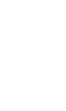


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Extreme Plein Air

## Extreme Plein Air: Painting an Active Volcano

By [Plein Air Today](#) -

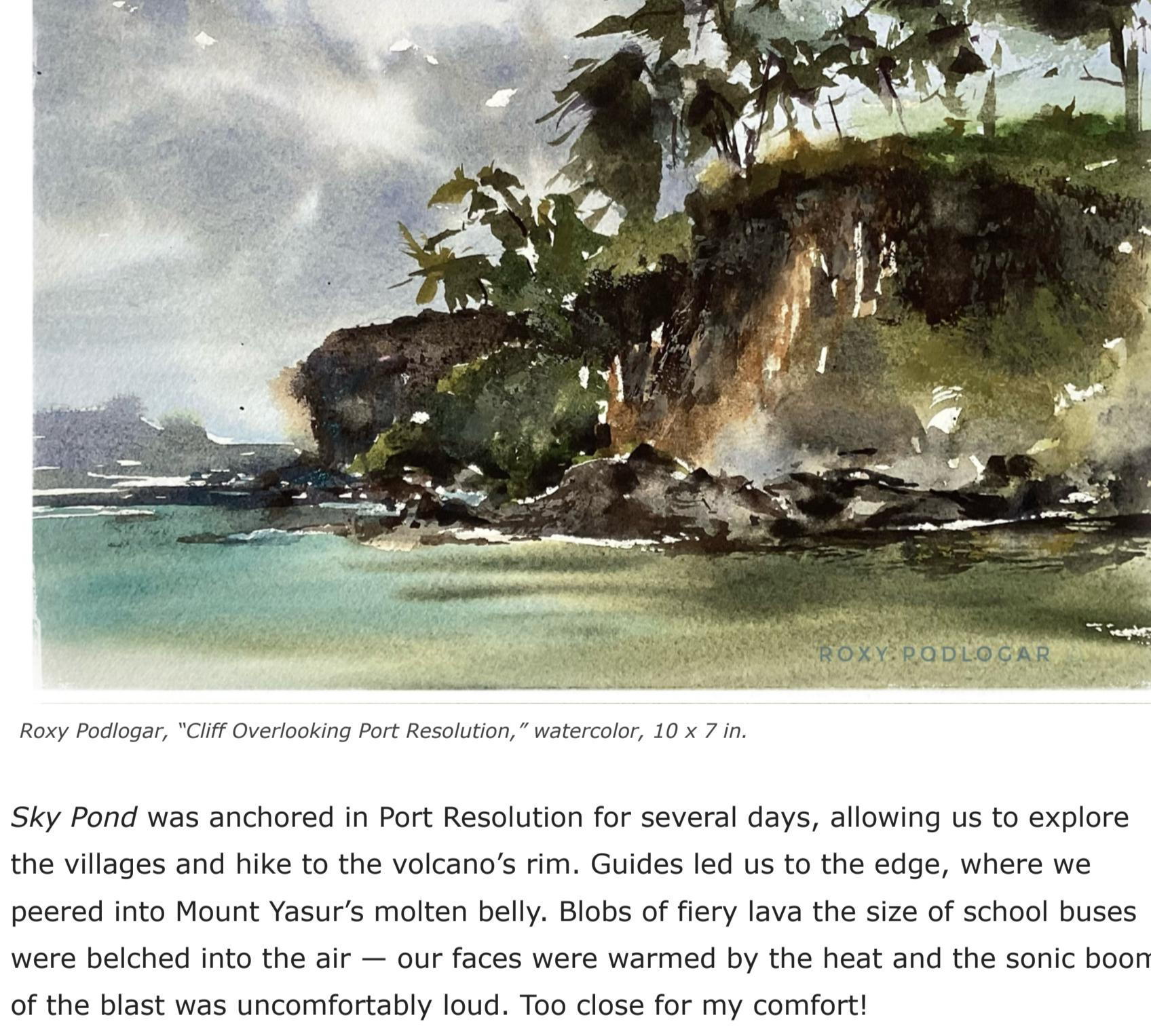


*The first wash of the painting, on Sky Pond*

### A Plein Air Painting "Postcard From the Road"

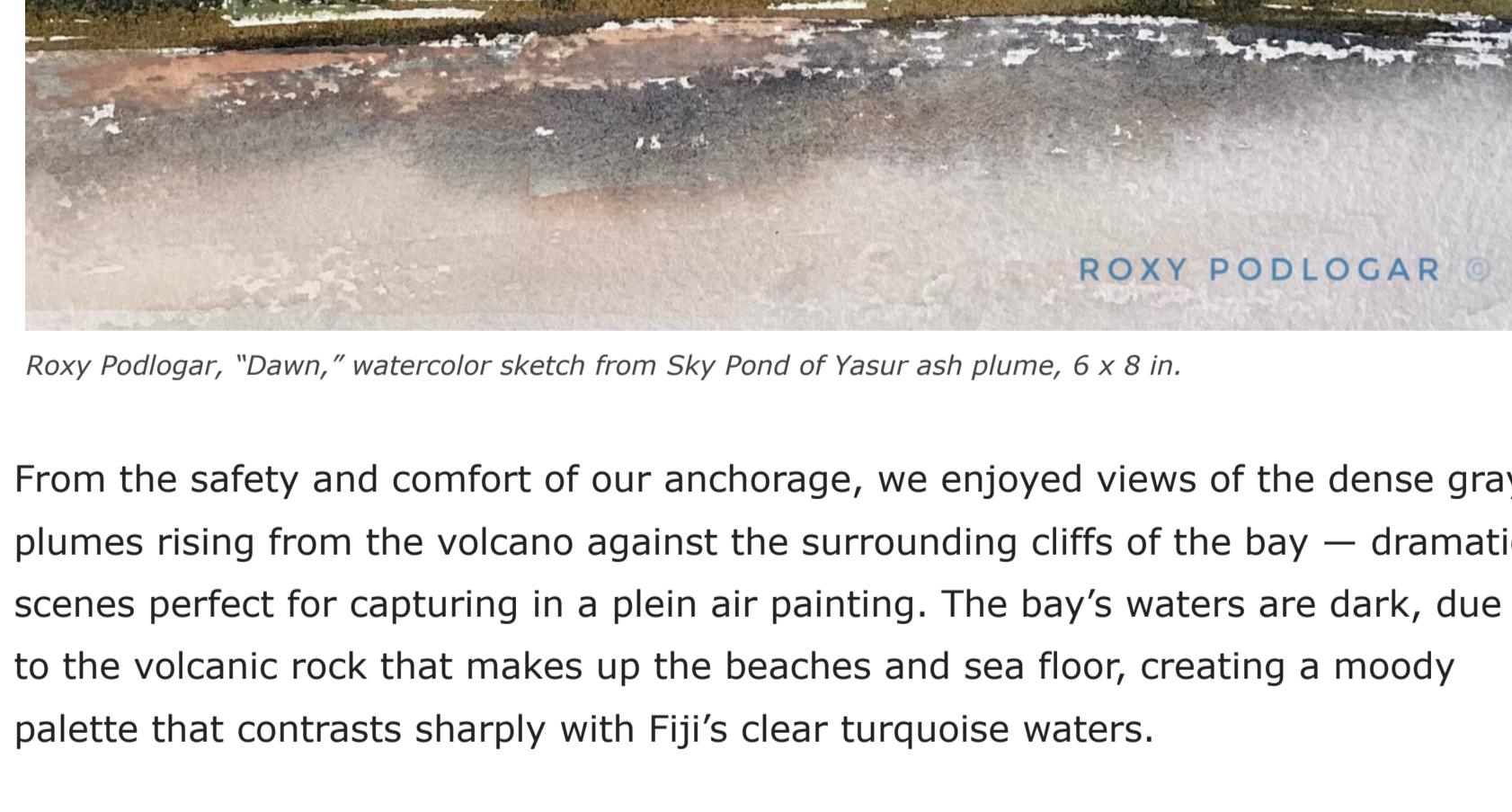
by Roxy Podlogar

Since 2016, my husband and I have been living full-time on our sailboat, *Sky Pond*, as we circumnavigate the Pacific Ocean. After spending two years sailing in Fiji, we made a three-day ocean passage on a westerly heading to the island nation of Vanuatu in November 2024.



