

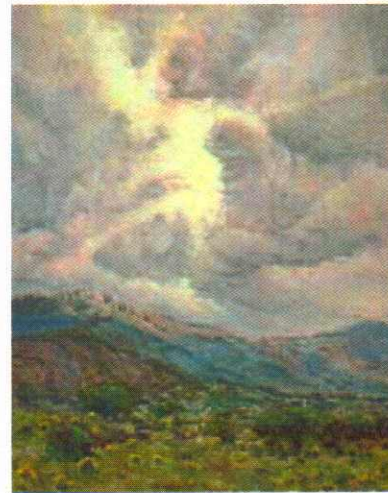
Phil Hulebak

The Southwest & Rocky Mountains have been an inspiration to Phil as he has spent most of his life in New Mexico. He has had the opportunity to explore the enchantment of the cliffs, the depths of the arroyos to the majesty of the peaks & sunsets, the sparkling magic of water & the way the sunlight plays-in all seasons.



Phil's formal art education comes from the University of New Mexico with emphasis on drawing & painting. He has attended several workshops in Taos, Scottsdale & Jackson with the great masters: Michael Lynch, David Leffel, Sherry McGraw, Kevin McPherson, Tom Hill & Scott Christensen.

Phil has been exhibiting throughout the Southwest since 1988 & has won awards from local art competitions.



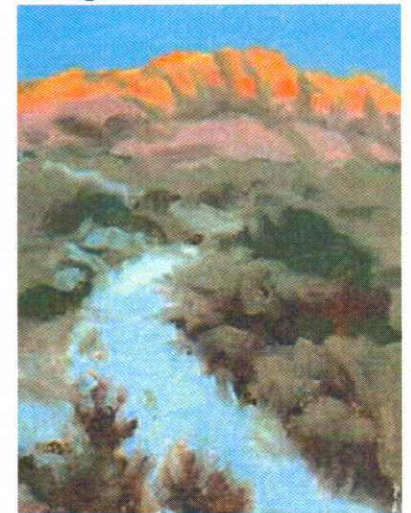
His originals can be seen at Weems Galleries in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Phil resides in Albuquerque, New Mexico as a full

time artist. He continues to explore his talents with various subjects & his creative spirit expanding with his persistent exploration of landscapes.

Phil's collectors are the University of New Mexico, RBC Dain Rauscher, Lovelace & Presbyterian Hospitals, the State of New

Mexico, Coca Cola & many private collectors. He has been a member of the Board of Directors of Weems Artfest since 1999 & he is a member of Oil Painters of America.



Space of his own

Landscape painter demonstrates his artistic maturity at Weems Galleries

BY WESLEY PULKKA
For the Journal

Phil Hulebak's solo show at the Weems Galleries in Old Town reveals another step forward for the maturing landscape painter.

His show last year was a milestone that established Hulebak's command of atmospheric space, one of the subtle and most difficult illusions created with paint on flat canvas. Leonardo da Vinci was an early inventor of the use of atmospheric tonal variations to create distance in landscape painting.

If you go

WHAT: Phil Hulebak:
Landscapes

WHEN: Through July 31. Artist's painting demonstration from noon-4 p.m. Saturday, July 21. Hours are 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Mondays-Saturdays and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sundays. Call 764-0302

WHERE: Weems Galleries, 303 Romero NW, Plaza Don Luis, Old Town

HOW MUCH: Free

REVIEW

This year viewers also are treated to numerous canvases featuring water reflections and the notion of water in the landscape. Under-painting is one method used by some 18th- and 19th-century American and European masters to set the tonal spectrum in landscape paintings.

Hulebak utilizes warm-hued under-painting to establish a simmering sepia base tone in "First Light on the Rio Chama" an elegant sunrise over water and mountains composition.

The variegated sky is mirrored in the placid river at dawn. "First Light on the

Rio Chama" can be seen as a metaphor for the dawn of Hulebak's growing atmospheric vision.

Though I thoroughly enjoyed seeing his latest work I did miss the aggressively painted small works in the tradition of Prendergast and Vlaminck that accented last year's show.

The small works in the current show are well done and blend better with the larger pieces but I long for that crazy yet controlled abandon that Hulebak revealed to viewers the last time around.

Landscape painters in New Mexico exist in such great numbers that finding the best among them is a daunting task. When everyone is painting the Sandias what separates their honest efforts into bad, good, better and best?

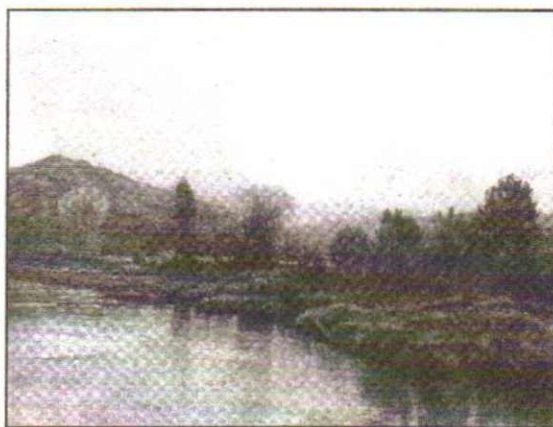
I look for life and heart in painting as well as draftsmanship, palette and content. Hulebak like everyone else takes photographs but he doesn't depend on them.

Instead he slogs through the mud, snow and sagebrush to execute pencil and paint sketches that burn the image into his memory. His truck may get stuck and get his feet wet but he tracks down the image like a hunter.

But Hulebak's hot pursuit of excellence also may include a hike into the foothills behind his Northeast Heights studio with paint box and canvas in hand.

Hulebak enjoys what he does and his positive energy, hard work and occasionally relaxed attitude conspire to make his paintings unique experiences among a plethora of pretenders.

In "Santa Ana Sunset"



"First Light on the Rio Chama," by Phil Hulebak, shares a kinship with landscapes by 19th-century American and European masters.

Hulebak apprehends the reflected sunlight bathing the distant hills with his back to the western horizon. He paints the sun and sky's residual effects before nightfall like a forensic scientist gathers fingerprints and DNA at a crime scene.

The offense in this case is the fleeting memorial to the glory of daylight stolen as the perpetrator slips away over the horizon leaving only darkness behind.

Hulebak turns his back on the fleeing suspect and captures instead the experience of another day passing.

He reveals his ability to stare the sun down in "Winter Sunset," a lusciously hued scene in the Sandia foothills looking west. This small work is more loosely rendered than the Santa Ana pictorial adding a sense of urgency to the fugitive light and color application.

The warm colors produced by the setting sun are reflected in the cold snow and by the leafless winter scrub. Despite its freely applied paint this is a convincing illusionist painting.

Hulebak is back from last year's successful show with a very strong collection of a blend of earlier fully realized concepts and techniques with an addition of new directions for his body of work.

As spatial relationships were his strength now reflected light on land and water are part of his vocabulary.