

Artist Statement

Robert Anke

I think I've always made things in order to satisfy the urge to create. Whether it's pottery, painting, carpentry, illustration, music or whatever, the desire to make things has been a constant in my life for as long as I can remember. My first grade teacher, Mrs Phillip, dubbed me "Artist Anke" and now, almost 45 years later, I have no idea whether she shaped my life with that moniker or if it actually described me back then. Maybe both.

While I may spend time working in various mediums, I never stray far from painting, drawing, and ceramics; they are my home base. With regard to illustration, a little mix of dark and light, or contrasting themes in general- often with a dash of humor- seem to be the things that run through my work. My paintings lean toward landscapes because I'm constantly awed by scenery while riding a bicycle, which is another lifelong love of mine. The nerve of nature to interrupt my rides in order for me to capture photos to paint from is eternally galling.

Teaching art reminds me to keep my sense of wonder alive. Kids are terrific coworkers and their constant experience of "the new" is a good reminder to see the world with beginner's eyes; to see it as a beautiful, transient thing. I want to capture it, tweak it a little bit visually, and put it out there again for people to enjoy.