



**RICHARD SCHLOSS's** *Dark Rain*, 2018, oil on canvas, 20 x 16 in.

## Romantic *Activist*

Artist Richard Schloss remembers when he was studying art at UCSB in the 1970s: "If you painted something too pretty, you were criticized for it; prettiness meant you were a weekend painter, because real artists make ugly things." Nearly five decades later, it's clear that Schloss, a renowned and well-respected landscape painter, is incapable of making ugly art.

Schloss also admits to being a romantic, which is why he was drawn to landscape painting (and the plein air tradition) at a time when the majority of his fellow students were followers of abstract expressionism. But his romanticism paid off, as shortly after graduating he was invited to exhibit his work at a local gallery, jump-starting his career.

In 1986, he became one of the original members of the Oak Group, a group of artists dedicated to raising public awareness about the importance of preserving open spaces throughout California. "The thrust of modern landscape painting is about protecting open space because it's disappearing," Schloss says, "I love the idea of being able to make that kind of statement."

He's committed to helping other artists as well, having recently opened **SANTA BARBARA FINE ART GALLERY** across from the Arlington Theater with wife/gallery director Julie Schloss. The gallery represents primarily Oak Group artists, including Schloss, whose work is featured there through March 6. 1324 State St., Santa Barbara, 805-845-4270. L. D. P.

[SANTABARBARAFINEART.COM](http://SANTABARBARAFINEART.COM)

## Silver LINING

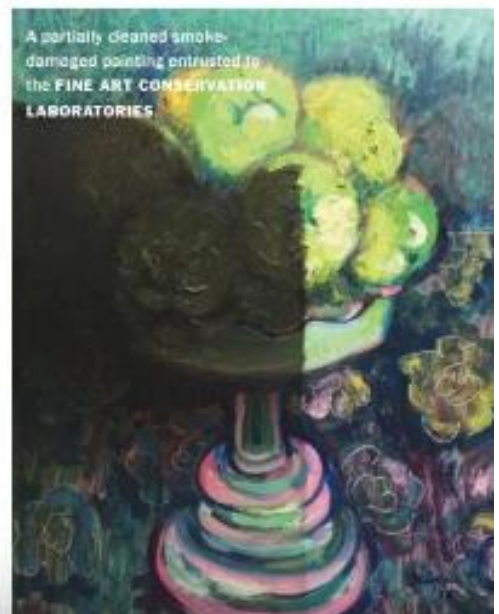
Scott Haskins deals with disaster every day. As owner of Santa Barbara's **FINE ART CONSERVATION LABORATORIES**, he sees the harm natural disasters like the Thomas Fire and subsequent mudslides can inflict on homeowners' works of art and the objects and personal memorabilia they collect. On the bright side, Haskins is a master at restoring everything from paintings to photography to murals. His Santa Barbara lab is equipped with a hot table (to relax cracks in paintings), a suction table (to pull stains from artwork), a polarizing microscope (to identify pigments and signatures), and an oxygen deprivation tent (to kill mold and remove odors).

Since the mid-1970s, when Haskins studied conservation in Italy (where he received a master's degree), technology has drastically improved the analysis involved in art restoration. "The ways of keeping paintings from flaking may not have changed remarkably in the last 30 to 50 years," he says, "but the technology that enables us to analyze things is totally different. We can identify pigments without gouging a hole in the painting."

Haskins travels around the world consulting on public and private artworks and also acts as an expert in litigation. His clients include insurance companies, municipalities, museums, and, of course, individuals. To date, his lab has worked on thousands of items related to the Thomas Fire and its aftermath. He's even written a multimedia e-book about preserving and protecting collectibles and memorabilia (downloadable at no charge from [collectioncaretips.com](http://collectioncaretips.com)). And his work perspective remains touchingly personal: "I love quality artwork from any time period. But I also love something that's important to you that you got from your grandmother. Because there's a sentimental aspect to it." 805-564-3438. L. D. P.

[FINEARTCONSERVATIONLAB.COM](http://FINEARTCONSERVATIONLAB.COM)

SANTA BARBARA



A partially cleaned smoke-damaged painting entrusted to the **FINE ART CONSERVATION LABORATORIES**



**JAMES PETRUCCI's** *Vessel #2*, 2015, oil, beeswax, and mixed media on paper mounted on panel, 22 x 34 in.

## Time Capsule

James Petrucci's solo show, "Vessel," at **THE BASIC PREMISE GALLERY** in Ojai—running March 23 through April 30—explores the self-taught artist's concept of the body as a vessel for memory and the passage of time. "We are the sum of our experiences," Petrucci has said, "but our memories are fallible. Because time is finite, we look for answers to define and give meaning to our lives." His work is at once figurative and abstract, internal and external, a visual reflection of the human condition. 918 E. Ojai Ave., Ojai. L. D. P.

[THEBASICPREMISEGALLERY.COM](http://THEBASICPREMISEGALLERY.COM)