

## **SPIKE RESS**

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Born in Long Island, NY in 1948, Spike Ressa had early exposure to the world of commercial art through visits to his maternal grandfather's studio at Grand Central Station. Though his Air Force family moved from place to place, these early impressions never left him. In the 1960s the Ressa family transferred to Roswell, New Mexico. It was there Ressa began his art career at the age of sixteen working for a local sign company. With his strong interest in art and a passion for learning he quickly gained the skills needed to advance into ever better positions in new locations, eventually becoming art director for a major sign company in Las Vegas, Nevada.

In spite of success as a commercial artist, Ressa felt the pull of fine art ever since he first held a brush. Weekends and vacations were devoted to pursuit of his own artistic development, traveling with paints and camping gear to find the diverse landscapes that inspire his work. In 1978 he left commercial art to pursue painting full-time. He began with a focus on watercolor, a medium he still finds challenging and exciting. After gaining national acclaim as a watercolor artist, Ressa added oils to his repertoire. "I find the contrast between the way one must handle the paint and brushes in oil versus watercolor stimulates me to more creative and expressive use of both media," Ressa says. Today he works comfortably in both media but always with a preference for landscape. He knows well, and loves the land and clear light of the American Southwest but the challenge of new subject matter in different parts of the world is always rejuvenating. With a wanderlust born of his transient childhood, Ressa still seeks adventurous travel whenever possible. Ressa explains his approach, "No matter where I am, I try to respond with direct honesty to what is before me. It is my aim to capture the way a scene *feels*, not just the way a scene looks. Whether it's the bright light of a hot Utah desert or a misty cold day in Alaska, I hope to communicate that feeling to the viewer."

## **BACKGROUND**

Born: Long Island, New York, February 1948

An early interest in drawing and painting led to an apprenticeship with a Roswell, New Mexico Sign Company. After ten years of working in the sign business, Ressa gained the position as Art Director with a national firm in Las Vegas, Nevada. In 1978 Spike left commercial art to paint full-time.

## **SELECTED EXHIBITIONS AND AWARDS**

- 2014 Oil Painters of American National Juried Exhibition
- 2013-14 Western Federation of Watercolor Societies Annual Exhibition - **Award of Merit '13**
- 2012 Utah Spring Salon, Springville Museum of Art, Springville, Utah
- 2011-15 Maynard Dixon Country, invited artist, Thunderbird Foundation, Mt. Carmel, Utah
- 2010-11 Western Federation of Watercolor Societies Annual Exhibition - **Signature membership awarded**
- 2001 Helper Utah Annual Plein Air Competition - Honorable Mention
- 2000-13 Dixie Invitational, St. George, Utah - **Awards '11,'12, '13**
- 1999 Watercolor West Annual Juried Exhibition - **Grumbacker Gold Award - signature membership awarded**
- 1997 Southern Utah Invitational, Braithwaite Fine Arts Gallery, Cedar City, Utah
- 1997 The Regional, St. George Art Museum
- 1996 Utah Spring Salon, Springville Museum of Art, Springville, Utah
- 1994-95 Expo Arte, The Juarez Art Museum, Juarez, Mexico
- 1989 American Watercolor Society 122nd International Exhibition
- 1988 San Diego Watercolor Society International Exhibit - **3rd and Purchase Award**
- 1988 Arts for the Parks top 100 for traveling exhibition
- 1986 New Mexico Color and Light Annual Exhibit
- 1986-99 Dixie Invitational, St. George, Utah, - **Purchase Award 1992 other awards '05-'10, '12**
- 1986 Watercolor West Annual Juried Exhibition
- 1985 The Utah Experience Exhibit, The Museum of Natural History, Taipei, Taiwan

1985 San Diego Watercolor Society International Exhibit  
1985 Rocky Mountain National Water Media Exhibit - **Dick Blick Award**  
1985 Cedar City National Juried Exhibition - **Purchase Award**  
1985 Watercolor West Annual Juried Exhibition  
1984 Utah Watercolor Society Annual Exhibition  
1984 Rocky Mountain National Water Media Exhibit  
1984-85 Western Federation of Watercolor Societies Exhibit - **First Merit Award 1984**  
1983 Utah Watercolor Society Annual Exhibition - **First Merit Award**  
1983 Cedar City National Juried Exhibition

### **GALLERY AFFILIATIONS**

Bingham Gallery, Mt. Carmel, UT  
David Ericson Fine Art, Salt Lake City, UT  
Fibonacci Fine Art, St. George, UT  
Robertson Fine Art, Hondo, NM  
Worthington Gallery, Springdale, UT

### **MUSEUM AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

Charles M. Russell Museum, Great Falls, MT  
Bountiful/Davis Art Center, Bountiful, Utah  
Dixie University Sears Gallery, St. George, Utah  
Saint George City Art Museum, St. George, UT  
Southern Utah Museum of Art, Cedar City, UT

### **PUBLIC AND CORPORATE COLLECTIONS**

Cedar City Art Committee, Cedar City, Utah  
Dean Witter, Salt Lake City, Utah  
Deloitte, Haskins and Sells, Denver, Colorado  
Fidelity Investments, Salt Lake City, Utah  
First Interstate Bank, Las Vegas, Nevada  
Flanigan's Inn, Zion National Park, Utah  
Fox and Company, Salt Lake City, Utah  
Iron County, State of Utah  
Parowan, Utah, Main Street Visitors Center  
Phillips Petroleum Company, Bartlesville, Oklahoma  
Review Journal Newspaper, Las Vegas, Nevada  
Silverlake Properties of Southern California  
State Bank of Southern Utah, Cedar City, Utah  
State Bank of Southern Utah, Parowan, Utah  
The City of Boulder City, Nevada  
The City of Salt Lake City, Utah  
The Leavitt Insurance Group, Cedar City, Utah  
United Bank of Brighton, Colorado  
Valley View Hospital, Cider City, Utah  
Watkiss and Campbell, Salt Lake City, Utah  
Winder and Haslam, Salt Lake City, Utah

### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

Southern Utah University - winter 1997, Special Instructor of Art  
Southern Utah University - 1994, guest artist  
Brigham Young University - winter 1992, guest artist  
Southern Utah University - winter 1984, Special Instructor of Art  
Southern Utah University - Continuing Education - summer 1984, 1989, 1990

Boulder City Art Institute Workshop, Boulder City, UT  
Cedar City Art Retreats, Cedar City, UT  
Duck Creek Village, Workshop, Duck Creek, UT  
Las Vegas Artist's Co-op Workshop, Las Vegas, NV  
Southern Utah Society of Artists Workshop, St. George, UT  
St. George Artist's Co-op Workshop, St. George, UT

Utah Watercolor Society Workshop, Cedar City, UT  
Willow Glen Art Retreats Workshop, Cedar City, UT