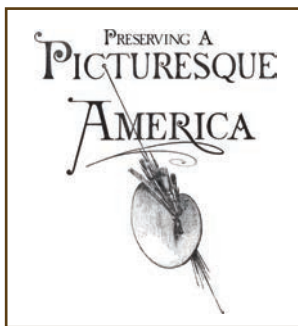


USING ART TO PRESERVE NATURE

By LYNN MAX

Fairview artist and printmaker Scott “Doc” Varn’s journey of discovery began in 2011 when he bought a few classic engravings of the French Broad River



nonprofit with the purpose of raising awareness of and educating and protecting natural and historic places across the country through the power of the arts.

He works with local artists to recreate the original drawings so others can see how these places have changed over time. He is also working on a book that combines the original and updated versions.

“The original writers and artists were instrumental in shaping America’s concepts of conservation and the need to protect historic and natural landmarks,” Varn said. “By using their works as inspiration and a guide, we rediscover their original vantage points

from an online estate auction. He was enamored by the classic technique and the detail in the composition. After discovering that the engravings were actually pages removed from a book, he was determined to find a copy of the book, with its beautiful artwork of the American landscape. The title of the book is “Picturesque America,” and it was not easy to find. Luckily for Varn, a friend owned a rare bookstore in Ashe-

and research current needs for preservation. We intend to inspire Americans again by locating and recreating artwork of all the original locations.”

The original book came out after the Civil War, when the country was still healing. The original writers and artists wanted to celebrate what was great about



ville. She helped him search through a vast collection, and much to his delight, they found a copy of the series released in 48 parts and then bound into two very large, heavy volumes with over 900 engravings, published in the 1870s. This publication contains drawings of natural lands and historic places all throughout the US, done by some of the best American landscape painters of the 19th century.

This was the beginning of Varn’s journey to find the same locations depicted in the original Picturesque America series. In 2015, MountainTrue, a local environmental and conservation organization, served as his fiscal sponsor as he embarked on this special project. With the encouragement of many people he met along the way, such as artists, historians and park rangers, Varn and his wife Sam revisited many locations from the original book so that he could sketch the landscapes.

Varn later founded Preserving a Picturesque America (PAPA), a

the country to help heal the divisions. Varn thinks that the new version can help with the same goal. The natural world sustains and calms us. The love of this beautiful land, and its protection, is a common, unifying theme that brings all people together.

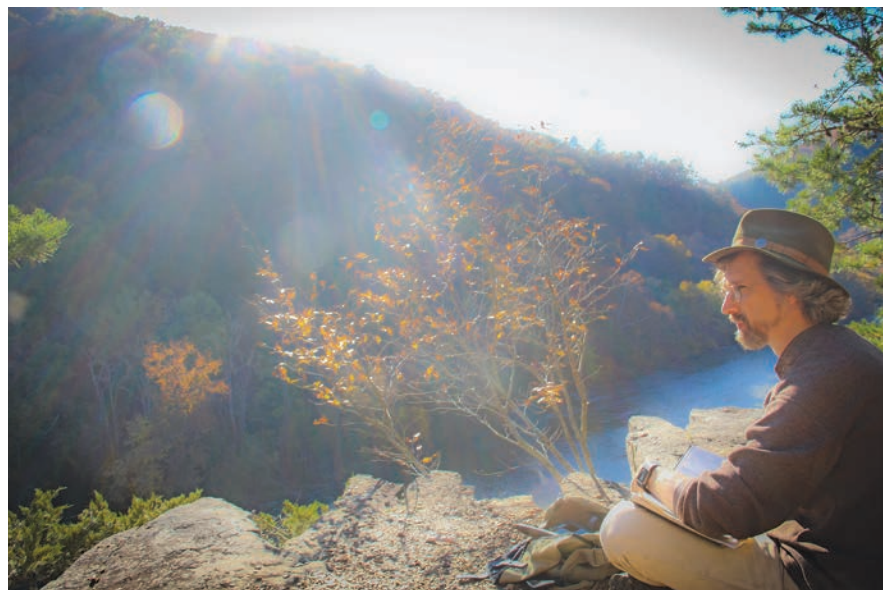
In collaboration with local artists and conservation groups, PAPA raises funds needed to help with protection efforts in regions across the US, such as invasive species removal, vandalism protection and trail maintenance, to name just a few.

You can support this important conservation mission by attending PAPA’s fall art sale and exhibition and buying a beautiful piece of artwork by a well-known, local artist.

Lynn Max is the Conservation Program Coordinator for Preserving a Picturesque America. To get involved with or for more information about PAPA, please visit | preservationthroughart.org or call 844-727-2278 ext. 702.



Scott Varn sketching in Maine’s Acadia National Park (above) and along the French Broad River.



