

Lori Putnam (1962 – )

Recognized for her expressive brushwork, contemporary compositions, and intelligent use of color, modern American impressionist Lori Putnam paints small- to medium-sized works *en plein air* and creates large paintings in her Tennessee studio. She has painted in more than 30 countries, and believes works created from life help her maintain freshness in her studio paintings.

Putnam is recognized as an exceptional living artist. Her award-winning paintings are highly sought after by collectors, and have been featured in numerous issues of today's major art magazines and journals. She is a member of respected organizations including the Salmagundi Club of New York City, the Oil Painters of America, the Portrait Society, the National Oil and Acrylic Painters Society, American Women Artists, and the California Art Club.

Museums have recognized Putnam's works for awards, exhibitions, or their permanent collections. Among them are The Truxton Museum of Art, The Brinton Museum in Big Horn, Wyoming, The Hockaday Museum of Art in Kalispell, Montana, the Custum's House Museum in Clarksville, Tennessee, The High Museum in Atlanta, Georgia, the Irvine Museum in Irvine, California, and The Academy Art Museum in Easton, Maryland.

In 2019 she accepted an appointment as Vice President of Art Ambassador for a Colorful World, and travels often to work with children and adults in less-advantaged communities. These experiences shed light on her purpose. Putnam says, "It is clear why I am here on the Earth. Bringing joy and laughter amidst the most difficult circumstances fills my soul."

In 2021, Putnam won the *Grand Prize and the People's Choice Award* in the Plein Air Salon Competition; two different paintings chosen from more than 8,000 entries.



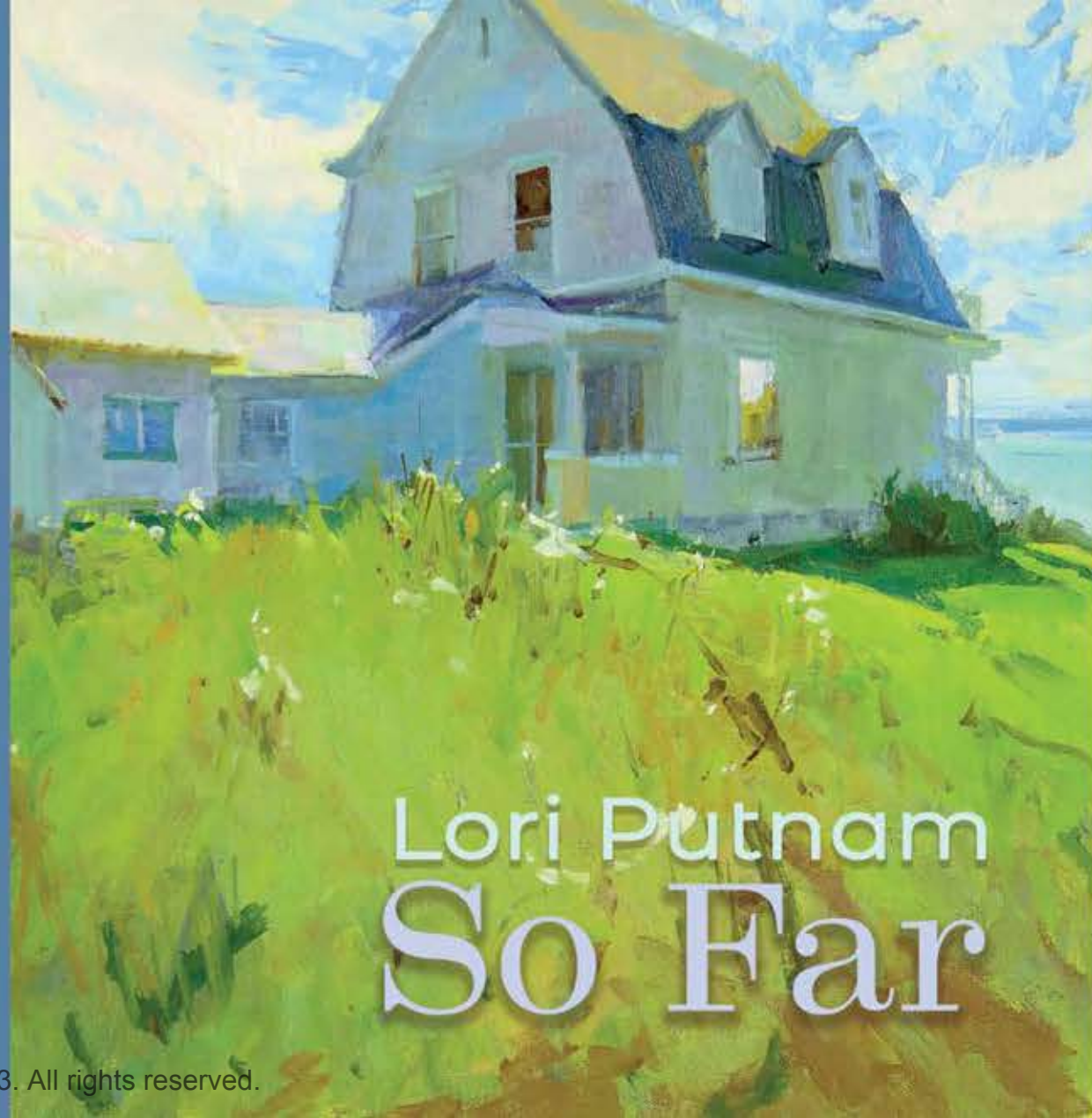
Lori Putnam in Yorkshire, England. Photo by Kate Cobble.

