University of Minnesota Museum of Art in 1981. This statewide competition in Minnesota selected from entrants who were between the ages of 20 and 30. The touring exhibition traveled the state for the following year. The result of this exposure was an invitation to join the Suzanne Kohn Gallery of St. Paul and Minneapolis and their representation continued for the next 15 years

until the gallery closed in 1995. Since then Maakestad has been an active member of the Groveland Gallery in Minneapolis which is one of the most recognized and longstanding galleries in the midwest. He shows every two years in solo exhibitions and has participated in many group events with the gallery.