

# ARTS REVIEW

Wilmette Arts Guild... to inform, stimulate, inspire

Journeys Vol 1, Fall 2019



Sunsplash by Judith Edelman



# A Visit to China

by Julie Ressler

## A Gift from Natalia Ragsdale and Annick Duryee

A journey begins as a seed placed in the fertile soul that nurtures and brings it to the surface of actuality. Lawrence Durrell- "Journeys, like artists are born and not made. A thousand differing circumstances contribute to them, few of them willed or determined by the will – whatever we may think. They flower spontaneously out of the demands of our nature and the best of them lead us not only outward in space, but inward as well. Travel can be one of the most rewarding forms of introspection."

A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step after the seed desire has fallen onto fertile soil of consciousness and opportunity. This is not a spur of the moment happening like a trip or an indulgence like a vacation. There is purpose. This may start unexpectedly but its need has existed for a long time. There is the need and the possibility of fulfillment. We have to look for whatever it is and all the great minds say that it is ourselves we seek, our true selves.

How could I go to sleep with all of Shanghai there for me? I could see the Bund and Wampo River from my window and the memories and stories called me to come



The Bund in Shanghai China



into the night. That so many others had seen these same lights was irrelevant to me, I had not.

My Aunt's most romantic love affair might have begun in this same window. The brochure said that many young officers had been quartered here at the Shanghai-Broadway Mansions not just at the famous Cathay Hotel just down the road. Now it is the Peace Hotel. Her handsome young officer might have stood in this very window holding her shoulders as they watched the Wampo River slip by. They had bought so many flowers. They used old bottles and pitchers as vases in hopes of lasting a while longer. Of course they saw nothing but their desire written in their future. The ocean liner on which her father had spared no expense to buy her a berth would leave in the morning. She would miss the launch curled in the arms of this young officer. They would take the flowers to the hospital in the morning and then start working frantically to undo what they had done. She would have a memory so vivid that sixty years later her papery cheeks would pink in recollection. Her father would lose both the money he spent and the money he would have to spend to buy her a ticket on the next one. The last boat to leave before the Japanese arrived! We had all been enchanted as this speckled, lumpy gray haired, skunk streaked bird of an old lady, this wrinkled octogenarian shared with the family Christmas table a glimpse of her precious youth.

My very beautiful, slender, young daughter with her dark eyes and hair had without intention triggered the memory of this evening. She put on the scarlet satin cheongsam thinking it looked festive. The old lady clapped her hands with joy at the sight, "Oh Anna, what a time I had wearing that dress!" She shyly asked if we would like to hear about that dress?

We asked if her young officer ever found her again? Yes, he had called her home in Philadelphia but she had been in India with the Red Cross. She sent a letter to the address he left, but he had moved to Venezuela. He called again, but she was in New Mexico. This call was to say that he was going home to England and if she was ever near Reading she should call up. A few years after the war she did and spoke to his wife. He was not at home but she would give him the message and he could call her at her hotel. She went out with friends that night but there wasn't a message. My father always said, "Natalia is a fool for men." It seemed to me that she was just ahead of her time. I did come to agree with him over time. She never married.

I have been going to go to China for fifty-three years. "What took you so long?" my startled friend asks? Well there was growing up, having a large family, preparing the psychic soil, so to speak. There was also a very hostile political climate for decades that we have forgotten about. "Well it certainly wasn't a priority if it took that long!" A voice intrudes. "Oh but it was!" It was the dream that sustained me through all the diapers and sore throats, failed geometry tests, spats and fugues.



Garden of Scholar Rocks in the Forbidden City, Beijing, China

# A Visit to China

by Julie Ressler



Everyone else in the world got to go it seemed to me. My husband was sent by his company and I lost my mind with envy for a time. I sat on the back porch watching the sun set each day in the west for the few weeks he was gone. I told my children that the sun has gone to China like your Daddy. I thought that everyone would go to China before I did. This was the early 1970's when Americans did not go to China. There would be Macdonald's arches over the Forbidden City before I saw it! I wasn't wrong but it didn't matter. Our guide informed us that it was Macdonalds that was making the Chinese fat! I didn't see very many fat Chinese, but I did see a lot of Macdonalds.

When he went a second time. I threw such a fit! I put every Chinese thing in the house up in the attic, including the soy sauce that was actually Japanese, I cried perpetually for weeks, vowed to never be born a woman again. Then he was asked to speak about his trips and he wouldn't do it. Waste.. the fates wasted that trip on him! I could speak about China and I hadn't even gone!

This "going" began when I was two years old and went to stay with my Grandmother and my aunts while my mother was sick with some sort of female problems. I have been told that I spent hours in front of the curio cabinet sitting on my haunches with my hands folded behind my back. I don't remember the hours but I do remember the objects as though it were yesterday. Particularly two fist sized pearl shells that had been elaborately carved into a mountain and valley scene with a small man carrying his burden up the mountain. He never got to the top. His struggle was always happening. The mountains are always there and the path is prescribed. He must leave the village and toil up and up. There were some beautiful gray painted snuff bottles and cinnabar boxes. Now the boxes are plastic or metal with a coating but these were carved wood and lacquer. There were several beautiful fans as well.

My Russian grandmother had grown up in China, mostly in Tientsin. She had met my grandfather when he moved next door. The new boy from the US and the little Russian girl became fast friends that turned into a marriage that lasted decades until he dropped dead of a stroke one morning upstairs in this same house which made me love China. In Tientsin I went driving around the English and the Russian Quarter. For the size of the streets and the houses and the size of the lives, it seemed to me to have taken up a disproportionately large part of my imagination. This is where I got the idea that somehow my family was as connected with China as with the United States. I have since learned the complete illusion and fantasy of that statement but the psychological impression remains. Our existence is inconsequential to China and our connection is complete illusion.

On my trip I met an anthropologist who had been born in Beijing. He went and found his family home and felt that some part of him was more complete from having seen where he had been born. Is that it? Completion?

My dear friend Suanne Wong when I told her that I was going to China warned me, "Because you are from the West, you will not understand two things that are very important. The first is that China is so old and the second is that China is so big." As my trip unfolded I quoted her many times and surely those were the most true things that I had ever been told. She also said that I would be glad to come home. This was not exactly true since I needed more time to see, but I knew what she meant. My home is the United States. I am truly more American for having been in China. For more than the shape of my eyes or the color of my skin, I would never be Chinese and China would never be my home, no matter what parts of it I would understand or admire. While there I would always be a stranger in a strange land, no matter how courteously treated. The differences brought the similarities into clearer focus. I went outward so far that I came inward.

What she told me did give me a perspective about Chinese history. China is so old that perhaps it suffers as a culture some of the attributes of elderly people, self-absorption and an inflated sense of the importance of their opinions - a certain grandiosity. They have seen and endured so much that they don't feel outrage or compassion. That requires a sense of the unique. What is unique over time? It will all pass. Life will be good and then it will be bad. Why get excited when things are bound to change? China will always be there. It may be Han or Manchu. It may be Communist or Imperial, perhaps the quintessence of capitalistic, but it will always be China and each small, human unit is but a blip on the great screen of its existence. To be Chinese is special in and of itself. Like the Jews in Israel, each Chinese has become part of the stream of history simply by his existence. This is not a small understanding.



Snake Wine

The size of China is astounding along with the diversities of cultures represented. I imagine this is more astounding to Europeans who live closely. We Americans do have the vast plains of the mid-west and the Rocky Mountains. All of the United States could fit into China twice. What was it I expected? Transformation? Transcendence? Of what and to what? The west is always going to the East. Marco Polo, Julie Ressler, we all want to go. The exotic will alter what we know. Spices and drugs and behaviors, a panorama of human possibility. There are more than a few references to the young in China that they must go west for variety and to quicken their sensibilities, refine their opinions.



# A Visit to China

by Julie Ressler

Would I be more worldly a better self, a happier self, more of my self? There has been a wave of "I survived China, just ..." books written by young Chinese. Many of the stories are affecting. The truth of their experiences lend this genre a special force. I have read a dozen in preparation for my trip. I knew that China's history was too large, the study for a lifetime. So I thought that I would seek a more intimate picture.

One of the guides told us that in school he had been taught to be an atheist. He agreed with me that only young people find this a viable philosophy. Then he said, he was always surprised to meet his teachers at the Buddhist temple on Sunday when he was forced to go with his parents! We saw a girl being instructed on the proper prayer rituals and looking as bored as most teenagers. Our guide said fiercely, "you see they make you do it!" "But 'they' make you do it everywhere!" I replied thinking of my own children.

Ah perspective, China would give one perspective on the confluence of human experience. The pure drabness of communism might well seem a relief after the gaud of all those palaces that Imperial China produced. There was no farther that decoration could go. There wasn't a square inch left to decorate or embellish. The black pants and the white shirt that every man and woman owned in modern China, the gray Mao jackets on both men and woman must have been a visual relief after the rags of poverty of so many and the gorgeous embroideries of the Imperial court. Now prosperity has brought wonderful costumes to see. Pink angora sweaters and tight black skirts and stiletto heels for climbing the Great Wall. Many colors for flying kites in Peoples' Square in Shanghai. China is visually on the rise again.