loriputnam.com



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Lori Putnam So Far



Lori Putnam So Far

Lori Putnam is a master of light and color. That is immediately apparent when looking at her work. As Hans Hoffman taught his students, "In Nature, light creates the color; in Art, color creates the light." This statement defines Lori's paintings. Her rich colors instantly enchant the viewer and her bravura brushstrokes are captivating. The result is a bold and brilliant effect of natural light; be it intense, subtle, or mystical.



An accomplished plein air painter, Lori has traveled throughout the country and the world. Her expert eye finds the most genuine and elegant light situations, which she quickly paints. She records the visual effect of her subject in swift forms and brilliant colors. Her style is unique, instantly recognizable, and always enchanting.

Jean Stern  
Director Emeritus  
The Irvine Museum



Jean Stern giving Lori the Irvine Museum Award of the Most Plein Air Invitational in 2016.

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Dawn and Lori painting in the olive groves near Peschici, Italy in 2008.

## Foreword

Dawn E. Whitelaw

It may seem as though Lori has moved quickly from being a skilled painter to an artist finding her own point of view. This transformation has happened due to the "miracles" of hard work and determination. Her paintings are the product of experimentation and play, not formula.

She is not just a slightly different version of other painters, but is uniquely herself. You see this in the choices she makes about chroma, key, and composition. Oh... did I mention subject matter? Lori's paintings are not limited to particular favored subject matter. You certainly will not be bored as she takes you on her journey. She finds something to paint everywhere. You would expect spectacular views as she travels to New Zealand or to England's coast, but she is finding extraordinary compositions nearby in Charlotte, Tennessee, or down a back alley in Florida. This is because her real subjects are shapes and color/value relationships.

The title of the book is "So Far." I can't wait to see what comes next.

Dawn E. Whitelaw



Dawn E. Whitelaw

## Kevin Macpherson

I am honored to write a few words for my friend, Lori. We first met eight years ago. I was the keynote speaker for the Plein Air Convention in Monterey, California. As a leader in the *plein air* movement and a judge for many



Art Ambassador for a Colorful World with the children in Guatemala, 2018.

international art organizations, I pride myself on being aware of upcoming talent. I was acquainted with Lori's work through magazines and exhibitions, but this was the first time we met in person. I attended her lecture and painting demonstration, and was blown away by her presentation. She was articulate and her presentation included both humor and humility. I remember thinking, "This girl is a rising star." It wasn't until she traveled with me on our Art Ambassadors for a Colorful World painting adventure in Guatemala that I truly got to know her and see the light that glows inside this talented woman. I witnessed that trip as a pivotal moment that awakened Lori's true purpose: a realization that she has a gift that goes beyond making pictures.

