

Laguna Beach Plein Air

Various locations, October 7-15

A LITTLE OVER a century ago, a burgeoning colony of plein-air painters began populating Laguna Beach, so enraptured were they by its unparalleled beauty and light. Today the picturesque Southern California town continues to

attract artists from near and far, repeatedly dazzling even local painters like Michael Obermeyer. This month he and 34 other prominent artists celebrate the city's artistic legacy in an annual invitational presented by the Laguna Plein

Air Painters Association. The nine-day festivities begin on Saturday, October 7, when the artists fan out to portray Laguna's lush, seven-mile stretch of sand and sea. Works created during the weeklong paint-out are displayed in an art show and sale on October 14 and 15 at Tivoli Too.

Obermeyer, a Collectors' Choice award-winner last year, has participated in every LPAPA invitational since it began 19 years ago. "I'm always surprising myself by what I paint," says the artist, crediting the scenic variety around his home city, from Laguna's surf culture to its dramatic cliffs, secluded coves, and singular views from Top of the World, a park overlooking the city. "I think I've covered every area here," he adds, "but it's always from a different angle and light."

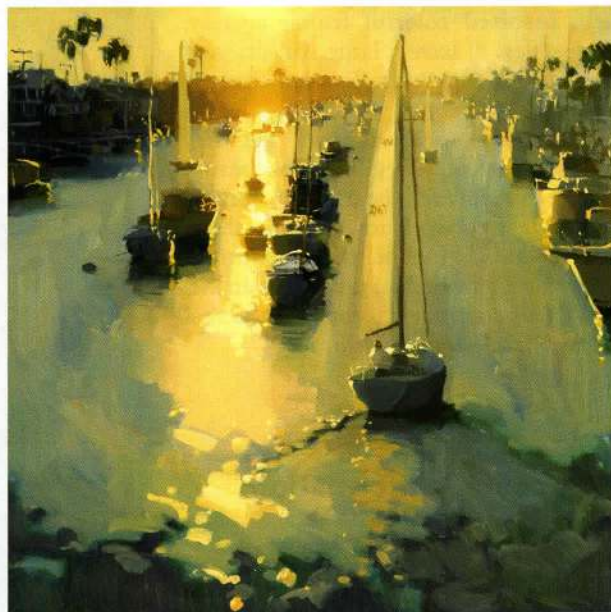
While a number of the participants hail from California, many others travel to the show from around the country, including Suzie Baker, Jennifer Diehl,



Jim McVicker, *Morning at Main Beach*, oil, 24 x 40.



Peggi Kroll-Roberts, *Laguna Lawn Bowling*, gouache, 8 x 11.



Jennifer Diehl, *Return at Sunset*, oil, 20 x 20.



Michael Obermeyer, Austerville, oil, 20 x 24.

John P. Lasater IV, and Patrick Saunders. “We only have 35 spots, so it’s a very competitive event, and we try to bring in at least four new artists each year,” says Rosemary Swimm, executive director of LPAPA. Joining the group and painting in the area for the first time is Stephanie Hartshorn of Denver, CO. In homage to her former career in architecture, the artist often features buildings in her landscape paintings, and she suspects that Crystal Cove’s colorful beach cottages will crop up on her canvases. “I look for subject matter that has character,” she says. “A lot of these beach homes are weathered, and so many families return to them each year. Those things make me happy as I paint.”

On Sunday, October 8, at 2 p.m., the artists assemble in Heisler Park for the popular Quick Draw, when they race to complete a plein-air masterpiece in two hours. Once the time is up, the public is invited to an artists’ reception at Festival of Arts, where framed Quick Draw paintings are on view and for sale. Throughout the ensuing week, artists’ demonstrations and educational activities help promote the city’s plein-air painting heritage, and passers-by are encouraged to mingle with the artists as they paint along the beaches, in the canyons, and throughout downtown Laguna.

Award-winning works are announced during a ticketed Collectors Gala from 7 to 10:30 p.m. on Saturday, October 14,

when guests can view and purchase all of the fresh plein-air works. Each artist also contributes one painting to the sale that they created before the event. (Paintings shown here are representative of the artists’ works.) The sale opens to the public on Sunday at 10 a.m.
—Kim Agricola

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www.lagunapleinair.org

See more work at www.southwestart.com/events/lpapa-oct2017.