

## **GAIL BOUCHER**

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Gail was born and raised in Casco Bay, ME. She was the daughter of a lobsterman. Ever since she was a little girl, she has been involved with and interested in fish, fishing, and sea critters. As an adult she is a boat captain out of Newburyport, MA. When she was in art school (Montserrat College of Art in Beverly, MA) in 2005 one of her teachers asked her if she had ever looked into the Japanese art of fish printing. She had not. She did. Ever since, she has tried to learn about Gyotaku and perfect her skills in the art form.

Pronounced: gee-o-tah-ku, Japanese for fish (guo) and rubbing or impression (taku), Gyotaku is a traditional form of Japanese fish printing dating from the mid 1800s. It was used as a way to record one's fish catch by fishermen who wanted to produce proof of their specimens in the days before cameras. You could say that even way back then to a fisherman a catch was just a fish story unless you could produce a picture. Over the years the technique used in the preparation of the fish and the rubbing has become a fine art.

For Gail, it has been a learning curve, a study involving time and trial and error to produce fish prints that are equal in beauty of different specimens in the image of nature's work. For her the fish are giving their life to art. They are all real fish that she or friends have caught. This gives an added layer of feeling and personalizes them for her even further. She believes the fish become special in that they will live on as a testimony of their existence in time and place.