We are kindred spirits. We love the act of painting, but we both have found great reward in generously sharing our knowledge and teaching others how to enhance their lives through the art spirit. We have traveled and painted together, mentoring students, and offering art opportunities to less-privileged children in Peru, Guatemala, Ireland, and Italy.

Artists work for years to find the formula for success, but what I find special about Lori, and what I admire about all great artists, is that she does not rely on formulas, techniques, or repetition. Instead, Lori is constantly evolving, growing, searching, and discovering anew.

Art is about letting your life unfold the way it was designed. When we peel away the layers of society and the stains and burdens of the past to reveal the true shining colors of our spirit, our true heart and art can emerge.

Lori's work is all about sunlight and the luscious color relationships drawn from nature. She pulls the viewer in giving a broader understanding of life and nature.

Artists and art connoisseurs will treasure this book. It is a collection of inspired recordings of her life and vision quest. These pages are filled with beautiful subjects. Her paintings have benefited from years of experience and continued education. It is a dynamic combination of technique and talent; decisive and disciplined. It is a balanced approach of intellect and intuition; a union of realism and abstraction. Dip your fingers into her icing-like textures, her tasty color combinations, and her expressive effects of light. Lori's personal style is a visual feast for your eyes. Lori Putnam has secured a special place in the archives of artists. The emotions and optimism we see and feel in Lori's work are brilliant and luminous.



Kevin painting in Guatemala with Art Ambassador for a Colorful World.



Lori and Kevin in Guatemala.

Lori is a person of determination and passion in all she does. She will continue down the path of creative exploration with the freedom to fail and the potential to succeed.

Kevin Macpherson Author  
Master Artist, Oil Painters of America  
Master Artist, American Impressionist Society  
Master Artist, California Art Club  
First President Plein Air Painters of America  
CEO and founder, Art Ambassador For A Colorful World



## Quang Ho



Quang Ho  
Photo by Peter Sandground.

To be a great artist, and achieve the success that might go with it requires 99% dedication, tenacity, love, hard work, and 1% talent. Lori Putnam is the model of what it takes to be an artist.

When I first met Lori, she had just put aside another life to dedicate herself to painting. She went “out on a limb,” as it were, not knowing where it might lead her, risking everything. I don’t think I’ve met another artist who is more dedicated and determined than Lori. Of course, I witnessed her struggles at first. Some painters rarely make it past that stage. But Lori took what she was taught and expanded on it, adding colors and

expressions uniquely her own. As a result, her paintings are filled with joy and bravura.

Her work and teaching have become a great source of inspiration for countless other artists worldwide. I am always left with a smile when someone asks if I know of Lori Putnam. “Yes. She’s the one who lives her life in art.”

Quang Ho



Lori Putnam and Quang Ho in Nashville, Tennessee, 2010.

## Scott L. Christensen

Observing the paintings Lori has put together is pure joy. Her superb craftsmanship is a permanent part of Lori’s daily vocabulary.

Beautiful high-key values give the viewer a sense that the colors chosen for each painting come from a conviction. Lori’s decades of study, scrutiny, and observation have made this book a marvelous feat — a beautiful piece of poetry that should be in everyone’s library.

Scott L. Christensen



Scott L. Christensen



Scott Christensen and Lori at the Plein Air Convention, in Monterey, California in 2013.

View with a Room  
2014  
Oil on stretched canvas  
34 in x 36 in  
Île-de-Bréhat, France

In August 2013 I visited Haidee-Jo Summers on the tiny French island of Île-de-Bréhat. *Drying Out*, 8"x10", and *Long Walk to the Ferry*, 9"x12", (below) are two *plein air* pieces from that trip. The studio work (right) came together a year later.





Pause de l'après-midi  
2020  
Oil on linen on panel  
18 in x 24 in  
Avignon, France

Cityscape Award of Excellence, Oil Painters of America Salon, 2022  
2nd Place, American Impressionist Society Annual National Juried Exhibition, 2022

*La Banasterie*, 12"x9", (below) was painted in Avignon, France during a six-week trip through Europe in 2013. I stayed in a lovely flat on this hidden street for a week and painted every day. Largely overlooked by tourists, the owners of local coffee shops and restaurants often brought me a complimentary cup of coffee or a glass of wine as I painted.





