

JIM MOTT ARTIST STATEMENT 1

It seems we can sometimes understand ourselves or find inner experience articulated through the language of the landscape – and in that connection recognize something within both landscape and self that is deeper and bigger than either. Landscape painting is, for me, mainly part of a contemplative path and a way of making connections. It is a means by which I can explore the interplay of inner and outer worlds, give substance to my appreciation of the things I see around me, and share a sense of caring, concern, and wonder with other people.

When choosing subject matter I tend to focus on the everyday visual environment, the ordinary, sometimes overlooked material of common experience. In painting a place, I want to show something of the particular visual reality of the chosen subject. I also try to keep the paint active and moving with a life of its own. The ideals I usually aim toward are a balance of representational and abstract/poetic concerns, and the concentrated moment when subject, emotion, and medium are one: Painting thus embodies the possibility of deep identification

As I become more interested in using art as a witness to environmental change and degradation, as one piece in the puzzle of raising consciousness, I have realized that – perhaps more than any other form of creative expression – landscape painting is able to embody and reinforce our ability to identify with place, with the land.

But more important than what may be depicted in a landscape painting is the nature of the process involved in its creation, the quality of interaction reflected in the paint. I have come to think that the highest value for art – whatever its form – in the present age may simply be its ability to serve as a transparent record of deep and responsive engagement with materials and with the world.

With my Itinerant Artist Project and other outreach projects I attempt to extend this spirit of engagement beyond the canvas and paint, and into the medium of social interaction (as opposed to electronic social media). When successful at getting my art-making into other people's lives, the outreach is mutually beneficial, generating a more meaningful and supportive context for the creation and sharing of art than I find in the isolated studio or the commercial gallery.

More about the Itinerant Artist Project can be found here:

www.jimmott.com/2iaphome.html

The rewards of social outreach are discussed more engagingly in this interview by Ani DiFranco:

www.jimmott.com/interview.html