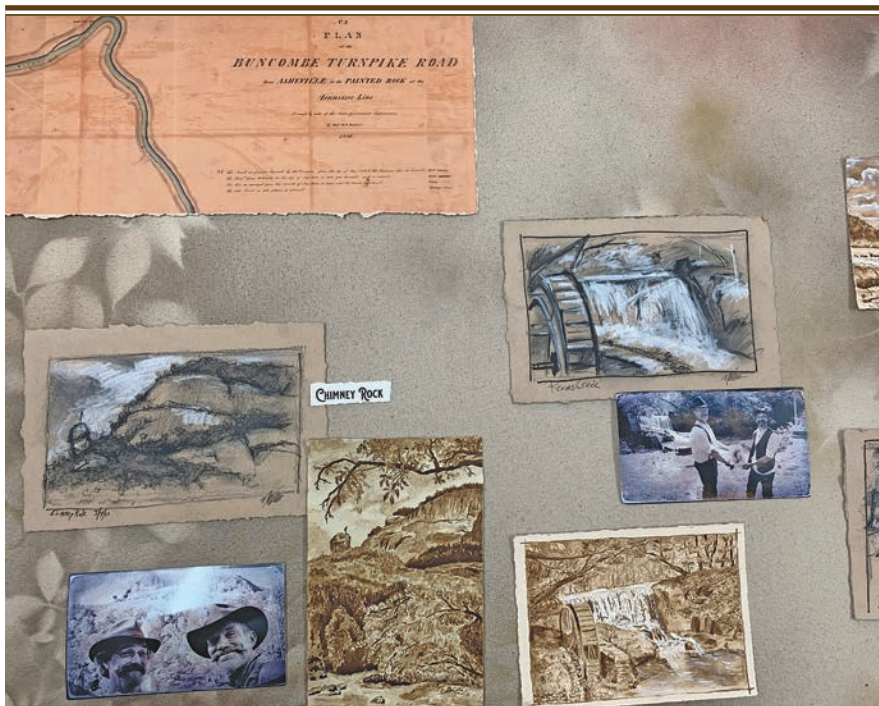
ART SHOW FUNDRAISER

PAPA is hosting its fall art sale and exhibition to raise money to protect WNC natural wonders along the French Broad River. Over 30 conservation artists have worked for years to produce over 90 pieces of art for patrons to purchase in support of the “Preservation Through Art” mission. There will also be opportunities to meet the artists and hear more about their involvement with PAPA.

“Preservation Through Art: Along the French Broad”
Fall Art Sale and Exhibition through October 27
Cloud Room at the Wedge at Foundation, 5 Foundy Street, Asheville

Artist Reception Dates: September 29 and October 13, 6–8 pm
Meet the Artists Q&A: October 6 and 20, 6–8 pm

For more information and to see the art for sale, visit preservationthroughart.org/current-show.



The 2021 Sojourn



In May of this year, Scott Varn and Mike Wurman recreated the 1870 journey of Picturesque America artist Harry Fenn and writer E.G. De Fontaine through the mountains of WNC.

Dressed in period clothing and carrying their art supplies, Varn and Wurman donned began their journey at Chimney Rock, which was where Fenn and De Fontaine also began. By horseback, foot and boat, Varn and Wurman covered 80 miles to Del Rio, TN. They traveled through the Hickory Nut Gorge and Asheville and along the French Broad River to Marshall and Hot Springs. They stopped at the 12 sites in the original Picturesque America on that route and sketched and wrote about their journey just as Fenn and De Fontaine had (see examples at left and above). Their intention was to see how these locations have changed over time and to evaluate if we have been good stewards of the natural landscape the original artist and writer had so fondly depicted over 150 years ago.

About Scott Varn



Originally from South Carolina, Scott Varn knew about WNC from spending summers enjoying the cooler temperatures and beauty of the Appalachian mountains.

He moved to the area 25 years ago, settling first into Asheville's Montford neighborhood. Then, he and his wife, along with their two sons, moved to Butler Mountain in Fairview in 2010. They wanted the boys to live in a place where they

could really explore and play in the woods. He is a passionate nature experience educator and scoutmaster for local troop 91.

He comes from a printing background and grew up in his father's print shop. Varn became a traditional typesetter and had a career as a graphic designer, later working for Adobe. He left the software industry to start a custom audio business so he could spend more time with his family. After years of running a business and a nonprofit, he sold his business to focus full-time on the mission of PAPA.

Doooh! Look What's Happening in October!



Love Never Dies!

with Asheville Medium
Anthony Mikolojeski
and special guests
Jackie Korth &
Elissa Wilds

October 15 @ 7pm
All Seats: \$53



Anthony Mikolojeski

The "Asheville Medium" delivers loving, healing, evidential and guiding messages from your departed loved ones.



and special guests
psychic medium
Elissa Wilds &
evidential medium
Jackie Korth



Dance Party!

Tap your feet (or dance) to their high-spirited sounds from big band, jazz, beach, R&B and a bit of funk!



125 S. MAIN STREET
HENDERSONVILLE
FOR SHOW & SAFETY INFO

October 23 • 7 PM
Advance VIP Seating \$28
Stadium Seating \$25
Door Sales All Seats \$32

We Will
All Wear
Masks



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