**Safe Harbor**  
2020  
Oil on linen on panel  
30 in x 40 in  
Charleston, South Carolina

First Place Overall, November Plein Air Salon Competition, 2020  
3rd Place, Safe Harbor, American Women Artists' Spring Online Showcase, 2021  
3rd Place, Safe Harbor, January Bold Brush Competition, 2021  
Grand Prize Winner Plein Air Salon 10th Annual Awards, 2021

*Abstracted Harbor*, 11"x14", (below) was painted in San Diego, California. I was one of the faculty members for the annual Plein Air Convention there in 2017. As I painted it, I remembered a photograph I had from Charleston, North Carolina. It was a quick snapshot taken through a car window while on a trip with Plein Air Painters of the Southeast. Three years later, *Safe Harbor* (right) was painted in my studio. Sometimes it takes a long time and miles of travel for an idea to materialize.





Santa Catalina Arch  
2021  
Plein Air  
Oil on linen on panel  
11 in x 14 in  
Antigua, Guatemala



The work I do in *plein air* informs my studio painting. The reverse is also true. These two *plein air* pieces from Guatemala in 2021 and 2022 have colors and values

Girl in a Pink Hat  
2022  
Plein Air  
Oil on linen on panel  
11 in x 14 in  
Antigua, Guatemala



similar to those used in a studio piece from 2020 titled *Sicilian Roots* (page 103).



**Triptych: Tribute to the Eastern Sierra**  
2022  
Oil on linen on panel  
18 in x 72 in  
Iceberg Lake, Eastern Sierra, California





Sea at Hookhead  
2017  
Plein Air  
Gouache on 140 lb cold press  
3 in x 6 in  
Hookhead Lighthouse, County Wexford, Ireland



Hookhead Lighthouse is a favorite painting location for artists who participate in the Art in the Open festival in Ireland. This gouache was a quick "catch" at the end of a long day of oil painting.

Aguas Calientes  
2022  
Plein Air  
Gouache on 140 lb cold press  
8 in x 6 in  
Aguas Calientes, Peru



Quick studies are always the best. In the late afternoon, just outside of Machu Picchu Park, the light disappears quickly behind the steep mountains. Gouache was the perfect medium for a good sketch at the end of the day.



## Chronology



Lori with her parents and brothers, Easter, 1963.

- 1962** Lori Leigh Harris is born in Nashville, Tennessee, on July 17, 1962; the youngest of three children. Parents, Mae Springer and James Oscar Harris ("Jim"), and older brothers James Michael ("Mike") and Joseph Richmond ("Ricky") live in a modest home in Nashville.
- 1964** Jim and Mae divorce. Mae finds work as a bank teller. Mae, grandmother Claudia ("Me-ma"), and aunt Geneva ("Aunt Skeez") purchase home together in Nashville. Jim remarries and is rarely present in Lori's life.
- 1965** Mae marries Charlie Clark Grigg ("Pops"). They build a house in Cheatham County, Tennessee where Charlie has inherited 48 acres bordered by the Tennessee Wildlife Game Reserve. Mae is an exemplary homemaker. Charlie works for the U.S. Postal Service.
- 1966 - 1978** Lori connects with nature as she spends time by herself playing in the yard, running through the woods, or pick-nicking along a nearby stream. She enjoys drawing and crafting and makes a life-long friend, Tracy Harris.
- 1971 - 1975** Brother Mike graduates high school and leaves to attend university. He marries his high school sweetheart Judy in 1973. Mae and Charlie separate several times over the course of the next four years. Lori often stays with one of her aunts or her grandmother. Her favorite time is with Aunt Skeez who encourages and cares for her. In 1974, brother Ricky graduates high school, joins the U.S. Navy, and marries. Lori paints large mural of nature scene in her family home.
- 1976 - 1978** Lori begins high school at Cheatham County Central High School and takes her first art class with Mrs. Brenda Boyte. Lori becomes the school newspaper's cartoonist; a position she will keep for the next four years. Lori takes speech and drama classes and performs in her first high school play. Her interest in musical theater begins.