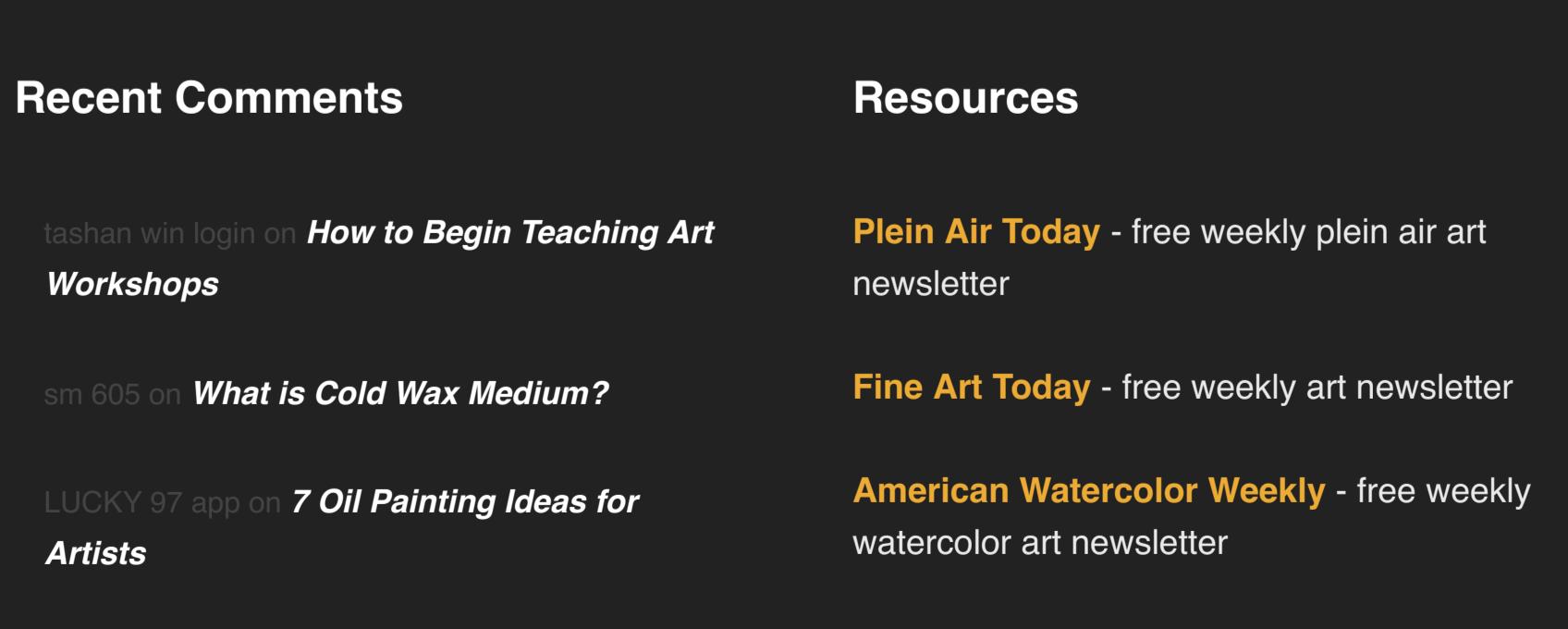
*The volcano Yasur on our approach to Tanna*

Our destination was Tanna, the southernmost island in the volcanic chain, in Vanuatu. Tanna is also where Captain Cook anchored his HMS Resolution, drawn to the anchorage by the fiery glow of the volcano Yasur in 1774. The bay is now known as Port Resolution, and the light from the active volcano remains visible at night from miles out at sea.



*Roxy Podlogar, "Cliff Overlooking Port Resolution," watercolor, 10 x 7 in.*

*Sky Pond* was anchored in Port Resolution for several days, allowing us to explore the villages and hike to the volcano's rim. Guides led us to the edge, where we peered into Mount Yasur's molten belly. Blobs of fiery lava the size of school buses were belched into the air — our faces were warmed by the heat and the sonic boom of the blast was uncomfortably loud. Too close for my comfort!



*Roxy Podlogar, "Dawn," watercolor sketch from Sky Pond of Yasur ash plume, 6 x 8 in.*

From the safety and comfort of our anchorage, we enjoyed views of the dense gray plumes rising from the volcano against the surrounding cliffs of the bay — dramatic scenes perfect for capturing in a plein air painting. The bay's waters are dark, due to the volcanic rock that makes up the beaches and sea floor, creating a moody palette that contrasts sharply with Fiji's clear turquoise waters.

**Editor's Note:** Join us for the 6th Annual Plein Air Live online art conference, featuring Kathleen Hudson, Kevin Macpherson, Kami Mendlik, and many more! The event takes place November 6-8, 2025, with an Essential Techniques Day on November 5. Learn more at [PleinAirLive.com](#).

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