

PASADENA STAR-NEWS

The seaside comes to Pasadena

Artists' works on display under theme 'Preserving Southern California's Coastline'

By Michelle J. Mills Staff Writer

American Legacy Fine Arts in Pasadena is giving environmental issues a breath of fresh air with its exhibit, "Preserving Southern California's Coastline," which opens Saturday.

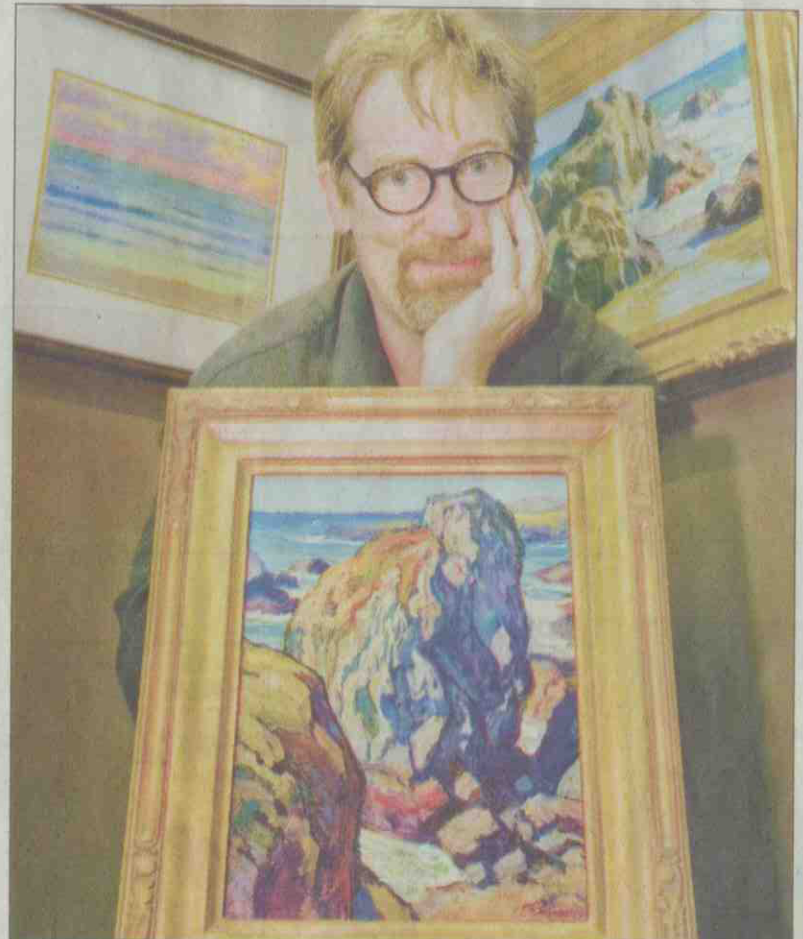
There will be more than 25 paintings by eight plein air artists on display with the hopes of drawing attention to the need of preserving these golden climes for future generations.

"What I'm hoping is that when people see landscapes, they'll see the beauty in nature and how full of life it is," said artist Tim Solliday. The sight makes "you want to protect it," he said.

The Altadena artist said he is weary of environmental organizations that seek money for political causes and wants the public to look to plein air artists like himself, who "are driven by the beauty of nature." He says people need to be personally responsible when they go out in nature and not leave trash or destroy it in any way.

Solliday will be displaying several pieces in the show. He works in oil, watercolor and pastel. He spends two hours on location, and returns as necessary to capture the scene just right. He takes an hour to prepare and set up his tools before he begins to paint. If the scene is complex, he'll make a pencil drawing or, very occasionally, take a photograph.

"Most of the time I stay away from photography because with the landscapes, you are bringing back basically the hand of God," he said. "And contrary to modern teaching in schools where it's all about the



Walt Mancini Staff Photographer

Altadena artist Tim Solliday will be displaying some of his works at the "Preserving Southern California's Coastline" show in Pasadena.

artist, in landscape painting it's all about the scene and God and the elements and the spiritual thing that you get when you're looking at a landscape."

Solliday describes art as "a combination of physics and poetry," as the artist must have the ability to draw proportion, perspective and light blended with the life and romance

of nature. Adding to this is struggle, which he believes makes an artist's work better and more mature.

But before all of this, an "artist's eye" is key. Solliday says a true artist looks not only for an aesthetic scene that appeals to him, but for a view that will appeal to the masses.

"If art doesn't have a universal appeal, I think you're wasting your time," Solliday said.

Good art sparks our creative nature, he said. When a society stops having passion and creativity, it begins to suffer.

"I think in modern life, we sell art short in its significance for the society at large," Solliday said.

"When art becomes so unfamiliar to the masses, when it has very little to do with the public, then it loses something. Art should add to society; it should give people something to go to and say, 'I'd like to aspire to that.' That's why landscapes are so powerful; they're inspiring."

Eaton Canyon, with its mountains, trees and water, remains a favorite spot for Solliday to set up shop, although he has been drawn to the Southwest recently, particularly the stunning cliffs in Arizona and New Mexico. This affection for precipices is carried into his coastline works.

"There's so many beautiful things in Laguna Beach," Solliday said.

"You get up on top of the cliffs in Laguna and look down at the sea or you go down to the sea and look back up at the cliffs."

Solliday's father was a technical illustrator for McDonnell Douglas; his dad's love for drawing was handed down, as by age 5, Solliday knew his path in life. He often got in trouble at school for drawing

PRESERVING SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S COASTLINE
Opens Saturday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturdays and by appointment, through July 24
American Legacy Fine Arts
949 Linda Vista Ave.
Pasadena
Free
626-577-7733
www.americanlegacyfinearts.com, www.timsollidayfineart.com
Opening reception 5:30-7:30 p.m. Saturday. Free.

during class; although his teachers chided him, they also recognized his talent and encouraged it. He later spent six years studying with Theodore Lukits.

Aside from his own pieces, Solliday has worked as a billboard painter and a book illustrator.

In his free time, Solliday is a big reader, especially of art books and artist biographies. His 10-year-old daughter and 18-year-old son sometimes sit for his paintings.

"It's always good to have a live model," he said. "There's certain curves that you don't see as well when you're looking at a photograph."

Solliday also has paintings currently on display at the "Prix de West Invitational Art Exhibition and Sale" at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City through Sept. 6.

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