



# ASMA

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**THE PAINTING BEGINS ON BOARD THE TITANIC MEMORIAL CRUISE**  
THE CONCLUSION OF JIM FLOOD'S EPIC PAINTING TRIP ABOARD MS BALMORAL. PAGE 24

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**LUKE TYSON STEADMAN,  
SIGNATURE MEMBER,  
VERO BEACH, FL**

**WEB SITE:**

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

“Familiar things happen,  
and mankind does not  
bother about them. It  
requires a very unusual  
mind to undertake the  
analysis of the obvious.



*"SELF PORTRAIT"*

Alfred North Whitehead (1861 – 1947)  
English physicist, mathematician and  
philosopher

***Science and the Modern World 1925***

Luke Steadman is a serious young man whose art is comfortably and solidly grounded in both the discipline of the Academic Tradition and in his own philosophy about life and experience. His art reflects his quiet joy in the ordinary and his optimistic enthusiasm about the world around us. True to the Tradition, Luke looks for inspiration in what most would not see because it is so obvious – “every day sensations or impressions that are often overlooked like the subtle beauty of things, the hours when there is a tranquility of light, the moods evoked by atmospheric conditions, the rhythms of nature and so forth.” He believes “that many lessons can be learned from nature.” For him, “inspiration comes when his perceptions and feelings about what he observes in nature resonate with his soul.” He finds wisdom in nature’s solitude and celebrates the least of what of what it offers – be it a river inlet, marsh grasses, or a wave, knowing that each of these is intertwined with the rest. And he

# Notes From Brush Hill



*"EVENING LIGHT - INDIAN RIVER" • 20" x 50" • Oil*

*"Whenever we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe." John Muir (1838 – 1914) Naturalist, author and conservationist.*

takes this attitude and approach to soaring heights when he dares to find it in a person alone on a beach like his *Moment of Clarity* or *Symphony in White*.

It is no wonder that he has developed a following. Ann McEvoy, Director of the Admiralty Gallery in Vero Beach, Florida that represents Steadman, says, "Luke is a fine, outstanding young artist who brings a depth of beauty and serenity of nature to his paintings that collectors not only relate to but are inspired and refreshed by. They can feel it and they love it."

This success did not just happen. In keeping with the demands of the Academic Tradition, it involved a lot of hard work and a great deal of effort to develop the ability to observe – to "see" what you are looking at in order to determine if it could carry a meaningful message to a viewer if rendered into a painting. Both Luke and his wife Amanda (née McGee) grew up and went through high school in Vero Beach although Luke was, in fact, born in Pennsylvania on June 4, 1980. His father, Virgil, a contractor and his mother, Nancy, now a professional consultant for financial institutions, celebrated the arrival of their sole child with the decision that the first step to the good life was towards the South – to Vero Beach where Luke dropped anchor at the age of six months.

During the two years following high school graduation in 1998, Luke

set about to get his bearings. He had studied design but this was at the time when CAD's (Computer Assisted Design) were taking over that field and Luke didn't want to spend his life in front of a computer monitor to create his work. So he did part time construction work for his father's business while attending a local community college and painting all the while. He had an aunt who was an artist and, seeing the talent and interest, suggested he have his portfolio reviewed by the Ringling College of Art and Design in Sarasota, Florida. He did and they offered him a place. "That was a terrific experience. They accepted all of

my credits from the community college and I took full advantage of what they had to offer. I sought out classes that taught me real skills that required discipline and avoided those that were less structured and more expression or emotion centered. Boom, more action, less talk."

"I also took independent studies outside of Ringling with Carl Johnson who was who studied under Richard Lack in his Minnesota Atelier, one of the lynch pins in the survival of the Academic Tradition in America." It paid off. I received several Ringling awards and two national awards for my work from *The Artist's Magazine* and I graduated with



*"MOMENT OF CLARITY" • 32" x 50" • Oil*

*"One of the greatest necessities in America is to discover creative solitude." Carl Sandburg (1878 – 1967) Pulitzer Prize winning Poet and Author*

# Notes From Brush Hill



"FIRST LIGHT KIAWAH" • 14" x 18" • Oil

"It is in man's heart that the life of nature's spectacle exists; to see it, one must feel it."  
Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778) Genevan author and philosopher.

honors." That was in the spring of 2005. He then took his wife to Italy to spend the summer at Daniel Graves' Florence Academy of Art where he enrolled in the Intensive Drawing Program under one of the Principal Instructors, Maureen Hyde.

