

CALIFORNIA

Marilyn Simandle

"It's All About The Light"

By RACHEL WOLF

MARILYN SIMANDLE BELIEVES that the role of an artist is to call attention to moments that go unnoticed by others. "I paint the things that move me, and hope to evoke the reaction: 'I never saw it that way.' It's always about how light falls, creating contrast and drama."

Simandle's light-filled watercolors and oils have earned her the honor of more than 75 one-woman shows in more than 30 years of painting. An esteemed teacher, she has been featured in numerous publications and has several books to her credit. Simandle's originals are widely exhibited in corporate and private collections, including those of The Trump Collection in New York, Sen. John Garamendi, and Burt Reynolds.

REAL ARTISTS KEEP LEARNING

Even as a well-established artist, Simandle emphasizes continued artistic evolution. "It's so important to keep growing," she notes. For her, this means striving to get simpler and looser in order to better communicate. "Art is about communication," she explains. "If art does not communicate to the viewer, something is missing." Simandle finds that to communicate well, she must omit — to use a painterly approach. "The big, simple shapes are the key to a good painting. It's surprising how little you have to put in to make the viewer know what you are trying to represent."



BLUE AND WHITE
OIL, 24 X 36 IN.



AMALFI
Oil, 9 x 12 in.



COMO CATCH
Oil, 24 x 36 in.



BOOTHBAY
OIL, 12 x 16 IN.

COMO BLOOM
OIL, 30 x 24 IN.



This dextrous artist enjoys painting still life, florals, and gardens in addition to her signature landscapes. A passionate gardener, Simandle especially loves her roses. On her acre of land, she also has a horse and two studios — one for her and one for her husband, painter Ted Goerschner.

Simandle recently ventured away from her home and garden for a painting trip to Europe — a two-week Mediterranean cruise that encompassed 14 different ports. In her view, traveling helps artists “really grow, because it forces you to take risks. The subject matter and atmosphere are different.” While traveling, she is especially prolific, completing two or three paintings a day. From this journey, she brought home 60 paintings. “I’d be the first one off the ship, hop in a cab, and go directly to painting locations. It’s energizing and stretching to be in a foreign country by myself.” After her annual trips to Europe, she spends the rest of the year painting larger works from these on-site painting references.

In the future, Simandle would like to visit locations including the Croatian coast, New Zealand, Budapest, Istanbul, Turkey, and Israel. She is currently preparing for a show at Morris & Whiteside Gallery on Hilton Head Island in South Carolina, opening September 7. That show will include 30-35 paintings, many of local subjects, as well as subjects from Europe.



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OIL, 12 x 16 IN.

