

President's Message from Robert Burridge!

This is my 5th Online President's Message. According to your many emails, you seem to anticipate my observations, announcements and ramblings. Thank you! I'm writing this at 37,000 feet on a flight from Fargo, North Dakota back to Los Angeles after teaching a week-long workshop there. Kate also came along to teach our one-day Art Marketing class.

Fabulous creative painters and very tall, blond Norwegians in Fargo.

I'm back in the studio for a few days, (painting for two major solo exhibits with openings in a few months) then off to Pasadena for a three day "Loosen Up with Acrylics" workshop; then back in the studio for eight days of uninterrupted painting time. How glorious to have quality painting time again. Which reminds me to remind you to schedule for yourself quality painting time. Let others know also. Insist on this "alone time" with yourself because doing significant work takes its time. Make certain others know this is your time to do your work and ANY distraction will hinder your next masterpiece. (That'll scare 'em) It will send the message that your creative talents as a painter is serious stuff.

Although I'm primarily a studio painter, I consider plein aire painters to be a blessed and hearty lot of individuals who trek the great outdoors with their entire studio on their backs. This time-honored tradition of seeking out the right outdoor location, setting up the easel and paints, capturing the view, making their artistic statement while surviving the elements, repacking it all back up and finally, hiking back to their studio with wet canvases, raw sunburns, bug bites and unexplainable joy in their hearts. Next month at this time, I too will experience this thrilling adventure in the central region of France. I was invited to teach two En Plein Air Masters Mentor Workshops in a 900 year old Chateau... and not a bad gig. The medieval castle sits atop a quintessential French country village with rolling hills, stone bridges and vineyards galore. Needless to say, I'm jazzed. Gathering my traveler's art supplies, I'm feeling the mounting excitement the French Impressionists must have had in preparing for their day in the country side. Their tedious prep work, however, was a bit more involved for them than it is for me. I can envision Cézanne and Pissarro mixing and filling small, skinned sacks (sheep testicles, actually) with oil pigments, lugging a backpack filled with a Jullian easel, bread and wine. Sad to say, I am not as rugged as those visionaries. I am spoiled with contemporary conveniences and will be thankfully enjoying the creature comforts of the castle staff, modern technology for computers, digital cameras

and chauffeured transportation. In lieu of oil, my medium of choice is Holbein Acryla acrylic. I have replaced my traditional heavy wooden Jullian easel with a lightweight aluminum Soltek easel. Get this product! It's worth every penny. You deserve it. It is about time an intelligent solution and beautifully engineered product became available for us modern souls. I could go on and on about it's many advantages, but all I need to know is that it's lightweight, fits in its own backpack, sets up in 30 seconds (really) and I'm painting within a minute. Breaking down is just as fast and easy. With this efficient system, I don't hesitate when the "plein aire" mood strikes me. For fear of sounding like an endorsement (and I'm not) I also recommend another intelligent, warrior product - The Collapsible Plein Aire Painters Umbrella and Clamp from PK Studios. It folds down small, opens extra large, has a rugged, adjustable gooseneck clamp, windproof features, reflective white outside and black underside. These two modern products might be another reason plein aire painting is on the rise again. Umbrella - go to <http://www.pkorch.com> (see enclosed pdf and photo) If you too have discovered new and worthwhile products, let me know and I'll pass them on in my next message.

And finally, in light of world news headlines, this quote has occurred to me: "We are put here on this earth not to see through each other, but to see each other through." Just staying positive!

Need to contact me directly? Best email address is RBurridgepaints@aol.com

Happy painting!

Love, peace and friendship,

Bob