

## Chris Potter @ Fast Frame

## Going Rogue

By ERIN J. SMITH / CASA

**WITH SWEEPING, BOLD COLORS AND RHYTHMIC SKIES** reminiscent of Van Gogh, Chris Potter now paints the beloved Santa Barbara locales where he once played as a child.

"I've always felt like I would be an artist," said Potter, whose paintings are currently on display at Fast Frame on State Street through June 24th. "But I was discouraged by what everyone was saying, that I would be a



Chris Potter

starving artist or wouldn't ever be famous until I was dead. I repressed it until college. I started questioning, 'What would I do if I was stuck in a room or deserted on an island somewhere?' I would paint. I would draw."

A local in every sense of the word, *plein air* artist Chris Potter grew up in Goleta, attended Ellwood Elementary School, and graduated from both Dos Pueblos High School and UCSB. Although he started out studying

philosophy and then math at UCSB, Potter settled into psychology for a major. But his interest in psychology soon inspired a process of self-examination, as he often found himself filling notebook after notebook with drawings while sitting in class. It wasn't long before he realized that his true passion was art, so he switched majors one last time.

Following graduation, Potter got a job as a stockbroker, but spent every

chance he got painting. "Even though I got a job right out of college, I still had this thing that I would do art every day," said Potter. "In the last five years, I kicked it into high gear. I'd walk out to the street during my lunch hour – still in my suit – and paint every single day. I'd paint nocturnes at night when the kids went to sleep. Whatever it took. It was a huge mission, but everything worked out and it happened. Now all I do is paint."

Potter remembers those days fondly and still loves painting out of doors. Come July, Potter will lead a group of twenty artists in a Quick Draw Competition, where they'll descend on downtown Santa Barbara during July's 1st Thursday event and paint *en plein air* for about two hours before displaying their art work for a one-night-only reception, complete with artist awards, wine tasting, live music, and an art sale at Casa De la Guerra. Potter plans to continue the event annually.

"Painting is more than just painting," he said. "It brings me outside and helps me accomplish something by going out there, too. It's not just going outside and observing



Christmas at the Paradise Cafe, 8" x 10", oil on linen panel by Chris Potter

it for yourself, but bringing something back for everyone to see. It's about capturing, recording, and sharing an experience. It's about community."

Fast Frame is located at 1333 State Street. Hours are 10am to 5:30pm, Monday through Friday, and 10am to 4pm, Saturday. For more information, call 882-1058 or visit [www.fastframesb.com](http://www.fastframesb.com). For more information about the Plein Air Santa Barbara Quick Draw Competition, call 252-7052 or visit [www.chrispotterart.com](http://www.chrispotterart.com).



De la Guerra Colors, 20" x 30", oil on canvas by Chris Potter