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OCTOBER 2012

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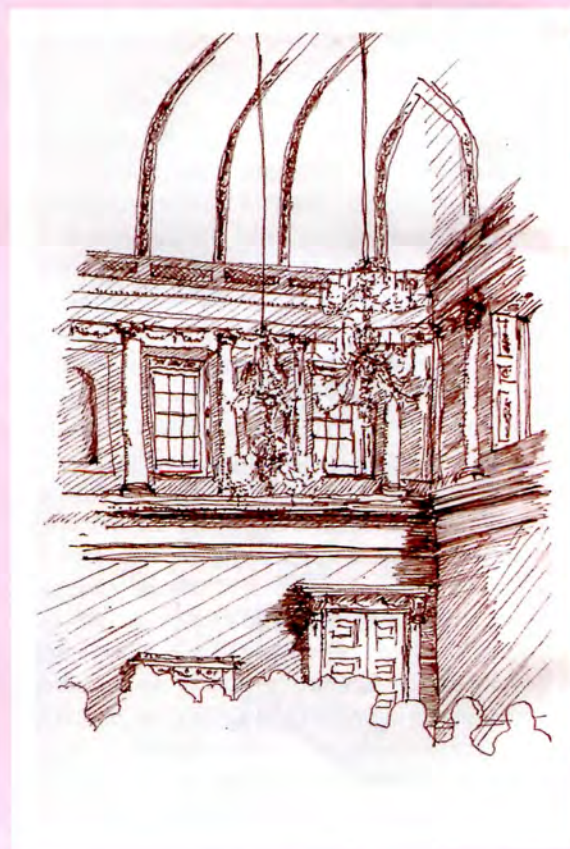
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Be in the Moment Laurin McCracken

I try to draw often; sometimes using just the glasses and serveware on the table at a lunch meeting for subject matter. *Interior, Bath, England* (below, right) was drawn during a meeting in a conference center, which thankfully was a very rich interior space full of history and detail.

I also sketch when I travel. I'm a studio painter, and the sketches I make related to my complex paintings are very different than those I do on the road. *Temple of Poseidon* (below, opposite), for instance, is an example of a sketch I made to record a site I visited.

One of the benefits of sketching is both being in the moment and being a part of the continuum at the same time. While the sketch of the barn in Hancock, New Hampshire, (below) is about recording a historic structure, it's also





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about seeing how the sun falls across the wall of the barn and how the light shapes its cupola.

I come away from making a sketch feeling rested and exhilarated. Some of my favorite times have been spent with a glass of wine in a lovely piazza, surrounded by ancient buildings bathed in late afternoon sun. While creating the view of Balquhider, Scotland (above), I got so caught up in the moment that I didn't notice it had started to rain until I realized that my sister was holding an umbrella over me.

As a realist, I work very hard to capture things as I see them in my paintings. Sketching, however, allows me to filter out the "noise" and concentrate on what makes that place special. While I can remember clearly a few moments when I took what I knew was going to be a terrific photo, I can remember almost every time I stopped and did a detailed drawing of a place. What I've drawn becomes a part of me. ▣



Find out how Russell Jewell compares sketching to watercolor painting at www.artistsnetwork.com/medium/watercolor/jewell-sketching-landscape.