Annick Duryee at the Jade Buddha Temple, Shanghai, China

Unlike Marco Polo I was not expecting to see sights never seen by western man but to see sights I had seen only in my imagination. I had studied so hard that nothing seemed strange. In the four and five star hotels where we stayed in the western curtain blocked out the smell of tea and many discomforts. We could have been in Tampa. The sensation was more like testing memory, like visiting an old home. The lama who blessed my beads in Beijing's Lama Temple knew this. He looked upon me for a long time. The Chinese observers watched attentively. It didn't seem strange to me to be one of the very few western women there and certainly the only one alone.

4 To "travel widely in Concord" is a phrase that has been misused by anxious parents to keep the adventurer in us all checked and colored in the box. There is the mindset that has to smell the olives and see the markets. This phrase of course refers to ultimate knowing and mystical imagination and is so true, so true. However the more superficial but the infinite possibilities of life's flavors comes only in the foreign market, foreign to the traveler. Someone is always being at home and someone is travelling widely. Even though our tour was unlike any other, having been invited by the government, and far freer. There were so many times when I wanted to call out to stop the bus.. I need that picture. I have to go more slowly. I have to mull and wonder. I like to talk to people. I was ashamed at how many people spoke English and how few of us spoke Chinese. My grandmother who was fluent in both said English was far more difficult.



Boatman on the Li River

In all second hand experiences, the essence is missing, ie. The living wetness of Guilin. The impossibility of cleanliness in an old village. I hate to be told what to see and what to think and how fast to do it. I feel connected to other women. I know their lives will not be far from mine, just the trimmings the decorations and certainly the luxuries but we will want the same thing for our children and feel the same frustrations when our wills are thwarted. Most women have to work much harder than I do and I admire their energy and grace. The rhythms of our lives are interesting to me.

"Travel is a celebration of variety and simultaneously an affirmation of the universal." When I first started travelling in college, I was drawn by the distant and the exotic, but now I know that what I was really seeking was a sense of effortlessly dropping into alignment with the universe. It happens through the serendipitous events that are tossed up by the rhythm of the road... I'll wind up in a place that I didn't intend to go to but discover that is just where I wanted to be, had to be.

Abraham Maslow "When you are in accord with yourself it acts as a gravitational pull on others to join you in the synchronous swing of things. The road spontaneously ignites one to one encounters unlike any we know in our work-a-day life. The social dynamics of travel – anonymity, limited time, engaged curiosity, switched off competitive drive create a framework of commonality, not difference which makes for heartfelt intense interaction."

During these excursions inside the lives of others, I have this feeling of being swept along by events I've done nothing to make happen. I'm like riding a cosmic wave I haven't paddled into. The sense of union feels not strange but innately familiar, like something in me had known this before I hit the road. "underglimmer" as Basho said. The oneness of all things appears... Harmonic convergence

"When before the beauty of a sunset or the grandeur of a mountain you pause and say 'Ah!', you are participating in divinity." You can stop worrying about where you are going and participate in the rapture of the arrival. The Chinese proverb, "I traveled the world and found myself."

# Big Boy's Tour Commemorates the transcontinental railroad's 150th anniversary.



No. 4014 climbing Wyoming's Sherman Hill behind helper No. 4021, on June 25, 1949.

## Big Boy story began in 1940

The world's largest steam locomotives received an accidental nickname

By Steve Glischinski

R.H. Kindig



When Union Pacific 4-8-8-4 Big Boy No. 4014 takes to the rails again following restoration by Union Pacific, admirers of the huge machine would do well to remember two names: Otto Jabelmann and William Jeffers. It was Jeffers who, as president of Union Pacific in 1940, told Jabelmann's Research and Mechanical Standards Department to design and construct larger motive power to conquer the grades not of famed Sherman Hill in Wyoming, but the Wahsatch Mountains east of Ogden, Utah.

While the majority of UP's Overland Route from Omaha to the Southern Pacific interchange in Ogden was relatively grade free, the Wahsatch Mountains were a significant barrier, with eastbound



# Big Boy's Story

1.14 percent grades from Ogden to Wahsatch, Utah. Since the opening of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, UP designed larger and larger steam power to conquer the Wahsatch range. The Big Boy would be the culmination of those designs.

According to the seminal book "Big Boy" by the late William W. Kratville, the Research and Mechanical Standards Department was established in 1936 under Vice President Jabelmann. Jeffers order to Jabelmann was to develop a locomotive capable of pulling 3,600 tons over the Wahsatch unassisted. To do so, Kratville recounts, the locomotive would have to have 135,000 pounds of tractive effort and an adhesion factor of four. Engineers concluded to meet Jeffers demands would require an eight-wheeled articulated with four wheel lead and trailing trucks – thus the 4-8-8-4-wheel arrangement was born.

Within three months a design team was assembled with the builder, the American Locomotive Company, with UP fur-



**Team of men who helped restore the Big Boy**

nishing members of the Research and Mechanical Standards Department to assist. Because UP had accumulated a great deal of research data, the entire project only took about one year to complete: six months to design, fabricate and acquire parts, and another six months to build the first locomotive.

Union Pacific initially ordered 20 Big Boys from Alco at a cost of \$265,174 each. The engines were deliberately overdesigned. For example, they were built to run at speeds up to 80 mph, although they would never be moving freight at that speed. This was done to ensure that rotating parts, such as the rods, would not break in daily service.

While the new engines were being built, UP prepared for them. Bridges had to be rebuilt to handle their weight,

curves realigned, and new 135-foot turntables installed at servicing points. Heavier 130-pound rail was laid between Ogden and the Wahsatch summit. While the normal Big Boy haunt would be between Ogden and Evanston, Wyo., as World War II progressed, the Big Boys' operational territory was extended east from Evanston to Green River, Rawlins, Laramie, and Cheyenne. They were also cleared to operate between Salt Lake City and Pocatello, Idaho, and Salt Lake City and Los Angeles, although they likely never did.

Naming the new locomotive came by accident. While under construction, an Alco machinist chalked the name "Big Boy" on the smokebox of the first engine, No. 4000. The name stuck, although it was rumored that UP had considered naming the class "Wahsatch." The Big Boys were 132 feet long, roller bearing equipped, and weighed 1.2 million pounds.

No. 4000 was shipped dead via the Delaware & Hudson, New York Central, and Chicago & North Western to Council Bluffs, Iowa. A UP switch engine towed the engine across the Missouri River to Omaha Shops where it was officially accepted on Sept. 5, 1941. Later that month, No. 4000 was steamed up for the first time, and then put on display at Omaha Union Station. It traveled light to Council Bluffs for



**Forging ahead with Big Boy's restoration**

# Big Boy's Story

servicing, then back to Omaha to pick up a train of 100 empty Pacific Fruit Express reefers. The locomotive made several stops as it traveled west across Nebraska for water, fuel and crews, arriving in Cheyenne early the following day.

No. 4014, along with Big Boys' 4004 and 4016, was involved in a test against a three-unit diesel in April 1943 between Ogden and Evanston, Wyo. According to Kratville, on April 2, 1943, No. 4014 took 65 cars and 3,479 tons out of Ogden. All the way up the grade the throttle was open less than full, and yet No. 4014 accelerated at points on the grade from 1.8 to 4.5 mph per minute. A top speed of 42 mph was recorded on level track, while the minimum speed was 13 mph on a three-degree curve on a 1.14 percent grade. Following tests with the other two Big Boys and the diesels, the internal combustion power proved to do no better than the steam engines had, and the railroad concluded that steam would remain on the route.

As World War II raged in 1944, UP received authority from the War Production Board to build five more Big Boys, Nos. 4020-4024. They were identical to the other locomotives except for the use of heavier metals in the boilers and rods. One member of this class, No. 4023, survives on display in Omaha.

The last Big Boys operated on July 21, 1959. Most were stored operational until 1961. Unfortunately the first Big Boy, No. 4000, was scrapped in Cheyenne in August 1961, but eight other Big Boys escaped No. 4000's fate – almost one third of the fleet. No. 4014 was retired in December 1961 after 1,031,205 miles, and was presented to the Southern California Chapter of The Railway and Locomotive Historical Society. Since 1962 it has been displayed by the society in Pomona, Calif., but now will see new life, extending the Big Boy story begun by Jeffers and Jabelmann well into the 21st century.

## Big Boy's 2019 Tour



**Crowds gather to watch as Big Boy goes on tour.**

and put on display on the other side of the railroad at the Larry S. Provo Training Center, West Chicago.

Hundreds of people packed on to platforms and railroad crossings to see the Big Boy roll through. Many said the size and power of the train was what drew them out to see it.

Only 25 of these massive Big Boys trains were built. No. 4014, which was delivered to Union Pacific in 1941, was retired in 1961 and later restored to make trips around the country.

The train is one of only eight Big Boys still in existence today, and is the only one still operating.

