

I Mainly Paint Scenes That I Have Visited .. by Kurt Leininger, April 2021



One might assume that since I retired 3 years ago, well before the COVID-19 pandemic reached Southeastern Pennsylvania, I might be accustomed to finding creative ways to keep busy and to continue to learn. And I am, generally; but the isolation we endured in the past year challenged me further. And I imagine that's true for many more folks than I might think...

I've always enjoyed the visual arts and music, and my favorite college elective class as a civil engineering student was History of Art. I had never seriously considered becoming an artist, until last September when Bob Stradling, Pastor of Vision Fellowship at the First Baptist Church of Malvern, offered to share his knowledge and experience in weekly art classes, hosted by Malvern Arts. With time literally on my hands, and the happy memory of early interest in visual arts, I decided to take the plunge and become an amateur oil painter!

I learned to paint with "water-mixable oils" 6 months ago from Pastor Stradling, who has been painting the past 10 years. I've painted almost 45 scenes so far, and my list keeps growing. I mainly paint scenes that I've visited, so it's a nice way to relive and appreciate my favorite places. I work at it maybe 2 or 3 hours for 3 or 4 days per week, so it's not like a regular "job." And like most retirement hobbies, I have no deadlines. I also find it both challenging and relaxing, which is a good combination as I enter the "geezer phase" of life.

The scenes I like to paint focus on natural landscapes with historic or iconic buildings, especially scenes that I've visited, photographed, and would enjoy recreating on canvas. Most recently, I painted the front of the Wharton Esherick Museum, just north of Paoli, which is an unusual structure designed by the artist of that name. Esherick avoided right angles in *everything* he made: his *entire* home, studio, and workshop. I found this small museum especially intriguing because I visited and admired many Frank Lloyd Wright homes, which excel in right angles! I'm convinced that with an open mind a person can discover, enjoy, and be inspired by the creativity of our fellow humans (like Esherick and Wright) even when they have contrasting approaches and methods.

Here are photos of some of my initial paintings:



Farm with Cabin



Neighbor's home



Paoli Battlefield in November



Wharton Esherick Museum



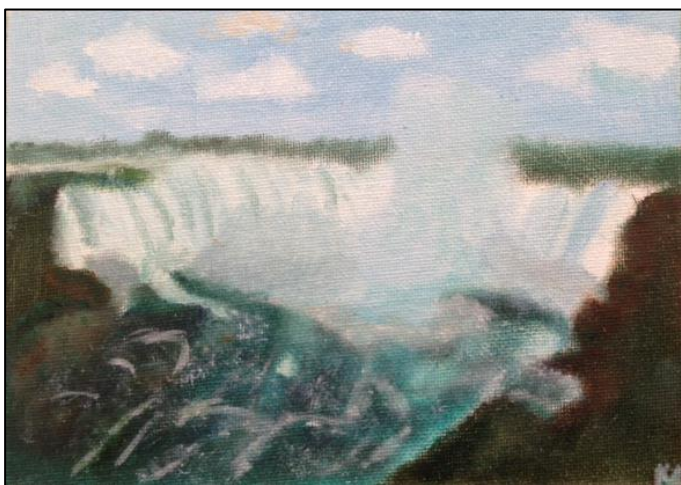
Pump House



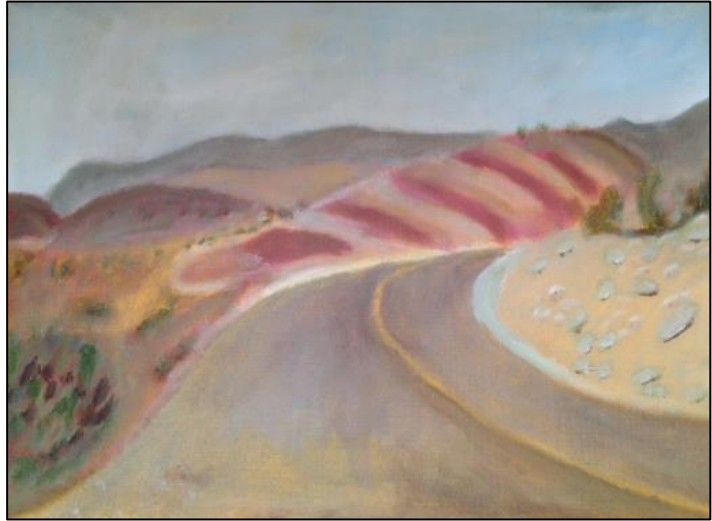
Kinder Dijk Windmill – Historic site



Neckar River, Heidelberg



Niagra Falls



Oregon Painted Hills



Castine Lighthouse



Grand Coulee



211 Channing