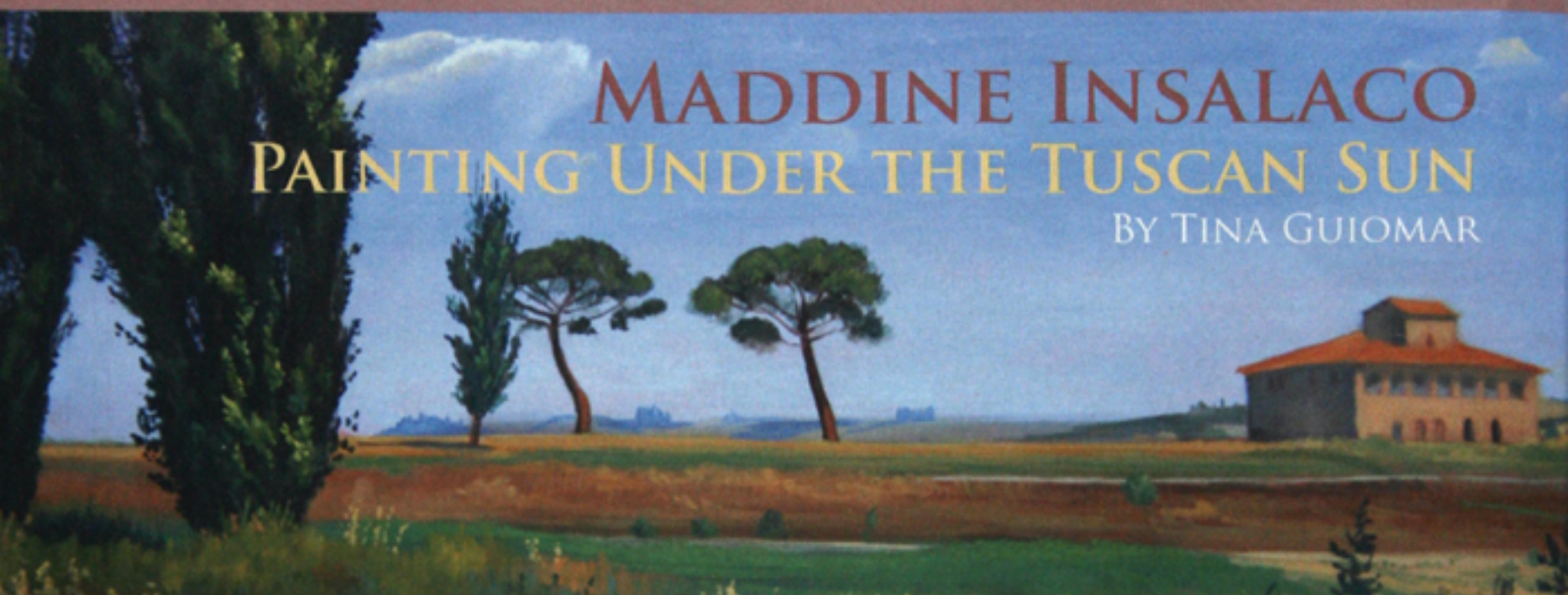


MADDINE INSALACO

PAINTING UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN

BY TINA GUIOMAR



Italy ... the name alone conjures up a vision of diverse landscapes with complex hills, valleys, beautiful flowers and a warm Mediterranean glow. A longtime tradition in Italy is *alfresco* painting. It began in the early 17th century; artists would flock to the Tuscan hills of Campagna Romana to capture the beauty of the land. The word literally means "open air." *Alfresco* painting is basically painting outside. It's the immediate gratification of your outdoor experience with nature, such as with the way the sun hits a hill at a certain time of day. With that experience, *alfresco* artists focus their work on nature and their real life experiences in it. They utilize the light in nature to create a mood in the paintings.

Artist Maddine Insalaco brings the beauty of Italy's landscape into her paintings, concentrating her artistic work on *alfresco* painting. She spent 10 years in Italy working at the United Nations and decided she loved Italy but not the job. She received her MFA in painting at the New York Academy of Art and, with her long history spent in Italy, found a way to get back

there to continue her *alfresco* painting. Presently she divides her time between marketing herself in New York City and living "under the Tuscan sun" in Italy. She began an open-air painting workshop during the summer months that travels the Tuscan landscape. The group program is held on farms situated on classic Italian landscapes in Montalcino, Buonconvento and Civito Castelana. Artists get the opportunity to paint *alfresco* and also enjoy the rich culture of the land and the people, drinking wines and enjoying the gastronomy of Italian cuisine.

Maddine's teaching and her own work go hand in hand. She has the opportunity to teach enthusiasts about *alfresco* painting, enjoying and exploring Italy, and also gains free time doing the same with her own work. *Alfresco* painting is limited by nature; there is only so much time in the day to retain the lighting and paint it simultaneously. Maddine's paintings tend to be small 5 x 15 inch pieces. The craftsmanship of the work is apparent when you look closely - she has mastered the illusion of smooth lines and a brushstroke is barely visible. The work is



Bibbiano Valley, oil/ 5.75 x 15 inches