It took Union Pacific five years to restore the world's largest steam locomotive, which dates back to the 1940s.

The world's largest operating steam locomotive made its way through the Chicago suburbs late in July, 2019.

The 133-foot-long Big Boy No. 4014 is part of Union Pacific's tour to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the First Trans-continental Railroad.

After coming to a stop in West Chicago, the massive train was taken off the tracks



**Julie Ressler poses next to a different Big Boy at the Forney Museum**



# The "Big Boy" and Louise

by Julie Ressler  
at the Forney Transportation Museum, Denver.

In many of the WAG Newsletters we have discussed "branding" and how it works in the art world. If you do a "drip" painting, it is



Louise Nevelson

your own, but everyone will see a "Jackson Pollock." If you crush a car, you will be creating a "Chamberlin." It is perfectly okay to do this, just don't appropriate the brand name also or like the famous forger, Beltracchi, you might go to jail.

At the Forney Transportation Museum in Denver, Colorado, I was mesmerized by the "Big Boy" steam engine. This fabulous behemoth (1,189,500 lbs loaded) made a decisive dif-



The "Big Boy" to Oil

ference in the World War II war effort. It was so imposing that it was thought to have helped demoralize the Germans! A connection



Louise Nevelson, Sky Cathedral

between the East Coast and the Pacific was critical to the war effort and this is what The "Big Boy" provided, doing the work of three smaller engines through the gap in the Wahsach Mountains at Laramie, Wyoming. My enthusiastic and knowledgeable guide was "Uncle Dave" who patiently endured my questions and photography for the entire morning.

When I walked through and around the "Big Boy," all I saw was ART! "Nevelsons"

everywhere! These arrangements of black objects derived their visual power from their usefulness and connection to each other. These stunning visuals were the braking system, the connectors, the massive wheels within wheels, the tires. Yes! This train had tires, steel tires... that would wear out and then have to be changed. All of it seemed thrilling and magical to me.



"The Big Boy" Exhaust



Uncle Dave Haus, Railroad Historian



The "Big Boy"

"Fierce-throated beauty! Launched o'er the prairies wide, across lakes, to the free mountain skies unspent and glad and strong" - Walt Whitman



The "Big Boy" Tire



# Laura's World

photos by Laura Rodriguez



Preparing tea



photo Jonathan Roob



WAG's Laura Rodriguez is the definition of a traveler. Unassuming but exacting, Laura has travelled the world since retiring from her nursing career. She visits and chronicals everywhere she goes with her wonderful photos. She goes everywhere. The photos on this page can only begin to impart the extent to her travels. Here we have images from India, Tibet, China, Italy, South America, the Middle East, Morocco, Butan...





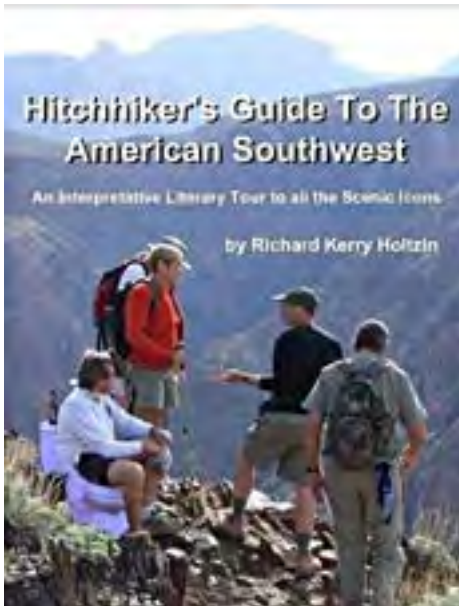
# Hitchhiking to Albuquerque

Spring 1962 by E.L. Traven



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After the series of hearings that morning, the guys who were being sent out from the LA county jail were lined up by the front desk. Any personal effects that had been confiscated were returned, mainly wallets, coats, whatever. One by one we were checked off the list and sent out the door. Ah, freedom! Felt ever so good. Bright sunshine, cool breeze, two o'clock. Time to hitchhiking. Right off I got a ride out to the freeway entrance. A good omen. First person to stop was a caddy from a local golf course, thought I was one of the guys who worked out there. No matter, he dropped me off at the entrance ramp to head towards Pomona. I had a filling station map, saw that I needed to get up as far as Bakersfield to catch route sixty six which would take me all the way to Albuquerque. About nine hundred miles. Wondered how long it would take. If I got lucky one ride would do it. Might take a few rides but at least I was on my way. Somehow I was still feeling lucky that the judge had let me off scot free after a weekend in the slammer.



Didn't take long for the next ride—a guy going all the way to Pomona. Friendly guy, talked about how he had come out from the Midwest back in the depression years, had found work in a factory, had a good life. When he pulled over to go into Pomona he asked if I had any money. "Well yeah", I said. "How much you got?" I pulled out my change "A dollar and twenty six cents." "Well you could use a little extra" he said, reaching into his pocket, pulled out two dollars and sixty cents. "Take this" he said "I wish I had more to give you, but this can help you on the way back to New Mexico. Don't buy a hamburger, get a jar of peanut butter and a loaf of bread---that will carry you." He waved me on as I got out the car, still reeling from the sense of good fortune to actually be on my way and gratitude to this benefactor.

Wasn't long before I got another ride, a young man on the way up to Victorville. A quiet guy but when I asked what he had been doing down in LA he told me that he had been to see his psychiatrist. I didn't press further but he went on to say that he was being treated for homosexuality. That was back in the sixties when such treatments were considered standard approach to guys who were attracted to other men. I wondered what success he was having but thought it best to let it go. When we got to Victorville I thanked him and got out to get on the road to next stop, Barstow. It was about six o'clock now, sun going down. I saw a young girl, maybe twelve or thirteen, walking across a bridge, probably going home to dinner. Had a sense of envy, envy of anyone having a home to go to, hav-

ing the evening to relax, have a shower, bed. No pressure to get to the next town much less go all the way to New Mexico. But I soon got another ride which took me into Barstow. It was dark now and getting chilly. I looked around for a vacant lot, a place to lie down and wait for morning. It was hard getting rides after dark and I didn't know what to do. It got a little colder, I knew that I wouldn't be comfortable sleeping out in a field. I got up the motivation to keep hitchhiking. Cars went whizzing by, not likely to get a look at you in time to stop even if they were inclined to do so. Then about nine o'clock a new Chevy stopped, there were three soldiers on the way to Needles. Hot damn! That would put me fight across the river from the Arizona border and it would be morning. No more trying to get a ride out there on a cold night. So on we rode, going down hill now until come early morning there we were in Needles.



# Hitchhiking to Albuquerque

Spring 1962 by E.L. Traven



The guys were friendly, liked to talk about their life in the military. We pulled into town before dawn .The driver said

“Here’s a waffle house, lets get some grub. Come on with us, we’ll stand you to a stack of pancakes.”

That was music to my ears. We had coffee and pancakes and I got on the road to cross the river, head on towards New Mexico. By now it was seven am and hot, I mean really hot. Like it wasn’t any fun standing out there on the road with my thumb out. Time went by , no luck for over an hour. Then a pick up stopped, an old guy and his wife with two dogs in the cab. “We’re only going as far as Kingman, but you can ride in the back of the truck if you want.” By then I was more than glad to be

going somewhere and not just standing out in the sun. I hopped in the back of the truck and off we went. By and by we pulled into a truck stop in Kingman. That was as far as they were going. I got back on the edge of the highway and put out my thumb. Cars went whizzing by, big trucks, how I envied them being on their way. Finally an old 1950 Ford pulled up, driver hops out and hollers “Hey are you Sam?” Well I guess I could be Sam as well as anybody. “Yeah, that’s me” I said. They were going to Flagstaff. Great! That was up in the mountains and only a few hours drive from Albuquerque. So there we were , tooling long; they are construction workers on the way to a job site in Flagstaff. Seems that some guy named Sam was supposed to have gone on ahead to the job site but his car had broken down, he had called back to the office and told them he would hitch hike. When these two guys started out their boss said “Be on the look out for Sam, he’ll be hitch hikin’” Sam was not someone they knew personally but apparently he was a heavy equipment operator who they needed at the job site. These two looked like maybe eighteen, nineteen-- a little rough around the edges but I was glad to be riding. We hadn’t gone more than thirty miles when there was a road block. Cops stopped every car, made everyone get out, checked each one’s ID. I showed them my fake drivers license which had the name Ed Martin. Cop looked at each ID and read out the name. We got back in the car headed on down the road, The two guys were kind of quiet then one said “Well, it’s a good thing we didn’t take Mitch with us”, the other one said “Yeah, that’s for sure!” Sounded ominous. “Who’s Mitch?” I asked. “He is the guy they were lookin’ for.” Turns out that Mitch was wanted for murder back in LA . Then the drivers said “Thought your name was Sam”, He seemed a little uncomfortable about it. “Well its actually Edgar,” I said but everybody calls me Sam. They seemed accept that I wasn’t the Sam they had expected but let it go. So that’s the company I was in. Didn’t get much information from them but sounded like they were living a hardscrabble life The miles flew by ,finally we got to Flagstaff. They pulled into a station to gas up, I hopped out and said” thanks”. I disappeared into the rest room and when I came out they were gone. I knew was that I was in Flagstaff and maybe, just maybe I could get to Albuquerque by the next day. If so that would only be a loss of two days of classes, easy enough to catch up and get back to normal life. That was a very cheerful thought. Still I was hungry, tired, and frankly scared, like how was I going to somehow make the last leg of that trip going from Flagstaff to Albuquerque?

