



David Lanier, *Evening Burn*, 2018. Acrylic on linen. On loan from Doug and Kay Ivester.



David Lanier, *Plantation Pond Covey*, 1996. Acrylic on linen. On loan from Thomasville Center for the Arts.

## CONSERVATION

A significant aspect of David Lanier's work is his portrayal of conservation practices in South Georgia, particularly through his depictions of controlled burns and the Bobwhite quail population. Controlled burns, or prescribed fires, are vital conservation tools used to manage ecosystems that rely on periodic fire for health and vitality. Lanier's paintings, such as *Evening Burn*, vividly depict these burns across pine forests, a common sight in South Georgia. These fires reduce hazardous fuel loads, prevent the spread of pests and disease, and promote the growth of native plants and wildlife habitats. By capturing the beauty of these fires, Lanier educates viewers about their ecological importance and challenges the often negative perception of fire in the environment.

Lanier also emphasizes the conservation of the Bobwhite quail, a species that has experienced dramatic population declines. Historically abundant across Georgia, the Bobwhite quail is a symbol of Southern heritage, especially in quail hunt-

ing traditions. Lanier's paintings often depict quail hunting scenes, showcasing the sport and broader efforts to preserve quail habitats. He highlights the role of conservation organizations like Quail Forever in maintaining and restoring upland habitats through practices like controlled burns and responsible land management.

David Lanier's work is a blend of art and conservation science, serving as both a celebration of South Georgia's natural beauty and a powerful medium for addressing critical environmental issues in the region. His paintings raise awareness about the challenges facing South Georgia's ecosystems, advocate for sustainable practices, and educate viewers about the science behind environmental preservation. Through his art, Lanier fosters a deeper connection between people and the land, making his work appealing to a wide audience.

David Lanier, born in 1962 in Albany, Georgia, is a realist artist whose work reflects his deep-rooted love of nature. Growing up in the southeastern United States, Lanier spent his youth camping, fishing, and hunting, which profoundly influenced his artistic focus. Though he began honing his observational skills early on, Lanier didn't start painting until his third year at the Ringling School of Art in Sarasota, Fla. After graduating with honors in 1985, he briefly worked as a commercial artist before committing to painting wildlife, landscapes, and sporting scenes full-time.



David Lanier in his studio. Courtesy of artist.



# Beauty in the Humble Places

Works by David Lanier

Haley Gallery Guide

August 29, 2024 – January 4, 2025



David Lanier, *Faithful Friend*, 2018. Acrylic on linen. On loan from David and Cathy Lynn Lanier.



David Lanier, *Royal Flush*, 2000. Giclee on canvas. On loan from David and Cathy Lynn Lanier.

## PROCESS

David Lanier's artistic process is meticulous and thoughtful, particularly in creating sketches and studies for his larger compositions. Before committing to canvas, Lanier employs a rigorous mental process. For complex pieces, he creates multiple sketches, exploring various aspects such as the angle of view, subject arrangement, light direction, and value distribution. These preliminary sketches allow him to experiment with the composition and ensure each element contributes to the overall harmony of the piece.

In developing larger paintings, Lanier often experiments with different color schemes and considers the mood he wishes to convey, whether it be a warm glow, an overcast day, or vibrant skies. He addresses potential mistakes during the sketching phase, preferring to correct errors on a small scale before committing to the final canvas. While many artists use digital tools for studies, Lanier remains committed to traditional methods, using real paints and brushes to deeply engage with the materials and the creative process. His dedication to this hands-on approach results in paintings rich in detail and emotion, reflecting careful planning, exploration, and revision.



David Lanier, Preliminary Sketches.



David Lanier, *Side By Side*, 2016. Giclee on canvas. On loan from David and Cathy Lynn Lanier.

## BIRD DOGS

David Lanier's depictions of bird dogs are a celebrated aspect of his work, reflecting his personal experiences and the cultural significance of these animals in the South. Bird dogs, especially breeds like English Setters and Pointers, are integral to quail hunting—a tradition deeply rooted in Southern heritage. Lanier captures these dogs not just as working animals but as noble and intelligent companions, crucial to the hunting experience.

Bird dogs are specially trained to locate and point game birds, such as the Bobwhite quail, which are then flushed into the air for hunters. Their keen sense of smell, agility, and disciplined training make them indispensable partners in the field.

Lanier often portrays these dogs in action—focused, poised, and ready to work—highlighting their remarkable skills and the deep bond they share with their handlers.

In the South, bird dogs hold a special place in the hearts of hunters and outdoor enthusiasts. The tradition of quail hunting with bird dogs, particularly in the Red Hills region of South Georgia, is both a practical activity and a cherished local tradition. These dogs are prized not only for their hunting abilities, but also as symbols of Southern culture and the sporting life.

Lanier's paintings, such as *Faithful Friend*, often focus on the emotional connection between hunter and dog,

capturing moments of quiet reflection and mutual respect. The dogs in his work are depicted with a level of detail and reverence that conveys their importance—not just as hunting tools but as beloved companions. This recognition extends beyond the art world; in the South, bird dogs are celebrated in competitions, hunting trials, and storytelling. Lanier's art honors the legacy and significance of bird dogs, elevating them to a status that resonates with both hunters and art enthusiasts.