

Chasing the Light

Austin Bergstrom to LAX (1st stop, 1st plane change)



Thursday, October 10, 2019

When I was five I was given one of those globes of the Earth; the sort that sit tilted on the edge of your desk and spin on a plastic axis. And when I was six my Aunt Madelyn came to visit. One morning (and I have to tell you that the woman had a mean streak) she walked into my room and started to spin the globe as fast as she could make it go while telling me that we were, in fact actually spinning faster than the plastic earth she continued to swat at. I have to admit that it messed up my way of thinking more than a little bit, and having not yet fully grasped the intricacies of gravity I spent the rest of the summer hanging onto what ever was at hand so as not to fly off into space without warning. (I'd had some high speed merry-go-round experience)

Tonight I flew out of Austin Bergstrom heading for LAX on the first leg of a lengthy and complicated trip. It was nearly dusk when we left and we chased the sunset all the way to the Pacific Ocean, but never managed to quite catch it. As I stared out the window at the brilliant orange horizon I thought about the fact that we were probably traveling about 500 mph plus or minus, but the earth was quite clearly spinning even faster. This made me finally consent that my crazy old Aunt had been right all along.

It also occurred to me that as painter and a curious human, I literally do chase the light. Light informs us. It illuminates dark corners, exposes secrets, and creates shadows. It offers atmosphere and stirs the imagination. In a literal sense, light defines the colors and contours of our world, but if considered metaphorically, it has the capacity to open our minds and our lives by forcing us to see what is really there. I'm not just waxing lyrical here, although admittedly

I've found the Cathay Pacific Lounge in the international terminal, I'm exploring a parallel between the actual and the idea, which as an abstract expressionist is my job.

The trip ahead of me will lead me to the blue light of the equator, to the depths of the Bali Straight, to the shadows of Mt. Rinjani and to the core of my admiration and love for a woman who has been a role model and inspiration to me for 30 years. I haven't brought my oils on this trip as it's short, only 14 days there and back, but I've brought my sketch books, some water colors and pens, and the focus of these studies will be about addressing preconceptions, overcoming fear and learning to live fully in spite of an approaching finish line.

Judy Blundell