Just then I saw a pick up truck with a load of furniture on the back. License plate New Mexico. It would be great if I could get a ride on that truck. Driver was a young man, maybe twenty five, clean cut, wore a cowboy hat. I asked him if he was going into New Mexico. Yes he was, en route to Santa Fe. Could I ride with him? “No “ he said, not unfriendly, but “I have a pregnant wife in the cab and I can’t take anyone with us.” “Well “ I asked “ could I ride in the back, just hold onto the furniture until we get to Albuquerque?” He looked doubtful. “ The thing is, I got a job in Albuquerque, if I show up by nine am tomorrow I am still on the job, but if I can’t make it that job is gone. I need that job, I got a house payment to make and I will be in a heap of hurt if’n I can’t show by nine am.” He seemed to understand. He went to the cab and spoke to his wife. Thank the Lord she agreed. He warned me that it would be cold back there going down the highway. I didn’t care, now I was set for a ride all the way into Albuquerque. I hopped up on back of the truck, held onto a dresser, and off we went. No room to sit down, just squat holding on to furniture. But if I could just stay on that truck I could actually get there this very night. Allelulia!



# El Callejón

## Zacatlán, Mexico

by Dick W. Davis  
photos by G.W. Olney



Let me tell you about the Day of the Dead in Zacatlan, Mexico

The Panteon, Zacatlan's cemetery, glowed in candlelight and was golden and aromatic being festooned in marigolds. Families seated themselves near graves which they had cleaned and cleared of weeds. Altars were decorated with photos, mementos and favorite foods of their departed loved ones. The sky was dark, contrasting with the candles glowing, as if they were souls. It was late evening, November 1, Day of the Dead.

Raul and I walked together along the winding paths of the Panteon. We stopped from time to time, noted the decorated altars, the care families took in adorning graves, sometimes ancient family tombs, the living having a meal, eating pan muerto, a special bread, drinking tequila or downing a Victoria beer, but not in grief, cheerfully, respectfully, honoring their loved, remembered relative and partaking as if in company with the spirit of the departed.

Raul said to me, "It's the Callejon you should visit."

The Callejon was a pedestrianized alleyway, not wide enough for cars. It was crooked, it followed an old creek

bed that had been ignored when Zacatlan was laid out on a grid, but the meandering creek, overtime as the neighborhood grew, turned into a black-water, open sewer. Years later the town built a culvert, putting the sewer underground and leaving a dog-legged alley that no car could drive. The alley became walls of ugly graffiti and later artists transformed the graffiti walls into beautiful mosaic mural memories of the people and town as they had appeared in old photographs.

Raul explained, "Those murals are magic. Once a year, just after midnight the souls of the past return, the people in the murals leave the walls and visit their graves in the Panteon to be with their families."

"What a story," I said. "Visit the Callejon after midnight, see for yourself," Raul challenged, "unless you fear spirits."

Raul departed, saying he was tired but to meet in the morning at 7 a.m. for breakfast at my hotel. It was only 10 p.m., too early for my bedtime. We said good night.

I wandered passed the Panteon; the murals caressed by fog gave me an eerie sensation of two worlds, living and departed. I arrived at the plaza. Crowds had thinned. It was cool, foggy, "spirits," I thought, chuckled to myself. I walked to the barranca, the gorge that divides Zacatlan from the Sierra Norte Mountains. Fog rolled over the edge and drifted into the valley below. It moved slowly, as if an old woman with an invisible broom was pushing the fog.



1941 First Apple Festival

photo by George W. Olney

Lights, as if stars, could be seen in the distance. I knew I was looking at San Miguel de Tenango, a village town, across the gorge, not more than a km distance, but a 10-km drive.

The town bell chimed 12 midnight, alerting me. I had walked along the barranca, unknowingly, "maybe guided by a spirit;" at the thought, I laughed to myself, I was approaching Callejon. It was the hour Raul had mentioned.

Callejon was dark, shadowed, the alleyway entrance opened in the middle of a block; fog at my knees crept along the narrow path, moved with the flow of my presence. The murals Raul mentioned covered the walls, both sides of the Callejon. In the dark, I could make out the scenes taken from photographs of the town from the 20s, 30s, 40s, that were recreated on the walls. I rummaged in my shoulder bag, found my flashlight and pointed the light at the murals. Zacatlan, the town, buildings, cars, a bus, shops with names now changed, which I knew, buildings but often with different shops or

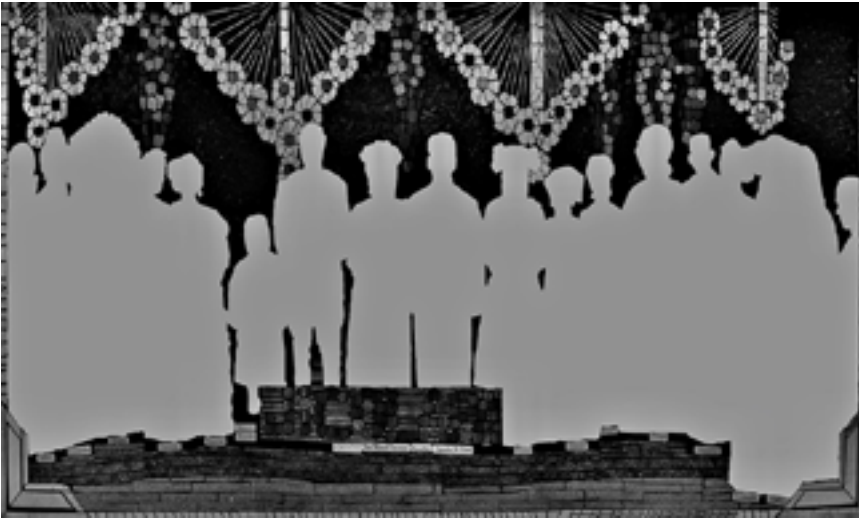


Photo, double exposure: George Olney



# El Callejón Zacatlán, Mexico

by Dick W. Davis  
photos by G.W. Olney



stores, the bank I recognized, now a hotel, but what was missing? People, all the people in the murals were gone, not a one, not the taco man, the priest in the plaza, or bus driver or the people on the bus, or on the street, or in the group photo of the women wearing traditional dresses for the first Apple Fair. The mural-photos.... were empty.

Long ago I heard that natives would not permit photographs as they feared the camera would capture their soul. It was true! Raul was right, images taken from a camera, transferred to a wall mural were alive in spirit on the wall and now were visiting their adorned graves in the Panteon.

Visitor: You must return November 1st at midnight, to see for yourself!

## La Leyenda de Callejón

by Dick Davis

Traducido por Martha Garibay

*El Panteón de Zacatlán brillaba dorado a la luz de las velas, adornado y aromático con flores de cempasúchil. Las familias se sentaban cerca de las tumbas que habían limpiado de malezas, los altares estaban decorados con fotos, recuerdos y comidas favoritas de sus seres queridos que habían partido, el cielo estaba oscuro, contrastando con las velas encendidas, como si fueran almas. Era la*

*tarde del 1 de noviembre del Día de los Muertos.*

*Raúl y yo caminamos juntos por los sinuosos caminos del Panteón, nos deteníamos de vez en cuando a observamos los altares decorados por las familias que cuidaban y adornaban las tumbas, muchas veces antiguas, los vivos comiendo pan de muerto, bebiendo tequila o una cerveza Victoria, pero no estaban en pena, permanecían alegres y respetuosos, honrando a sus seres queridos, recordando familiares y participando como si estuvieran en compañía del espíritu de los difuntos.*

*Caminamos un poco después del panteón y Raúl me dijo; hay un callejón que debes visitar, es peatonal, no lo suficientemente ancho para los autos, está torcido, sigue un antiguo lecho de un arroyo que había sido ignorado cuando Zacatlán estaba tendido en una cuadrícula, pero el serpenteante arroyo con el tiempo y a medida que el vecindario crecía se convirtió en agua negra y años más tarde la ciudad construyó el alcantarillado poniéndolo bajo tierra y dejando un callejón donde no podría circular ningún coche, el callejón entonces se convirtió en paredes de graffiti feas y posteriormente los artistas lo transforman en hermosos murales de mosaicos con recuerdos de la gente y la ciudad, tal como aparecían en fotografías antiguas.*

*Raúl me explicó; estos murales son mágicos, una vez al año, justo después de la medianoche regresan las almas del pasado y las personas en los murales abandonan las paredes y visitan sus tumbas en el panteón para estar con sus familias .*

