



Meet Your Neighbor  
Landscape Artist

**RICHARD SCHLOSS**

By Rhina Hayes  
Photos by Michelle Lauren  
Michelle Lauren Photography



Hope Ranch Beach, Autumn Sunset East  
2008 oil on canvas, 36x48 Photo  
Courtesy of Santa Barbara Fine Art Gallery



Hope Ranch Beach, Autumn Sunset East  
2008 oil on canvas, 36x48, owned by Ranch residents,  
Photo courtesy of Santa Barbara Fine Art Gallery



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# Richard Schloss

An artist who saw the light in Hope Ranch

As a boy in the 1960s, landscape artist Richard Schloss spent every summer and Christmas vacation visiting his grandparents at Hope Ranch. Richard's grandfather J.L. "Bob" Keyes was President of Aramco Oil and lived in Arabia for many years before he and his wife Sydney bought a home on Las Palmas. Richard remembers the many exotic photos from their life in Arabia including banquets with princes and kings and tables heaped with silver-domed servings of unusual fare, including camel!

But upon retirement, life in Hope Ranch was a lot more relaxed. "My grandfather was a gentle giant," Richard says. "He never pursued power, was a modest man. My grandmother was the one with all the stories."

Trips to La Cumbre Club were fine, but Richard remembers feeling most at home in the Ranch when he and his brothers spied the Christmas tree lit up on the lake. It was the signal that they'd returned. And as he roamed the hills, swam in the ocean and made mischief with seasonal friends, he was also absorbing the wonder of the outdoors and the magic he would later find, creating beautiful landscapes on plain air to capture what he calls the "character of the light" in Santa Barbara.

Richard knows of no other artistic family members and in fact, everyone in his family studied sciences including his three brothers. Richard declared as a physics major when he started UCSB in 1971. "After a year, when it got harder and harder, I

knew I wasn't going to continue. I took two drawing classes in the architecture department at Berkeley for summer school and something just clicked. I changed my major and decided I was an artist. Ironically I found out later that my father had always wanted to be an architect but never pursued it. Richard was born in Fort Worth Texas, and his father was a retail management executive in the San Francisco Bay area where Richard was raised. "My father was very supportive of me being an artist despite the dim financial prospects," he says.

"The University was also very supportive in that I studied there for 11 years and they gave me a studio and the opportunity to experiment. I did everything from abstract airbrush painting to figures and portraits and every medium I could imagine. There was one graduate student (only one!) who painted outside. I thought it was so romantic that I started painting outside and never did anything else, although now I mostly do larger paintings in the studio."

"Both of my grandparents died in the early '70s while I was still at school. And when I began my career, I was of course drawn to Hope Ranch as a subject, at the beach when I could get there and at Laguna Blanca always," he says. "The light here is very atmospheric and varied and yes even romantic. I began painting at 19 and basically did nothing else. I never had any inclination to do anything else, whether or not I could support myself at it. Fortunately, it worked out."

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Richard and Julie Schloss.



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"My sponsor in college was an art professor, William Rohrbach, who lived in a small house in Hope Ranch on the cliffs above the beach (now torn down for a major mansion). I would often go there to paint and even bring models there. He rented it for 30 years for \$300/month but unfortunately never bought it. He called it "the monastery" because of the simplicity of his lifestyle, also a big influence on me. He took me to Istanbul to visit some friends while I was on a scholarship from the Art Department and then I stayed for six weeks painting on the Mediterranean."

Richard was also taken with the sport of fencing, and he taught the skill at UCSB for ten years in the 1990s. Along the way, he met some interesting people and also in Italy. "Did I mention that I also loved Italian and got a bachelors degree in Italian? I still keep it up today but from afar," he says.

Richard's wife Julie taught photography makeup at Brooks Institute for 25 years. They've been married for 23 years, and she manages the gallery and also is a skilled hair and makeup artist with a busy calendar of weddings and events. Their 31-year-old son and three grandchildren live in Idaho, and their 21-year-old daughter attends the University in Manchester England.

In 1992 he was chosen to paint the diorama backgrounds for The Cart-

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wright Interactions Hall and The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. He has done numerous commissions for public spaces including Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital, Santa Barbara Historical Museum and The Palo Alto Medical Foundations in Mountain View and in Sunnyvale. In 2015, he had a large one-man show at the Ventura Museum of Art.

He is the only living Santa Barbara artist to have work displayed in four museums in the Central California area and has been a member of Santa Barbara's *The Oak Group* since it's inception in 1986. His work was shown in the Easton Gallery in Montecito for many years, but for the last six months, Santa Barbara Fine Art Gallery is where his art has found a home. Located at 1324 State St #J, the wide-open entrance, tucked into the corner of Arlington Plaza, across the street from the Arlington Theatre, welcomes strolling shoppers and diners to take a better look inside. Here is where Richard paints and visits, still inspired by that wonderful Santa Barbara light.



Light on the Hills, Laguna Blanca, 2012  
Oil on canvas 24x20, Photo courtesy of Santa Barbara Fine Art Gallery

