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**Special Report: Painting for the Planet**

By John Oberlin, ABN Intern

DANA POINT, CA--Every morning, as [Cliff Wassmann](#) walked through the doors to the [Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia](#) on his way to class, he would see [Frederic Edwin Church's](#) "Cotopaxi" painting of the smoke-bellowing South American volcano the piece is named after. Ever since then, Church and the other painters in the [Hudson River School](#), a group of mid-19th-century landscape painters, have been a guiding inspiration through Wassmann's painting career.



Cliff Wassmann, above, who will be among the SOLO artists at [Artexpo New York](#), travels around the world, capturing unique landscapes of lands most people may never see. His most recent series of paintings are based on photographs from a trip he took to Antarctica. Shown below, "Livin' on the Edge," which Wassmann says has been symbolical of his own life and career choice, "Afterglow - Lemere Channel" and "View From Ronge Island."

Today, he strives to achieve the quality of such 19th-century masters, who like Wassmann, provided the public with images it might not otherwise have seen.

Wassmann, who will be among the SOLO artists at [Artexpo New York](#), says that when people do not know about a place, they may not care about its existence. He adds, people remember a painting of a place better than a photograph because of the emotion the painter can put into it. And, by remembering, people have more of an appreciation for these unique, and sometimes endangered, parts of the world.

Wassmann has traveled across the United States and to Italy, Greece, Mexico and Easter Island in Chile,

photographing diverse landscapes as well as man-made structures. His most recent painting muse is the white, rough terrain of Antarctica. "The abstract shapes there are amazing," he says, referring to the icebergs. He traveled there in 1998 to take photographs. But the photography never sold. "Last year I had a creative crisis, so I started to paint the Antarctica photos, and everything just clicked then."

Although he paints from photographs, he specifically does not want to create a painting that looks like a photograph. "Photography is a machine to duplicate reality -- a painting is so much more than that," he says. "With painting, I can manipulate the colors and the softness of a line to create an illusion of depth better than a photograph."



**"Afterglow - Lemere Channel"**

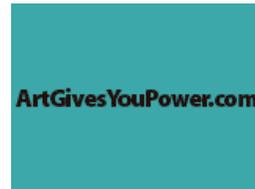
To create paintings more realistic than photographs, Wassmann uses techniques such as blurring lines and changing colors to create more motion and depth. He considers his direct experience of a place to be most important when painting from a photograph.

When he took the photograph on which



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For information on being part of the SOLO Artists Section, contact Debbie Kuhn at 216.750.0358



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