*¡Qué historia le dije! y él me contestó ¡visita el callejón después de la me-*

*dianoche ve por ti mismo!, desafió Raúl, a menos que tengas miedo de los espíritus y Raúl se marchó diciendo que estaba cansado pero que nos reuniríamos a las 7 de la mañana para desayunar en mi hotel. Eran solo las 10 de la noche demasiado temprano para mi hora de dormir y decir buenas noches.*

*Vagué del Panteón a la plaza, las multitudes se habían reducido, hacía frío, estaba brumoso y pensé ¡los espíritus! y me reí entre dientes, caminé hasta la barranca, el desfiladero que separa a Zacatlán de las montañas de la Sierra Norte, la niebla rodó por el borde y se adentró en el valle, se movía lentamente como si una anciana con una escoba invisible estuviera empujando la niebla.*



# El Callejón Zacatlán, Mexico

by Dick W. Davis  
translation by Martha Garibay



*Las luces, como si fueran estrellas se podían ver en la distancia, sabía que estaba mirando San Miguel Tenango, un pueblo al otro lado del desfiladero, se veía a no más de un kilómetro de distancia y no a diez en automóvil.*

*Photo, double exposure: George Olney Las campanas de la ciudad sonaron en punto de las 12 de la noche alertandome sin saber que había caminado a lo largo de la barranca, tal vez guiado por un espíritu, al pensarlo me reía por dentro, me estaba acercando al callejón y era la hora en que Raúl me había mencionado.*

*El callejón estaba oscuro y sombrío, la entrada estaba en la mitad de la cuadra, la niebla en mis*

*rodillas se arrastraba por el estrecho sendero y se movía con el flujo de mi presencia, los murales que Raúl mencionó cubrían las paredes a ambos lados del callejón, en la oscuridad pude distinguir las escenas tomadas de las fotografías de la ciudad de los años 20, 30 y 40 que se recrearon en las paredes, revolví mi bolso y encontré mi linterna y apunté la luz hacia los murales y vi Zacatlán, la ciudad, edificios, automóviles, un autobús, tiendas con nombres ahora cambiados y que yo conocí, edificios que ahora son diferentes establecimientos, el banco ahora un hotel, pero ¡qué faltaba! ¡gente!, ¡todas las personas en los murales se habían ido!, ni uno, ni el taquero, ni el sacerdote en la plaza, ni el conductor y la gente del autobús, ni en la calle, ni en la foto del grupo de las mujeres vestidas en*

*trajes tradicionales para la primera Feria de la Manzana. Las fotos del mural.... estaban vacíos de gente.*

*Hace mucho tiempo escuché que los nativos no permitirían fotografías ya que temían que la cámara capturaré su alma y eso era cierto, Raúl tenía razón, las imágenes tomadas de una cámara transferidas a un mural en la pared estaban vivas en espíritu y ahora estaban visitando sus tumbas adornadas en el Panteón.*

*Visitante: tu debes regresar cada año el 1° de noviembre a medianoche, para verlo por ti mismo.*

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## Letter to the Editor

WABI-SABI strikes home!

In the Winter 2016 *Arts Review* (available online at [Arts Reviews on the WilmetteArtsGuild.org website](http://ArtsReviews.ontheWilmetteArtsGuild.org)) I read your article about Shibui, Wabi-Sabi, Kintsugi. I found it interesting but it really didn't resonate for me until recently. I've been visiting the Skokie Lagoon regularly, walking the paths there with my wife and my dog. On my first few visits I was very impressed with the obvious beauty of the lagoon, its wildlife and forest.

On subsequent visits, I had become accustomed to the surrounding beauty, and my attention began to wonder to the muddy banks of the river that passes along the path. There were raw tree roots, black from the mud, upended trees, fallen branches. I used to think this was "mess." Now it was interesting and much of it very beautiful. As we walked along next to the forest, the ground was littered with downed trees, fallen branches, cut logs that were never claimed. Again, the site no longer seemed unkempt, but rather, Wabi-Sabi.

Wabi-Sabi does have some physical characteristics, although relying on a mere physical description won't get it. It is the well-worn spirit manifest in an object. Wabi-Sabi refers to the beauty that is inherent in imperfection, impermanence, and incompleteness. It is solitude, aloneness.

*J. Ressler*



Wabi Sabi,  
by Barbara Schneider

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Editor: Julie Ressler

Printing: Central Avenue Printing

Graphics: Ted Ressler



# El Callejón Zacatlán, Mexico

by Dick W. Davis  
photos by G.W. Olney



The Process, from  
beginning to now!







# A Pilgrimage in Pastel

AN ARTIST HIKES 1,000 MILES OF THE “WAY OF ST. JAMES,”  
STOPPING EVERY FIVE MILES TO PAINT WHAT SHE SEES.

*By Sharon Bamber*

**Reprinted from the Pastel Journal, June 2019**

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# A Pilgrimage in Pastel

Sharon Bamber



Sharon Bamber and Dupon on the Camino

As I write this, my feet are killing me, my legs don't want to work properly, my back is aching, my shoulders are sore, and I'm so tired that it's hard to keep my eyes open. Still, I just can't seem to stop grinning. I'm 700 miles into a 1,000-mile hiking and painting expedition. I'm walking the famous Way of Saint James, alongside my donkey, Dupon, stopping to paint en plein air every five miles along the entire journey. I've walked across France, over the Pyrenees, and-as I write-I'm almost halfway across Northern Spain. I've been walking and painting non-stop for four exhausting and exhilarating months-with about two more months to go. I don't want the end to come.





# A Pilgrimage in Pastel

Sharon Bamber



“SINCE THE YEAR  
A.D. 950, PAINTERS,  
WRITERS AND POETS  
HAVE FELT THE PULL OF  
THIS JOURNEY. I’D BE  
WALKING AND PAINTING  
WHERE ANCIENT MAN  
PAINTED ON CAVE WALLS  
AND WHERE SOROLLA  
PAINTED SOME OF HIS  
GREATEST WORKS.”

## Thinking Big

This ambitious art expedition arose from a single question I posed to myself in December 2017: “Where am I heading with my art?” I had plunged, three years ago, into life as a full-time artist. Since then, I’d spent my time doing everything that an artist has to do to make a living. I was

18 loving it. Why then, did it feel that something was missing? I started to consider: What do I really want my creative life to look like?

After much soul-searching, I figured out that I needed to immerse myself into creative projects that could take me deep into the spirit of a place—projects that would keep me constantly in contact with nature. I determined that my true interest lies in expedition-based projects that can result not only in beautiful art, but also in an alternative way of communicating important stories. And I realized I craved a lifestyle that incorporates travel, which feeds my artistic and adventurous spirit. The idea of a slow-traveling expedition artist was born.

The next question became: Where to start? My mind swarmed with exciting ideas jostling for attention—until one serendipitous moment. While I was visiting Limoges, in France, I noticed bronze scallop shells set into the pathways. I discovered that the shells marked the Way of Saint James, a network of ancient paths in Western Europe, all of which lead to the shrine of Saint James the Apostle in Santiago De Compostela, Spain. The Spanish part of the route is also known as the Camino de Santiago.

The route has played a key role in religious and cultural exchanges, circulating ideas and art since the Middle Ages. I learned that, in 2018, the pathway would be celebrating 20 years as a UNESCO World Heritage Listing, coinciding with the European Year of Cultural Heritage.

I’d found my perfect first expedition— a route of enormous cultural significance, crying out to be painted. Since the year A.D. 950, painters, writers and poets have felt the pull of this journey. I’d be walking and painting where ancient man painted on cave walls and where Sorolla painted some of his greatest works.

I planned to start the journey from Le Puy en Velay in France, and walk 1,000 miles of the Way of Saint James to Santiago de Compostela. I made a goal to stop for painting time every five miles in order to capture the whole sense of place. As donkeys have been walking this route alongside pilgrims since the beginning, I decided that a donkey would be a perfect companion. I looked on the journey as an enormous challenge but, oh, the romance of it all!



The Romanesque town of Conques in Southern France was one of the early stops on my painting trek



# A Pilgrimage in Pastel

Sharon Bamber

## On the Trail

**DAY 1** The cobblestone streets of Le Puy en Velay sweep up through the old town to the cathedral, where the oldest pilgrimage route in France begins. My plan had been to paint the cathedral, but when I turned away to look at the streets, I saw tall, narrow buildings- their shutters alive with beautiful patterns of light and shade. By the time I'd set up to paint my first painting of my expedition, however, the light had changed completely. So frustrating! But also, strangely comforting, knowing that, Whatever was



I traveled with a donkey as a way to ease the transport of supplies. Dupon was also a good travel companion.

ahead of me, the familiar difficulties of plein air painting would be accompanying me.

**DAY2** Today my donkey, Dupon, and I shared the drinking tube of my water supply. His choice, not mine.

**DAY 6** A typical day: Up at 6 a.m., pack tent, breakfast, groom Dupon, hoofpick Dupon, load saddle, load bags, leave at 8 a.m. (if lucky),

19 walk, find painting location, tie Dupon on short tether to off-load, re-tie the long tether so he can graze, set up to paint, paint, talk to interested bystanders, pose for their photos, keep painting, take photos of painting, find Google location coordinates, take down art gear, pack, tie Dupon on short tether to re-load, groom if he has rolled, load, have a snack, then off again to the next painting location. I start in the dark and end in the dark. Exhausting, but an adventure!

