

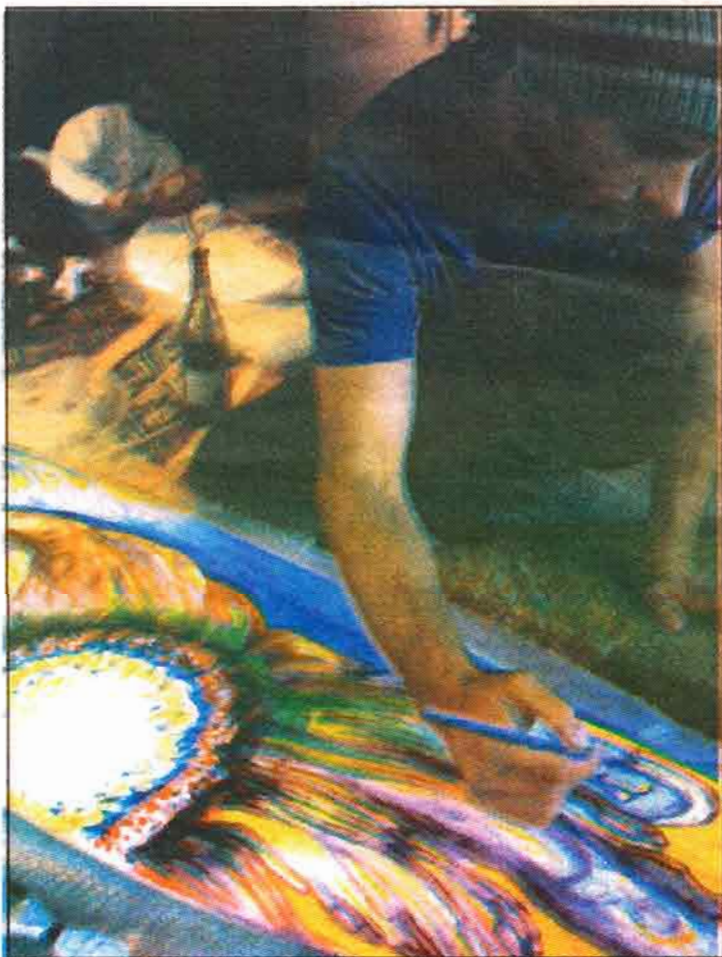
Hard-charging star of new surf movie has home and studio on Central Coast

By Brady Teufel

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Inspiration is like a splinter in the foot—you can't stop dwelling on it until it's released. From the urchin-infested reefs of Sri Lanka to the cactus-rimmed pointbreaks of southern Chile, local surfer and artist Christian Enns gathers the spines of stimulation from his overseas adventures and recreates them in the quiet confines of his Morro Bay painting studio.

Combining a vibrant Van Gogh-style of impressionism with brush and canvas, and an equally stunning and energetic Tommy Curren-esque prowess with surfboard and wave, 25-year-old Enns, manages to maintain a lifestyle of travel, painting, and wave riding that may not be making him big bucks yet, but nevertheless provides a livelihood most members of the surfing clan may envy.



SURBOARD ARTIST—Christian Enns lays down some color on a surfboard.

"I can't stop myself from painting or surfing," claims Enns. Judging by his hefty artist portfolio of vibrant acrylic landscapes, surf scenes, and adventure-inspired portraits, and an equally impressive collection of photos of him surfing great waves around the world, he makes little effort to hinder his creative flow in or out of the ocean.

In the water Enns is definitely a force to be reckoned with. He is rated 126th in the World Qualifying Series of surfing, has twelve seasons of North Shore experience, is sponsored by Channel Islands surfboards, El Nino and Island Style clothing companies, Mormaii wetsuits, and Sex Wax.

He is the hard-charging star in Marshall Hattori's recent instant classic movie "Imagine Surfing as Sadhana." At the movie's recent screening at the San Luis Obispo Vet's Hall, in-the-water performance drew gasps and hoots from the house as he weaves from one tube to the next.

With a father who made his living from the sea, Enns was taught to be comfortable in the water at a young age. "My dad was a diver and he would take me out to the rocks

offshore of Studio Drive to get a feeling for the ocean's strength," Enns recalls. "Sometimes I would practice hanging on to the rocky wall while the swells and surges tried to pull me back down."

At age 11 he discovered that his passion for art was almost as deep-seated as his desire to surf. "Both are creative outlets," says Enns, with a serious look in his eye. "Both are meditative and teach you patience."

Beneath Enns' measured countenance and easy smile there is a fearless waterman who likes to surf big waves. As all who have seen "Imagine Surfing as Sadhana," Enns' is not afraid to paddle out into a double-overhead, uncharted





ON THE SEARCH—Much of Enns' painting has been inspired by his world-wide surfing travels. This one was inspired by his trip to Morocco.

Moroccan pointbreak by himself.

"There were so many times with Marshall (director of "Sadhana") when I was out there by myself wishing that my friends were there to share the perfect surf with," Enns said. When I asked him to describe how it felt to have a theater full of people rallying behind your every wave, Enns told me that this was the payoff for so many months of dedicated soul-surfing. "It was work [gathering footage for the film]," he said. "I hope my friends are stoked when they see this

Davey Smith and Steve Denham for inspiring him to surf as well as he does and to Cuesta College art teacher Marianne Nausha for refining his skills on canvas.

With an Associate of the Arts degree under his belt, Enns will be attending Cal Poly next year to refine his artistic talents and expand his academic credentials. Having spent much of the past three years traveling the world and surfing locales such as New Zealand, Indonesia, Australia, and South America, Enns is also currently work-

these epic surfing destinations.

"Everyone feels an inspiration in their life, some take it in and that's their jewel—they live off of it," Enns said. "But some pour it back out and I want that to be my future."

Besides uncovering countless perfect surf scenes and honing his wave riding abilities in every type of setup imaginable, Enns has returned from his global adventures with a comprehensive outlook on the world which he incorporates into his paintings of the

"Traveling really shifted my subject matter and vision of reality," he explained. "I look at things differently, my inspirations are different, and my art is more free and psychedelic."

Enns' most recent creations are on display at the "Surf and Sea" exhibition at the Gallery Paradiso in Morro Bay. You can also find examples of his art under the previous artist of the month in the gallery section of Surfer Magazine's website at www.surfer-mag.com.