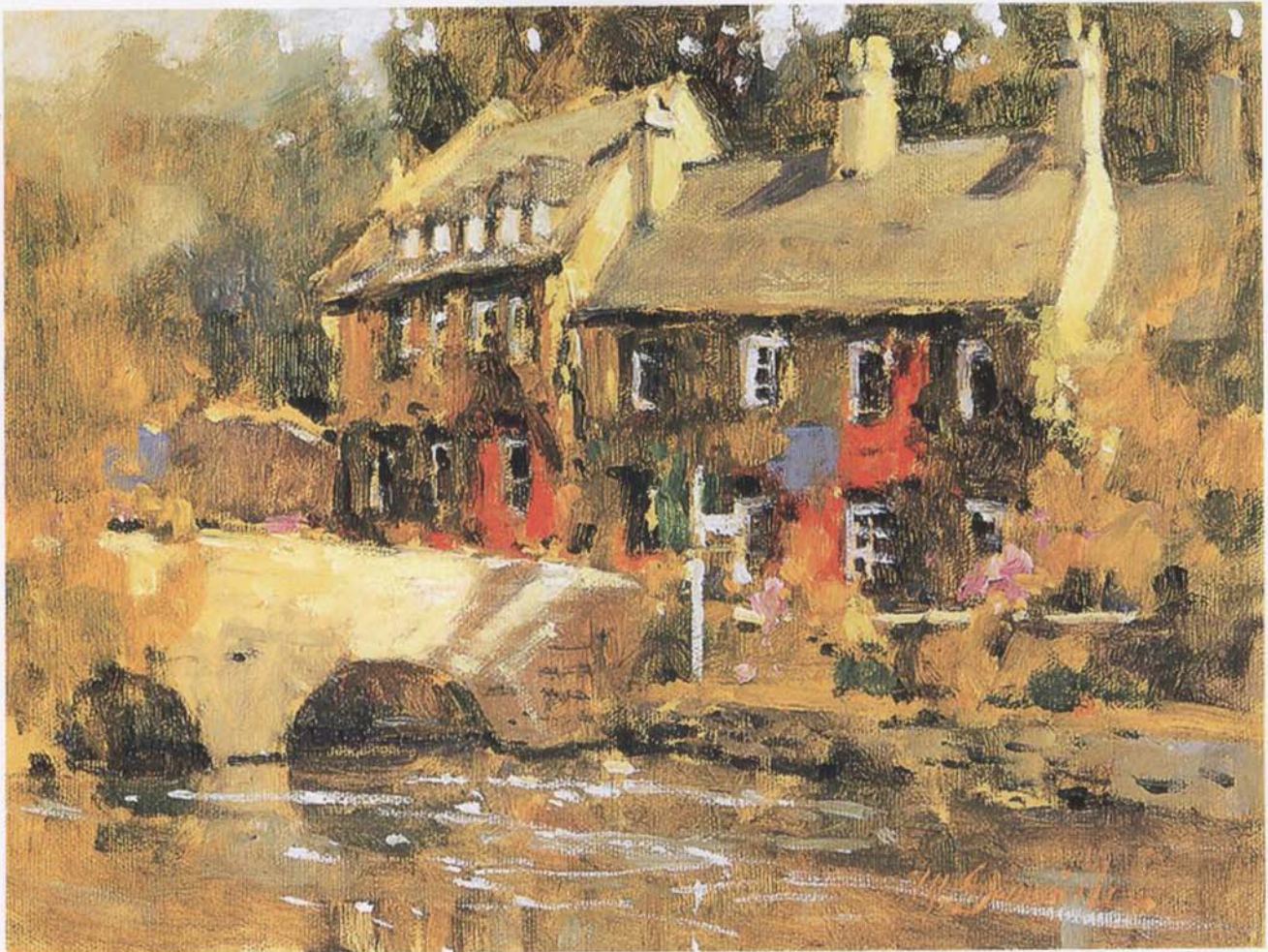
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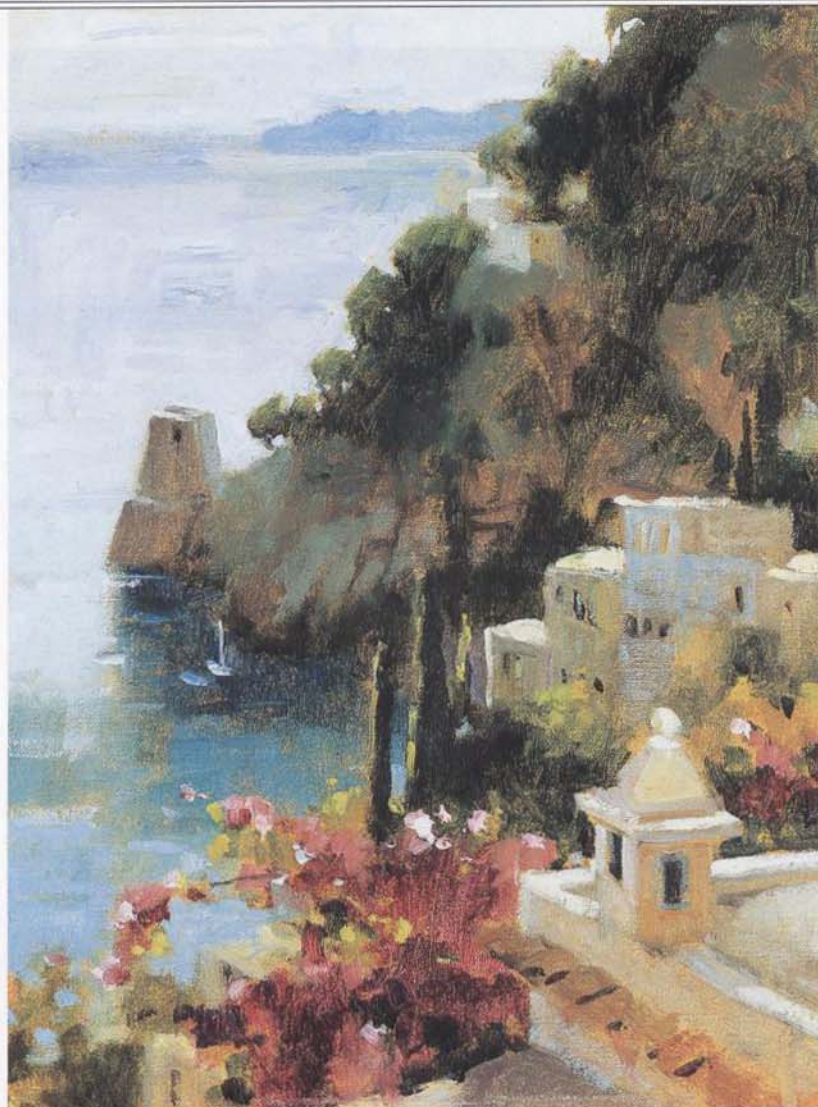
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SWAN HOTEL, ENGLAND (SKETCH)
Oil, 9 x 12 in.