**DAY 10** Today I crossed the Aubrac plateau with its stunning moorland, boulders,



## WHAT I PACKED

My painting gear had to be extremely sturdy to survive all types of weather and the rough terrain.

- Terry Ludwig pastels (270 sticks)
- Heilman pastel box
- Manfrotto tripod
- Joshua Been upright panel holder
- Easel Butler
- 9x12 Ampersand Pastelboards (200). To avoid carrying 200 boards, I arranged for packs to be shipped in advance that I could pick up at stops along the route.
- Under the Weather pop-up photopod
- One set of clothes plus one extra base-layer, 2 extra pairs of socks and underwear
- Two pairs of trail shoes
- Camping equipment (minimal)
- Radical Wheelie V Traveller.

The total weight of my supplies exceeded my original estimate and was getting well above the weight that I wanted Dupon to carry, so I purchased this hiking "trailer." With it, we were able to pull 80 pounds of gear. My husband pulled it up the really tough mountains, but otherwise we took turns either pulling the trailer or leading Dupon.



My setup for the trip included a palette with 270 pastels. Knowing that I'd confront not only diverse scenery but also a wide range of atmospheric conditions on the trail, I wanted to be prepared to address a lot of color variation.

# A Pilgrimage in Pastel

Sharon Bamber

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After an overnight stay at the convent above, I made a painting of the building and its ancient doors.

purple heather, rock walls and high altitude. I'll be on it for two or three days. I can feel the history. Pilgrims used to be attacked by wolves and bandits here, though thankfully not today. I found a wonderful spot here I painted a lonely farmhouse and its stone walls.

DAY 14 Dupon moves fast downhill. At times, too fast. I'm not a gazelle going downhill-more of a sit-down-and-shuffle type, but with a 400-pound donkey traveling behind you, it's just not possible to take that approach. So, away we went, down and down and over some crazy rutted and very bouldery sections. Yes. We made it, and no twisted ankles or loose saddlebags.

DAY 15 I found a little backstreet route through the old village. Swallows, gathered for migration, were still asleep. The only sound was the dip-clopping of Dupon. I felt a very emotional connection to the pilgrims who have passed here before me and welled with tears-- a moment promptly ruined when Dupon, looking for the best spot to eat, decided to drag me across the cobbled bridge and nearly knocked me into the river.

DAY 16 I had just started a painting of an old convent where I'd spent the night, when a nun asked me to do a painting of the original doors, which dated from A.D. 1060. So, I moved my setup and painted the doors instead, which made a lot of nuns very happy.



The scenery on the Way of Saint James includes mountain forests and streams, rolling hills, and charming old villages with cobblestone streets and medieval churches.



# A Pilgrimage in Pastel

Sharon Bamber

**DAY 22** Mindlessly painting within reach of Dupon. He wandered over, had a sniff of my pastels and, quick as a flash, a few disappeared into his mouth. Not your usual plein air problem! He soon spat them out again. The sticks were none the worse for wear, just a little damp.

**DAY 23** Noticed beautiful early morning light on some farm buildings. Part of a stone wall along the path had collapsed, giving me a perfect view. I was painting away when along came a tractor, forcing me to quickly pack up and move. I had just set up again when along came a van with two farmers, planning to rebuild the very wall that I was looking over. Unbelievably, they said they'd wait for me to finish. I love being in a country where everyone loves artists! Great to see them rebuilding the wall rather than just throwing up a fence. I'm in awe of the miles of dry-stone walls I see and wonder at how long it must have taken people to build them.

**DAY 55** The colors were very gray today-both the stone and the weather. One of the joys of plein air painting is having to adjust to conditions and color variation on a daily basis. A constant challenge.

**DAY 59** All of the moisture in the air today was messing with my usual painting technique. Normally I do a pastel underpainting, which I then wash with water. In these conditions, the pastel behaves differently, and the wash is taking too long to dry. I plan to try the next with no underpainting.

**DAY 67** I managed to get the start of my painting completely wrong. First time I've had to abandon a board altogether and start again.



I worked around an advancing tractor and onlooking farmers to paint this early morning scene near a collapsed stone wall

# A Pilgrimage in Pastel

Sharon Bamber

Just what I didn't need in the cold. It's freezing even with a hot water bottle stuffed up my jumper!

**DAY 90** I walked up and over the Alto de Perdon, stopping at the top to paint the sculpture, which consisted of silhouettes of pilgrims, including a few donkeys. It's an iconic Camino landmark and an emotional place to reach.

**DAY 102** Angry police officers stomped over to move Dupon and me along. As soon as they saw that I was painting, they let us stay and even came back at the end for a look. I'd love to have time to do the same painting twice, once pushing the colors and once not. I did experiment with the final few colors I'd yet to use in my palette-exciting! I stayed in an albergue (hostel) that has been open for pilgrims since A.D. 1182. I don't think it has changed much!

**DAY 117** Today I stood in the footsteps of Joaquin Sorolla and painted the same scene as his Catedral de Burgos en Invierno (Cathedral of Burgos in Winter). It was not hard to find the exact same spot, as very little has changed in over a century. I knew I wouldn't end up with anything as amazing as Sorolla's painting, and was prepared to be miserable and unsatisfied about it, but it turned out that the joy of the moment stripped away any concern about my result.

**DAY 122** I stopped at a nearby monastery. In a room off to the side of the chapel there were some wonderful paintings from the 15<sup>th</sup> century. In a small stone room next to them, there was an original vSorolla. The first that I'd ever seen in person and a total surprise. It made me cry.

## FUNDING AN EXPEDITION

I started a Kickstarter campaign to fund my expedition, and I'll be forever grateful to my backers. If you're considering crowdfunding as a resource for an artistic enterprise of your own, here are some pointers:

- Your idea should be one that you believe in with your whole being.
- Start planning at least six months before you launch a campaign.
- It's vital to communicate the idea clearly.
- Offer great value and tiered rewards.
- Identify interested groups and find the best ways to reach them and with the right message.
- Form a small "mastermind" group to help you in your efforts.
- Be prepared to work long hours during the campaign to keep up the communication with your target market.
- Ignore all your doubts and keep going!







I'd just been inside a magnificent cathedral, but when I stepped outside and saw these humble, old earth homes, I just had to paint them. A passing pilgrim remarked that it must be wonderful to see the world through the eyes of an artist-- to see beauty in things that others pass by. He said he'd try to look at things differently as he continued his journey. I was thrilled to paint in the footsteps of Joaquin Sorollo. I was able to set up at one of the same spots that inspired the Spanish master.

## A Portrait of a Place (and an Artist)

After months of walking and painting, I asked myself if the expedition was living up to my expectations. My answer? Well, yes, in a way. I had told myself that it would be challenging and wonderful, but I don't think I really knew what that meant. I certainly do now. It's far more than I ever expected--more exhausting, more exhilarating, more painful, more fulfilling and deeply, deeply satisfying. I'm giving everything I have, and I go through the gamut of emotions nearly every day. More than once, I've cried-- with pain, exhaustion, worry, joy, laughter. Nearly every evening, I'm so tired that I think I can't go on. Then, every morning I can't wait to get started again. And Dupon has stolen my heart.

As for my art, I've learned so much. Even though I haven't reached the end of the road yet, I know that what I have is much more than a collection of paintings. It's a body of work that, as I'd hoped, reveals the sense of this special place and tells the story of this ancient route as it is today. What I didn't expect was that the story of my own personal journey is also there to be seen, dancing through every painting. **Pastel Journal, June 2019.**

*Award-winning artist Sharon Bamber (sharonbamber.com), of British Columbia, was born in England, but officially became a Canadian citizen in 2014. She has spent much of her adult life traveling and working throughout Europe, Southeast Asia and Australasia. She 's a signature member of the Artists for Conservation and the Federation of Canadian Artists, and a juried member of the Society of Animal Artists.*

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# Postscript: Sharon Bamber and Julie Ressler

Hi Julie,

Thanks for getting in touch. Walking and painting the Way of Saint James was a wonderful, incredible, exhausting and extremely challenging experience - I'd certainly recommend it if you get the opportunity!

Dupon made the experience extra special. He stole my heart completely and every single memory is based on 'Dupon did such and such a thing at that place/on that day'.

I found him at a place called Ânes de Monédiès in the Lot region of France, not too far from Le Puy en Velay and he returned home to the same place. The donkeys there are really well cared for and much loved, so although it was unbelievably difficult to say goodbye to him, I knew he was returning to a fantastic home, with lots of donkey friends and a huge area of land to roam.

