

## Annual **Sandgren Coast PaintOut and Embedded Workshop**

### Description

The Sandgren Coast PaintOut is an outdoor painting event. It happens rain or shine for two-weeks each summer. It was initiated over forty years ago by painter and teacher Nelson Sandgren who passed it along to his son Erik. At the heart of the PaintOut is a shared regard for the awesome natural forces visibly at work, a love for Oregon coast, the fondness of intrepid painters for each other, and a shared belief that the challenge of making paintings on site is a broadening experience.

The Sandgren Coast PaintOut and Embedded Workshop continue to be the centerpiece of the summer for a self-selected group of painters. The **PaintOut** is open to everyone: no registration or payment is required. The PaintOut is free for all. Serious painters of all levels of experience are welcome. Some concentrate on watercolors, others work in different media. In recent years over one hundred painters have shown up for all or part of the scheduled two weeks on the central Oregon Coast. On any one day there may be from twenty to sixty painters on site.

The **Workshop**, embedded in the PaintOut, provides paid instruction by Erik Sandgren for three days. The workshop emphasizes observation, composition, drawing, and color in the medium of watercolor. Beginner, intermediate, and experienced painters are all welcome. Discussion and individual critiques are based on shared assignments and demonstrations. Class runs from 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM. The cost is \$190. Participants may register by sending a non-refundable \$50 deposit payable to ErikSandgren at 811 North Thornton Street, Aberdeen, WA 98520. Class size is limited to 15-18 participants. Registrations are accepted until the class is full.

The second week of the PaintOut, an exhibition of work and slide presentation is held On Wednesday evening at the Newport Recreation Center. Painters bring along one or two of their pieces done at the Paint-Out. The public is welcome to attend. On the final day of the PaintOut a potluck and show-and-tell is arranged as an outdoor gathering.

The PaintOut and Workshop tends to attract painters who are open to mutual critique. Most see this as an opportunity to have fun while redirecting themselves to more direct and painterly responses. The PaintOut is a forum which encourages setting aside preoccupations with particular styles, methods, formulae, and techniques in favor of fresh observation and expressive responses in paint.

Regardless of weather, the PaintOut convenes daily at the sites indicated on the itinerary posted at [www.eriksandgren.com](http://www.eriksandgren.com) under EVENTS. Most often we meet at Oregon State Parks or waysides. Available subject matter varies from the sea itself to wave swept rocks, light houses, cliffs and headlands, seabirds, coastal forests, working harbors, marinas, boats, coastal streams and rivers, and beaches populated by summer visitors. On-site painting goes on all day and we share work in progress and informal discussion part of most afternoons. Many painters continue to work well into the evening light.

The PaintOut and Embedded Workshop remain non-advertised events that have grown and maintained themselves entirely by word of mouth and personal invitation. They offer camaraderie, critique and opportunities to see how other serious painters handle their gear and painting problems on site- sometimes in adverse conditions created by sun, rain, or wind.

## History

The PaintOut began in 1978 as a summer course in watercolor taught for Oregon State University by Nelson Sandgren. It was always held at the Oregon Coast when June could be relied upon for rain because Nelson loved that environment and found the dampness conducive to his broad wet handling of saturated color. When Nelson retired from Oregon State University in 1986, many friends and students prevailed upon him to start a coast painting class under his own auspices. People missed the camaraderie, the stimulus of painting problems and the critique. Thus it became a fee based workshop for many years and continued as such when co-taught by Nelson and Erik from 1988-94. Eventually, Nelson retired from any formal obligation to teach. He “bequeathed” this event to Erik in 2004. He last attended in the summer of 2006 just before his death. Those who were there that year witnessed Nelson’s focused production of powerful watercolors on site, right up to the very end of his life.

In the annual “Dear Artist Friends” letter he sent out in 2004, Nelson wrote, “After over fifty years of both teaching and painting at the coast I feel that it’s time to pass along my enjoyable role. Erik...has much experience, enthusiasm and competency with outdoor painting; we’ve done a lot of it together through the years. You, he, and I will have much opportunity to extend our mutual observations and interactions as we enjoy our usual group get-together times. I thank you all for your long friendships and cooperative spirit, your love of painting. I’ll continue to be one with you. See you July- at Newport! With Appreciation, Nelson Sandgren”

It is Nelson’s shared joy, persistence, and love of structurally vigorous painting that remain the driving spirit of the PaintOut and Workshop. See more of his life and work at <http://nelsonsandgren.com/>