

Santa Ysabel Art Gallery

30352 Highway 78 . P.O. Box 480 . Santa Ysabel, CA 92070 . 760-765-1676

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CONTACT: ANNIE ROWLEY
760-765-1676

SANTA YSABEL, CA . . .

JANE CULP EXHIBIT *ROCK MEDICINE* AT SANTA YSABEL ART GALLERY

At Santa Ysabel Art Gallery, March 2nd through April 14th, 2019 will be a one person show, *Rock Medicine*, an exhibit that will feature the oil and watercolor paintings of contemporary landscape artist Jane Culp. In this Santa Ysabel Art Gallery exhibit, Culp will show pieces painted in the Southern California low and high desert, and work that she has done in and around Joshua Tree and Yosemite National Parks. Reception for the Artist is Saturday, March 2nd, 4-7 pm. Admission is free. The public is invited.

Jane Culp is a rock person. She is a painter who paints the wilderness. Rocks, cliffs, mountains and boulders are her preferred subject matter. On painting rocks she says: "Experiencing the wonder of those strange earth forms with their air and light, talking to me, reaching out from the canvas while making their own space is exhilarating". In addition Culp states: "I am amazed and overwhelmed with the feeling of awe for dry California wilderness with its taunt and tortured skin of landscape. Working along the naked flank of the eastern Sierras near Yosemite, and among the strange forms within Anza Borrego Desert Badlands, once ocean floor but now what the geologists call 'an upside down Grand Canyon', I see millions of years of time stacked up in colored layers of sediment, tilted and compressed by tectonic forces, sculpted and polished by wind, rain and sun."

Painting on-site is not easy. Nature does not always sit quietly for her portraits. Wall Street Journal arts writer Lance Esplund wrote this in July, 2010 in regard to a then current show of Jane Culp's titled *Wilderness Work* at the Bowery Gallery: "When working outside in the desert, with its overpowering winds and relentless sun', the landscape painter writes, 'I strap my easel to my legs.... When I work in watercolor, it is held to the ground with either my knees or my feet'. Yet despite her struggle with the elements, Ms. Culp arrives in these expressive oils, charcoals and watercolors at a place of structural clarity and composure – while making palpable the rush she feels interacting with nature. Her pictures' restless skies and stepped sharply carved mountain peaks retain the vastness, monumentality and naturalism of their subjects. Yet ultimately she is painting not the landscape but the thrill of engagement."

Culp lives and paints in Anza and in Borrego. Anza especially, a home of some very fine and paintable rocks, cliffs and boulders. Coming from the eastern part of the United States, she became familiar with this rugged high desert area during a several decades long involvement as a painter with the Dorland Mountain Arts Colony, a nearby artist's retreat. This connection moved Culp to purchase land in nearby Anza, build a studio to work in and a straw bale cabin to live in. "The Anza land looked to me like a national park in its sheer beauty" she notes. Jane Culp has been an officially designated Resident Artist of California's Yosemite, Joshua Tree and Death Valley, National Parks. There is a chapter featuring her and her Yosemite work in the 2013 book Art in the National Parks (Fresco Fine Arts). She is quoted in this chapter saying: "We cannot get away from Nature, our bodies are nature and like our bodies nature is alive. My art explores that life as it is reflected in form".

Santa Ysabel Art Gallery is located at 30352 Highway 78 at Highway 79 in Santa Ysabel, seven miles below Julian. Admission to the gallery is free. Gallery hours are Thursday through Monday, 11AM - 5 PM, and by appointment. Closed Tuesday and Wednesday. For more information call gallerist Annie Rowley at 760-765-1676.