I had to start the journey at the beginning of September because the summer is too hot for donkeys. I knew this meant that I would still be walking over winter. Not ideal for me, but better for Dupon. Finding water, food and a good place for Dupon to stay every night was easy throughout the 500 miles in France. I stealth camped about 50% of the time in a field or woodland with Dupon and the other 50% in auberges/hostels which had fields for Dupon to stay in. Donkeys don't actually drink much (although they are fussy - the water has to taste good!) and they eat pretty much any vegetation. Grass grazing that horses need isn't the best for donkeys as they need rougher pasture, hedges, trees, all of which were plentiful in France.



Donkeys at Ânes de Monédiès

Finding the same thing for the next 500 miles in Spain was much harder. Of course, it was winter by the time we got to Spain, but in general it seemed that the Spanish had a very different idea of what good accommodation was for a donkey. Many times I was told that the albergues had a good place for donkeys, only to turn up and find that they expected him to stand all night on concrete, tied to a railing. No, that was not going to happen! So I'd have to walk on and find somewhere else to stay or camp.

24 Finding food was also more difficult and I had to gather food all day for him to eat at night. It was Christmas when we arrived at Burgos and I was concerned about food for him on the Meseta.

Crossing the Meseta while stopping to paint every 5 miles was going to take 18 days. I spoke to a local vet and asked about the availability of food and didn't get a satisfactory answer. I decided that it was time to ask Anes de Monedies to come and collect him. So I walked from Burgos to the end without Dupon. I was devastated to say goodbye, but I knew I had made the right decision for him.

I would walk through France again with Dupon in a heartbeat, but I would probably not go through Spain again, especially not in winter or summer. Maybe autumn and spring, but I don't know.

If you do decide to do it, I have to warn you that travelling with a donkey certainly adds a lot of work! I would say he added at least 2 hours of work at the beginning and end of each day, so that needs to be taken into account when planning. Also, I got a sort of donkey-related repetitive strain back injury, as you always have to walk on the left, therefore always slightly twisted in one direction. Also, you have to walk at donkey pace. Breathe, relax and go with the flow - you can't speed them up if they don't want to go any faster! It would have been a much easier journey to undertake without Dupon, but would it have been more rewarding? Absolutely not.

Anyway, I have lots of Dupon stories and could go on forever :) My greatest memory of the journey is standing with him, side by side, my arm draped around his neck as we both watched the sunrise. The connection I felt in that moment is something that I've never experienced before. I will treasure it forever.

I hope you get the chance to make the journey, it's an unforgettable experience.

Best regards,

Sharon

+++++

On 2019-08-03 14:44, Julie Ressler wrote:

OH THANK YOU SO MUCH for your generous and timely reply! Since my watercolors are not as weighty as your pastels, I think I would try the journey without a donkey or my dog! I am sure that parting with Dupon nearly cut your heart out but there is no doubt that you made the best decision. Ahhh the winter!!!!!! Goodness you are brave.

Donkey caption: Donkey's from Ânes de Monédiès. Over the centuries, the Pyrenean donkey was selected for its bravery and its agility on steep paths and cliffs.



# In the Beginning

*It's not what you look at that matters,  
it's what you see.* Henry David Thoreau

by Julie Ressler



J.E. Liotard, "A Frankish Woman and Her Servant." (1750) A.K.A. "Cooooool Shoes!"



Penelope Knight Rodriguez has been selling her original greeting card designs since she was six years old.



My love of art came on a rainy, boring Sunday afternoon when I was about three years old. I found my mother's 1940's red lipstick just sitting on her dressing table. Oh it looked so good! I put it in my pocket. Later I went slowly wandering through our big old house in search of "something to do." One of my favorite rooms was the dining room with its white on white flocked wallpaper. Hmm.....it just seemed the thing to do to pull out that red lipstick and go around the designs...carefully. At first it was the tiniest mark, barely a scratch but then I saw how really good it looked and went around more and more. It was very beautiful! The coming storm never entered my mind. Shortly thereafter I discovered that "art" could really perk up a boring day. The screaming was amazing. My father's uncontrolled laughter caused the tremendous fury to be turned on him and I just stood there with my hands behind my back like a good girl watching the drama unfold. The next morning a large box of Crayola 48s and a large pad of newsprint appeared in my life and it's never been the same.

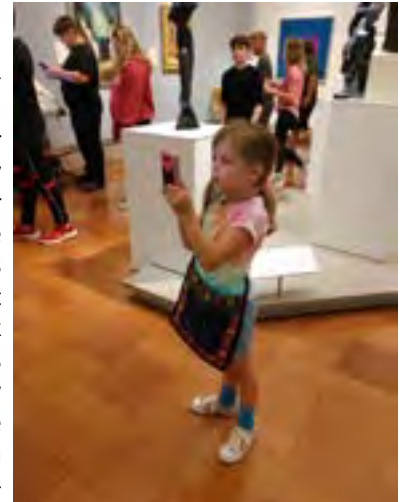
Art can really spark up your day!

## Introducing Young People to Fine Art

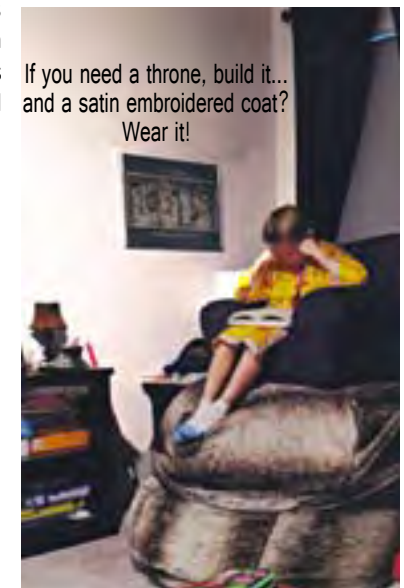
Old cell phones are wonderful cameras that take images that can immediately be printed using almost any computer. Teaching composition and getting the young to really look at what they are seeing is so much easier with this tool than anything else .. They can then cut and paste these images into their diaries at home. "They love it!" is everything.

Corie enjoyed the costumes and dress up. However at the sight of two English porcelain dogs, she whipped out her sketch book from her satchel and sat drawing them for quite a long time. The Nelson Atkins in Kansas City is a very comfortable place to visit with lots of sitting spaces and so much to see.

Parker brought his sketch book with him from North Carolina and showed it to absolutely everyone at the Art Institute of Chicago! I let go of his hand for a second to sign a form at the Front Desk. I turned around. There he was sitting on the floor in the middle of the main lobby of the Art Institute with a VERY famous artist! He was explaining his sketch book! The famous artist was listening attentively, nodding and pointing. I walked over and looked on as they talked. Smiles all around...The great man said, "Parker, don't ever lose or throw away these drawings. When you are thirty-five, they will pay you a FORTUNE for them." We all laughed and we went on our way.



Corinne Sophia Ressler, photographing "Cooooool Shoes" at the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City



If you need a throne, build it...  
and a satin embroidered coat?  
Wear it!



Parker Henry Sanko  
Art Institute of Chicago



# Anita Willets-Burnham

Winnetka Artist and World Traveller (1880-1958)

The North Shore's champion tourist from the pre-airline era may have been Anita Willets-Burnham of Winnetka. She didn't travel more miles than everyone else, but she sure knew how to get around on a tight budget, sketching and painting pictures wherever she went. After seeing Europe with her husband and four children in 1921-22 and then taking the same clan around the world in 1928-30, she chronicled their adventures in the book *Round the World 011 a Penny*.

On their first trip to Europe, their children ranged from nine months to 13 years old. On their second trip, they crossed the Pacific and made their way from Japan through China and India to the Middle East and Europe. They made their trips affordable by renting out their home in Winnetka while they were away. They learned how to find inexpensive lodging and split meals for five among the six of them. Willets-Burnham said the family's expenses during their circumnavigation came to \$2 a day per person.

Willets-Burnham's advice for travelers included these tips: Wear a cape. "What is worn under a cape is nobody's business." Learn how to communicate through gestures. "I turned actress, and felt like a lady with a hundred faces." Don't be afraid of losing your way. "If you want to see a city properly, get lost in it." Bring art supplies. "A paint box - a remedy for nerves, a substitute for adjectives." Travel light, "Even the burden of one suitcase disturbed me. Why be a human truck horse?" And bring along your children. "Families are assets, and if you take one along you are always home."

