

Artist Profile

E. John Robinson Takes Time to "Give Back" After a Career of Painting for Galleries

E. John Robinson is an artist at peace with himself, his life, and his community. There is an inner quietness about him, something he might attribute to a lifetime of painting seascapes in all their forms. What could be more peaceful than interpreting nature on canvas?

"I have had a wonderful career," he says. "My art has been accepted well by the public and I've made a comfortable living." He calls his home, tucked away in the Pygmy Forest off Comptche Road, the "house that seascapes built."

E. John has created more than 4,000 seascapes, and over 800 landscapes, most of which are in private collections. His paintings



E. John at his easel

pulled out of Carmel and now shows his work only at Panache Gallery on Main Street in Mendocino.

Give Back Time

The hard work is behind E. John now. He has reached a time in his life he calls "pay-back time" – giving back to the community through how-to books and videotapes, or simply giving paintings to worthy causes, or to people he loves and admires.

Though he talks of slowing down, the freshly completed seascape sitting on his easel and a newly published book "Painting All Aspects of Water for All Mediums" (his third book by International of Reader's Digest and are in numerous notable private and corporate collections in America and Europe. Most of them were sold in just two places: Carmel and Mendocino. Last year, he

Never After Ribbons

E. John's work has never appeared in juried exhibitions because he says, "I was never after ribbons. I wanted to express myself, and the fact that the public



Mendocino Surf

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Spring Hills

accepted my work--by buying it and telling me personally that they liked it--was enough for me." However, he earned his first recognition in high school when he placed in the top ten in the National Scholarship Art Contest. This was a breakthrough for a young man from a family of pioneer fisherman, loggers and farmers.

One of the things E. John does best is teach. He began teaching fifth grade in Petaluma in the 1960's because there were no galleries to sell his work and he couldn't make a living selling paintings and watercolors in community art-in-the-park events. Even as a schoolteacher, he taught creativity along with reading, writing and arithmetic. "Schools, by their nature, have to educate for a left-brain society. Creativity is pushed to the back burner for most people," he laments.

E. John's art lessons are captured in three books on techniques for painting seascapes that sell throughout the English-speaking world, including Europe, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. He also provides lessons on oil painting and watercolors through instructional videos and audiotapes, which are available for online purchase at www.ejohnrobinson.com.

E. John feels that the most important lessons for an artist to learn are the three steps of creativity: first, people begin by copying what others have done; second, they copy

nature or what they see before them; finally, the subject, no matter what it is, becomes an expression of the artist--how he feels about it.

Discovering Mendocino

By 1966, he discovered the thriving Mendocino art community and began "the most inspiring time of his life." By 1968 E. John had moved here and was working full time as an artist. While creating seascapes has been his primary outlet for creative expression, in the 1980's he turned to other areas of nature. Out of that experience came a book of Sierra landscapes, "Special Moments--An Artist in Nature," a self-published book that explains his methods, feelings and philosophy.

While E. John readily admits that gallery paintings are commercial art, they allow the artist far more freedom than the artist who must please a client or a boss. He never painted anything because he thought it would sell, nor did he ever put a price on his work. The gallery owners did that and he accepted what they paid. And they paid well.

And what of the future for this international artist? "I won't allow myself to become stagnant," he says with conviction. "I will continue to be guided by a desire for self expression, rather than self interest, whether I'm painting, working in my garden or making something in my workshop. I was born to be creative and I shall not stop in this lifetime."



Books by E. John Robinson

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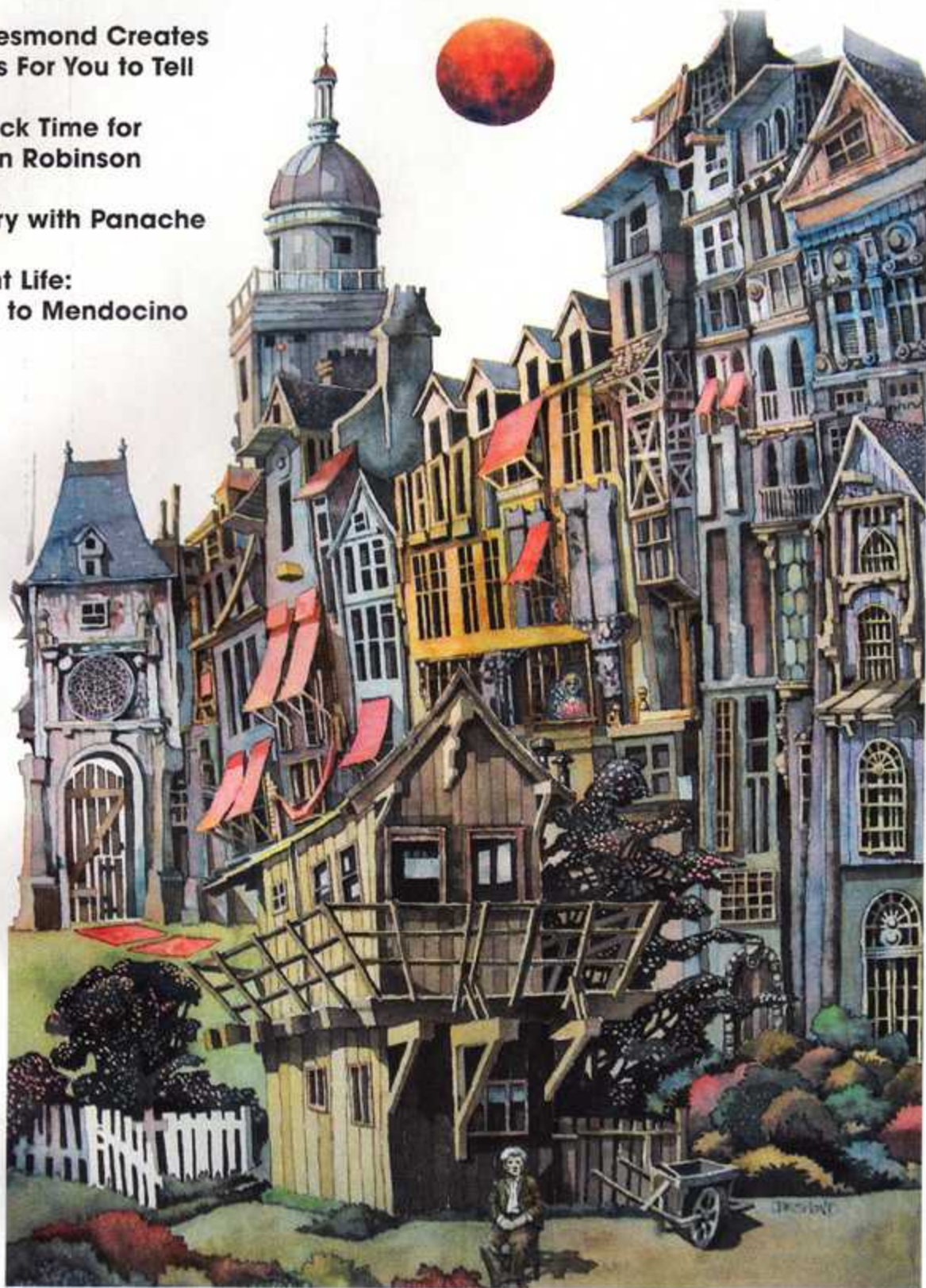
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E. John Robinson**

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