The ASMA artist featured this column in the last issue, Signature Member Edward "Ted" Minoff, studied at the Florence Academy of Art for a year and is just one of hundreds who have benefited from the high level of instruction in classical drawing, painting and sculpture in the Academic Tradition since the American artist Daniel Graves opened the Academy over twenty years ago. His philosophy, which underlies the Academy's curriculum and method of instruction, demands a return to discipline in art, to canons of beauty, and to the direct study of nature and the Old Masters as the foundation for great painting and sculpture. To do this, however, is not easy; it involves a step-by-step progression through the school's curriculum, from learning to draw accurately to learning to use precise color values in oil or, for the sculpture students, learning to use correct structure in clay.

#### (Footnotes)

<sup>2</sup>See the web site for the Florence Academy [www.florenceacademyofart.com](http://www.florenceacademyofart.com). Go to "About Us" and click on the PDF file at the end of the third paragraph to open the Graves essay *Tradition in the 21st Century*.

Graves and those involved in the Renaissance of the Academic Tradition have a simple, basic belief: Every art is about control: If you cannot follow specified movements of ballet, you cannot dance ballet; you cannot play classical music unless you have control over all the scales and your fingerings. You cannot paint and sculpt in a traditional manner unless you have learned the necessary principles and techniques.

Daniel Graves has an excellent essay on the Academic Tradition, its history, its near demise in the 20th Century, its survival in a few ateliers in the United States and Europe and its blossoming in the early 21st Century.<sup>2</sup> While the essay focuses on the discipline and skills needed (including, importantly, the power of observation), Graves recognizes that he could not improve on the words of John Ruskin, (1819 – 1900) the artist, writer, leading art critic of the Victorian Age in England and the first Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford University. In a most fundamental way in his treatise *All Great Art is Praise*, he calls attention to the most basic premise of the Academic Tradition that so clearly sets it apart from the many art movements that followed in the 20th Century.

"Fix, then, this in your mind as the guiding principle of all right practical labour, and source of all healthful life energy, - that your art is to be the praise of something that you love.

It may be only the praise of a shell or a stone; it may be the praise of a hero; it may be the praise of God: - your rank as a living creature is determined by the height and breadth of your love; but, be you small or great, what healthy art is possible to you *must be the expression of your true delight in a real thing, better than the art.* . . .

If you desire to draw, that you may represent something that you care for, you will advance swiftly and safely. If you desire to draw, that you may make a beautiful drawing, you will never make one."

Graves contrasts this philosophy of love and enthusiasm for the subject being more important than the art that results with the various "isms" that bring you toilet seats, elephant dung and other forms of shock art. The toilet seat would never pass the "the expression of your true delight in (the) real thing" test. But, to the contrary, Luke Steadman's *Moment of Clarity* – his "true delight in the real thing" – certainly would.



"SYMPHONY IN WHITE" • 27" x 32" • Oil

"It is in man's heart that the life of nature's spectacle exists; to see it, one must feel it."  
Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778) Genevan author and philosopher.

# Notes From Brush Hill

And using Ruskin's test, it is no wonder Luke's art passes the test: He simply loves his subjects. His wife Amanda is the Symphony in White and she is the Moment of Clarity. And his daughter, Ava, has modeled for many of her six years. Already Luke realizes that – love him as he does - his two-year-old son



"DAUGHTER AVA AT FIVE"  
14" x 18" • Oil

"Ty" (Tyson) - all high-energy boy, might not turn out to be the cooperative model his sister and mother have been.

Nature, his other love, Luke simply loses himself in. He has a 20' skiff that he takes out on the Indian River to paint lagoons, inlets, marsh grasses – quietly and alone for hours at a time but constantly observing. But he does more than just paint the scenes of the Indian River. This winter the Admiralty Gallery, in conjunction with the Indian River Land Trust, is hosting an exhibition of Indian River paintings by Steadman and two other artists to raise awareness about the

work of the Land Trust and to raise funds for its support.

As John Ruskin said: *"All great art is praise."*



Charles Raskob Robinson is a Fellow of the Society. He paints at Brush Hill, a studio built in 1752, located in Washington, CT and formerly owned by Connecticut and New Mexico artist Eric Sloane. Some of Charlie's work may be seen on his website at: [www.brushhillstudios.com](http://www.brushhillstudios.com).