Willets-Burnham came out of her journeys with some of the same feelings modern travelers continue to seek - a feeling of warmth toward the rest of the human race. "Travel does something to you," she wrote. "It has made me feel that the world is mine; I love it all." **-Text from North Shore Magazine**

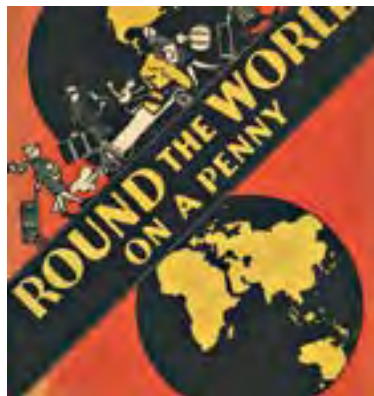


Exhibit and sale sponsored by Winnetka Historical Society at North Shore Art League November 1, 2019

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Anita's House and Studio on Tower Road, Winnetka, IL





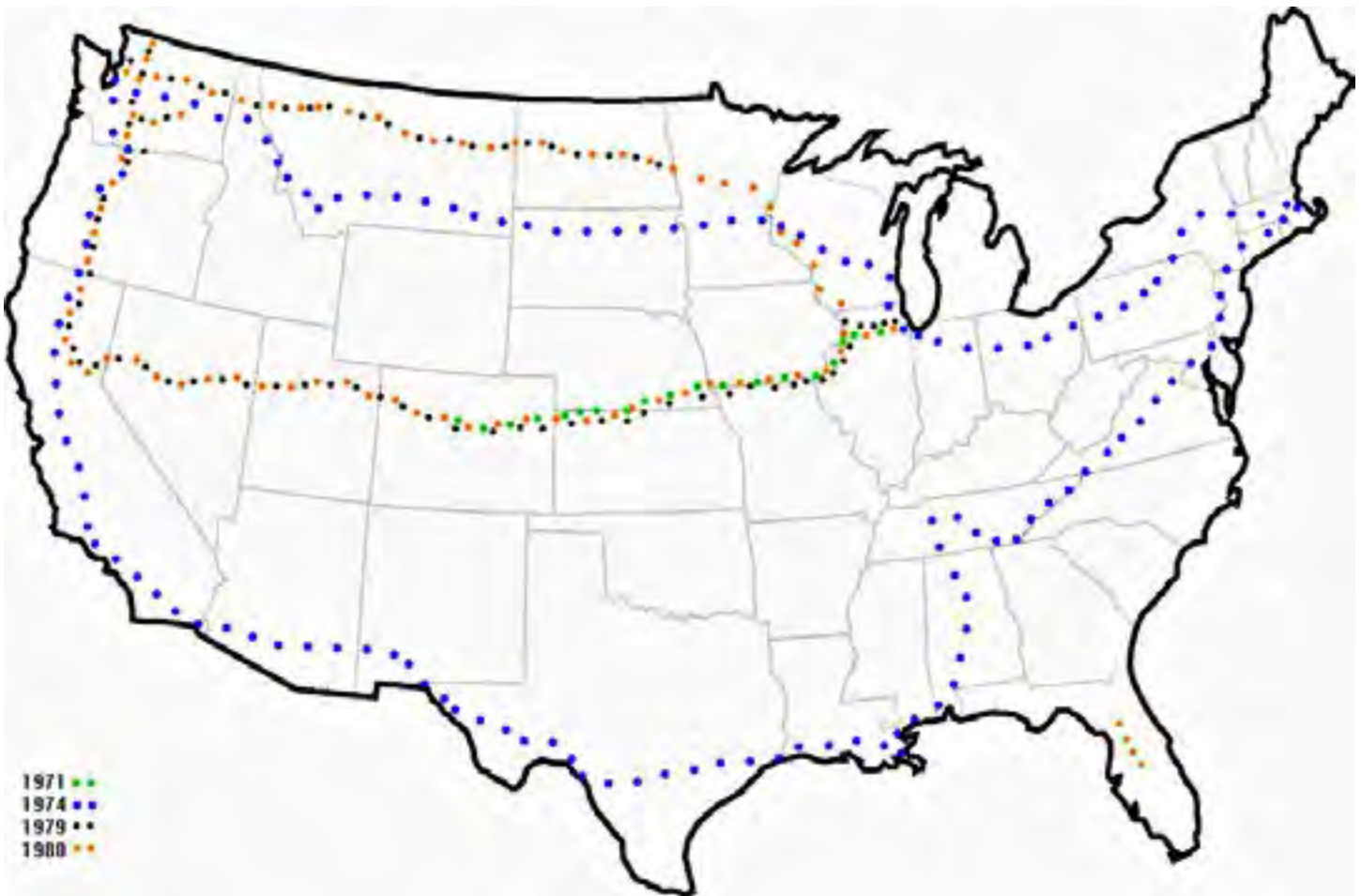


Freight lines ridden: Burlington Northern, Denver and Rio Grande Western, Southern Pacific, Milwaukee Road, Western Pacific, Union Pacific, Louisville and Nashville, Seaboard Coast Line, Southern, Penn Central, Erie Lackawanna, Delaware and Hudson, Boston and Maine.

#### THE JOURNEY

My introduction to train-hopping took place in August of 1971 on a Denver to Chicago freight train. Alone in a boxcar, I watched the flickering lights of the prairie towns shimmer like grounded galaxies, appearing and disappearing as the train rumbled through the warm Midwestern night. During a stop in a Galesburg, Illinois train yard, a soot-blackened face emerged from the darkness and asked, in voice caked with dust, about the destination of the train. It was a brief moment between a row of freight cars but one that stuck in my memory. The blackened face, the gravelly voice, and the hard life it embodied, haunted me and, ultimately, became the inspiration for documenting the lives of the handful of men who carved out a life along the tracks.

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# Following the Tracks

by Dale Wickum



#2 Spen' mos' yer time alone watchin' the country blow by a boxcar door.



#134 Lookin' after the dog mightbe the only thing keepin' me in my right mind.



#25 Hell, it gits too bad, if some'um's botherin' me, I jus' ride it out, ride it outta my system.

#15 - Ya walk into town an' them people knows ya ain't one of 'em.



#10- I'll watch 'em make up a train 'n can tell where it's headed by its cargo.



#43 Too many people in a hurry. Ya see 'em buzzin' 'round in their automobiles like turd flies.



# Following the Tracks

by Dale Wickum



#42 Ever'body's had a raisin' a some kind er other; a mother 'n father er someone that's tol' 'em right from wrong 'n showed 'em 'bout gettin' 'long in the world. Only one time did I get food stamps. I don't go in for that welfare er food stamps. Hell, if I cain't make it on my own, I don't wanna make it at all.

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#60 One time I went through the closet 'n counted my shirts. I come up with seventeen a them things. Seventeen shirts! No man alive needs that many shirts.



#28 I knowed he seen me. Had his flashlight right square on me when I hopped off. I ducked in the trees an' kept an eye out fer him. Pitch dark down there. Didn't follow me. He walked to the edge a the tracks 'n shined the light all aroun'. Can't see nothin' lookin' in a woods like you can seein' out.



#22 Down in Mississippi, I was sittin' along the tracks at the end a the yard, and a woman come out from a nearby house with a plate of food. Handed me the food, complete with a knife and fork.



#33 What I do when I get a hol' a some money is buy me an armful a can goods, an' get some plastic, an' wrap 'em up real good, an' bury 'em at night when nobody's 'roun'. Bury 'em wherever I think I might be needin' 'em. The day comes 'roun' when I be low on change, I dig 'em up an' eat good.



#51 They found him lyin' face down in the creek. His dog was sittin' along the bank there. That dog stayed right there with Tennessee.



#67 Don't never trust a tramp sez he cain't cook. A tramp is the best cook there is. A tramp'll take anythin' worth eatin' an' make a stew out of it. Beans, spuds, gizzards, onions, any goddamn thing.

# Following the Tracks

by Dale Wickum



#32 This ain't no birthdee party.



#39- I caught a guy stealin' from me, an' I shot him.



#41My dog's name is Carter, like them little pills,



#48 Talkin' to hisself, that's all he's been doin' lately. Dunno what to do 'bout him. Use' to be I could count on him fer anything. Was a good partner. I cain't let him go into town no more, for fear he'll git hisself locked up.



#6-We cooked up 'possum, coon, fish. There's a couple a wild pigs loose down there. Never caught 'em. Ray got close enough to throw his hatchet at one. Hit it square in the ribs, didn't draw any blood, just bounced off. You can't catch a wild pig; they're quick as a cat 'n smart. Them pigs is one of the smartest animals you'll find.

Dale's website: [www.followingthetracks.com](http://www.followingthetracks.com)



#11-There was this guy they called Christmas Tree. Every year he brought us Christmas Trees.



#124 -If a guy don't want to go associatin' with the human race, it' not my affair, let him be.



#54 - Parts of the country you want to keep your fire low so's not to attract attention.



# Of Beauty and Simplicity

STEADFAST IN HIS GOALS, ARTIST **MICHAEL LATALLA** STRIVES TO PAINT HIS SUBJECTS AS BEAUTIFULLY AS HE SEES THEM AND AS SIMPLY AS HE CAN.

By Robert K. Carsten





Lost Boys at Las Ramblas, Barcelona · Fall of 1963.



Like Christopher Columbus in that same spot, they didn't know where they were or where they were going, no idea when they would get there or how long it would take. When they got home, they had no idea where they had been or how long they'd been gone.

Beauty is in the eye of the beer holder. Hopefully, you'll find Fat Tire's new store as appealing as the Amber Ale bottled up inside. Cruise over to our website to see the full line-up of freshly brewed beers for your enjoyment, [www.beerline.com](http://www.beerline.com)



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2014

...Red Tavern, San Francisco, the fall of 2014... 2019, they still have no clue!

Dick W. Davis & Everett Campbell