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Art Imitates Life for Watercolorist Becker

By Andrea A. Firth



Rob Becker at work and play at his daughter's soccer game Photo David Becker

"I spend a lot of time sitting on the sidelines," says Rob Becker, an affable, young father of three children ages seven, nine, and twelve years. Becker, who works as an architectural illustrator, moved his family to Orinda about five years ago for the same reason many families come to this city—the schools. While he is able to work without interruption in his compact poolside studio during the day, he finds after school hours and weekends are filled with his kids' sporting activities.

"When my son participated in the Orinda Aquatics Program a couple of years ago, I used the one hour practice time to paint instead of driving back and forth or doing other errands," says Becker. He enjoyed the artistic outlet and the challenge presented by the composition of the scene with the constant movement of the water polo players. From there he started to bring his paints to baseball games, soccer games, and swim meets, whatever the sport of season turned out to be—that became Becker's landscape.

"Kids are really curious about the fact that I paint at games," says Becker. "They always ask where they are in the painting," he adds with a laugh. He has found the adults on the sidelines quite interested in his work as well, and he has sold several of his watercolors to players' parents. He has also been recognized in the wider Lamorinda art world; five of Becker's sport scene watercolors were recently chosen to be part of the permanent collection in the new Lafayette Library and Learning Center.

Becker will display an array of his artwork in the Orinda Library Gallery's November exhibition. In addition to a number of his sports scenes, Becker will show watercolor landscapes that he painted plein air in northern Lake Tahoe

and scenes from a trip to Mexico. The works will be available for purchase, and Becker says he will contribute ten percent of the proceeds to the Educational Foundation of Orinda.

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