COASTAL COTTAGE
Oil, 24 x 36 in.



POSITANO VISTA
OIL, 12 x 9 IN.

AN ARTISTIC PATHWAY TO THE PRESENT

If Simandle's future looks busy and exciting, it is simply an extension of her past. Her mother was an artist who encouraged her to paint at a very young age. She took the young Marilyn with her to adult education classes throughout grade school, and Marilyn recalls painting and drawing throughout high school. She received her degree in art from San Jose State University, and feels fortunate to have gone to art school "before the whole 'anti-fundamentals' trend took over."

After graduating college, Simandle took a break from art and traveled for two years as a flight attendant. Thus began her lifelong love affair with Europe. During this time, she compiled a small portfolio of design work, which she took to I. Magnin in San Francisco, a popular store at the time. "During my interview for an art position, I asked what the manager in the highest position did. I decided I did not want to do that, put my portfolio away, and went outside to paint."

With her undeniable talent, Simandle was easily accepted into a co-operative gallery on Union Street. Each co-op member was required to work one day a month at the gallery, except for the top 10 sellers. From the beginning, Simandle's work sold so well that she never had to man the gallery. In those days she just packed her watercolors in the car and found places to paint. Unfortunately, most galleries wouldn't show

watercolors, and she soon amassed a large inventory for a market that, in her estimate, was about 90 percent oil paintings.

One of those oil painters was Ted Goerschner, who became her husband. "Because Ted painted in oils, I continued a while in watercolor to differentiate us. But when I finally picked up oils, that was it! It's great to mix paint and have it stay in one big pile. They are a little heavier to carry outside, but much faster — no mixing time

— it's like painting with peanut butter. Unlike watercolor, I dive right into darks first; and I love painting with white paint!"

HER GREATEST COMPLIMENT

Since switching mainly to oils, Simandle has found collectors responding to the light in her paintings. In the past two years, Mr. and Mrs. Randall McCoy of Naples, Florida, have added four of her paintings to their collection. "They are masterfully warm, sunny, and uplifting. What a talent she is!" Other collectors have noted, "You paint places I want to be. Your painting makes me want to be there."

Despite such effusive adulation, Simandle is clear about her greatest accomplishment. When a terminally ill friend was in the hospital, one of her prints hung on the wall in clear view. During the worst of his pain, "he told me that he looked up to my print and he was able to put himself there. That gave him hope. That was the best compliment I ever had. I couldn't ask for more than that."

Simandle believes it was the light that drew her sick friend into the beauty of her painting. "My faith is my biggest motivating factor. Light is God's clothing. Light is much more powerful than darkness. It's all about the light." ■

RACHEL WOLF is the contributing writer for *Fine Art Connoisseur*.