

'CELEBRATING GOD'S CREATION'

By Vicki Stavig

We're surrounded by it, and yet we don't see it—the brilliant colors of leaves in the fall, the magnificent glow of a sunset, the snowy banks along a creek. We know it's there, but we take it for granted, as we go about our busy lives. And we feel it—sun shining on our faces, wind blowing through our hair, crashing waves sending a misty bouquet of shimmering water through the air. Mother Nature beckons us to enjoy and appreciate the wonders she has to offer, but all too often we ignore those offerings, as we go about our busy lives.

We're too plugged in—to our cell phones, to our headphones, and to the thoughts swirling through our heads—to take in the beauty of the world around us. Thankfully, there are others, who have dedicated their lives to capturing the mystical, magnificent natural wonders of the world with paint, so that we might not only see what they have seen but, hopefully, feel what they felt, when they stood on that shore, walked through that forest, or sat on that rocky cliff.

Their renderings can be exciting or soothing, brilliantly colored or muted, but what they have in common is the ability to move us—emotionally and mentally—taking us out of the four walls that surround us and placing us on that mountain, or in that field.

Landscape artists love nothing more than being outside, surrounded by the sights, sounds, and smells of nature. They are not easily deterred from their quests; mosquitoes and freezing temperatures be damned, they will head out, intent on painting what moves them, in hopes that it will move us, too.

We are pleased to share with you the works of six wonderful landscapists: John Burton, Ross Buckland, Steven Curry, Kaye Franklin, Lanny Grant, and Deborah Paris. While their styles—and the scenes they capture—vary, their message does not: Let me share with you the wonder of the great outdoors.

We invite you to sit back and let them lead you to—and through—their special places.



Evening Outlook by Steve Curry



Spring Moonrise by Deborah Paris



Close Friends by Ross Buckland



Faith (All is Well) by John Burton



Headwaters Fremont Creek by Lanny Grant



Quiet Place by Kaye Franklin

Vicki Stavig is editor of *Art of the West*.

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Sunset Cruise, oil, 18" by 24"

“I come from an art family and have always admired the beauty of the golden age of California landscape painters,” says California artist Steven Curry. “I feel that a landscape can appeal to a broader audience versus other genres, such as still life or figure/portrait work; there is such diversity and flexibility of the category. It can be any location, any time of day or night, any season or aspect of weather. You also can stylize and design a composition with far more visual freedom versus specific rigid still elements, or aspects of human anatomy.”

“The most difficult aspect of landscape painting is the changing lighting of plein aire painting. If you are banging out a small size—like an 8" by 10"—it's pretty manageable, despite clouds and lighting changing overhead, or simply losing daylight. I still prefer not being rushed and like a non-restricted time of studio work, allowing the proper amount of time to refine and polish a finished piece.”

“I feel a good landscape should engage the viewer on a deeper level, to keep analyzing and going back to a piece. Elements for me are a beautiful palette of harmonized color, luminance of light, a strong composition, great brushwork with wonderful edges, and draftsmanship.”

“I think each piece will speak differently to each viewer, but I would hope the painting would draw them in, almost mesmerizing them, taking them to another place. It should give them a joy similar to seeing a great performance, enjoying a beautiful wine, or listening to great music—a painting that can give continuous joy over and over, speaking to each individual viewer in its own way.”



Around the Corner, oil, 30" by 24"