

# Frances B. Ashforth

## Artist Statement

[www.francesbashforth.com](http://www.francesbashforth.com)

Raised in an extended family of artists, I have always been drawn to line and color. Time spent at my grandparents' farm along the Connecticut River Valley in New Hampshire, cultivated and validated my need to study the horizon line. The 'long view' of the river valley was my early geographic center. My work honors my family legacy of both land stewardship and art. Our world moves at an extreme pace and the study of land, water and sky, both vast and detailed, allows me to retreat from that hectic pace. Sense of place and personal memory define our individual points of view. 'Apparent horizon' is the range of knowledge that defines each individual through personal experience and acute observation.

I divide my studio time between drawing & printmaking. Having lived in the Pacific Northwest for 8 years, I am still very influenced by the weather and open vistas of that region as well as of the arid American west. An avid fly fisherman, my work is also significantly influenced by the time I spend in both fresh and saltwater environments. Water is our most precious resource and my recent work addresses the study of both arid, wetland and drought-ridden habitats. The inherent stark beauty of these habitats often tricks us into forgetting about the history of land use and abuse. Ancient geologic events have created our familiar geographies, views and landforms we often take for granted each day. Perhaps I am simply committing these views to paper in hopes that we will remember to be good stewards of the land. Our landscape defines us, we know the outline of a particular hill or mountain, we know the shape of the edge of the lake we swim in or walk along. Simply put, we are part of the landscape. We enjoy it and take from it, we scar it, then try and fix it. My hope is that my work, my simple memories on paper, will help instill the desire to respect and remember what the land continues to give us in all its variety, grit and beauty.

My studio practice is as sustainable as possible. I use waterbase inks, which require no use of solvents and I repurpose paper frequently. Natural resources are often taken for granted, I am an ongoing observer and do my best to research where my materials, such as ink and paper, are sourced from.

Part of my practice is focused on giving back. I donate prints each year to various benefits for both socially and environmentally responsible non-profits. I also enjoy sponsoring 3 to 4 artists each year from the NYC area, who don't have access to printmaking facilities, to come join me for a day of printmaking in the studio at The Center for Contemporary Printmaking in Norwalk, Connecticut.