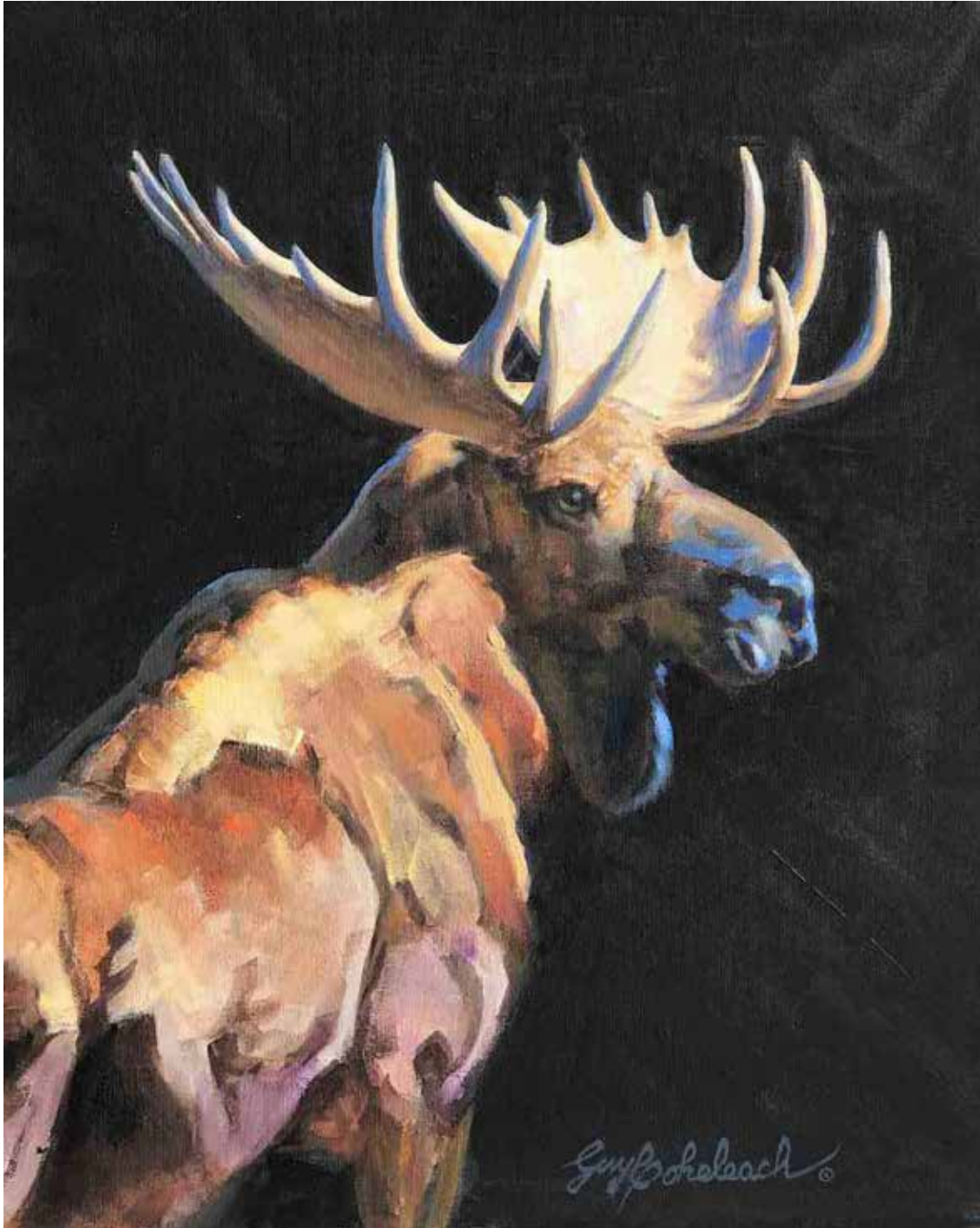




# CATASUS

JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF ANIMAL ARTISTS

FEBRUARY 2025 | VOL 1 NO 1



CULTIVATING EXCELLENCE IN THE FIELD OF ANIMAL ART SINCE 1960



Rita Chang, *My Secret Garden*, Acrylic on board, 23 x 16  
ART AND THE ANIMAL -64<sup>th</sup> Annual Members Exhibition

# CATASUS

JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF ANIMAL ARTISTS

*Catasus*, an online magazine published 3-4 times annually, is the official Journal of the Society of Animal Artists, Inc, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

The Society of Animal Artists (SAA), founded in 1960, is devoted to promoting excellence in the artistic portrayal of the creatures sharing our planet, and to the education of the public through art exhibitions, informative seminars, lectures, and teaching demonstrations. The SAA's membership, past and present, represents a veritable who's who of artists from around the world. Artwork in this publication has been contributed by our members or sourced from the SAA's archives. Reproduction for other purposes is forbidden without written permission of the artist(s). Membership information is available at [www.societyofanimalartists.com](http://www.societyofanimalartists.com)

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Patsy Lindamood, *Turning the Corner*, Graphite on cradled Ampersand Claybord, 24 x 24  
ART AND THE ANIMAL - 64<sup>th</sup> Annual Members Exhibition

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**Front cover art: Guy Coheleach, Living Master – Moose Portrait**, oil on canvas, 20 x 16  
ART AND THE ANIMAL - 64<sup>th</sup> Annual Members Exhibition

# CATASUS

JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF ANIMAL ARTISTS

## Editor

Kelly Leahy Radding

## Assistant Editors

Wes Siegrist  
Cathleen Savage

## Design/Production

Kelly Leahy Radding

## Editorial Submission

In 2025 *Catasus* will be published in February, July and November.

We invite all members of SAA to submit content for inclusion in *Catasus*. Contact Editor Kelly Radding at [kradding@mac.com](mailto:kradding@mac.com) to request space. If you have an idea for an article topic, or to suggest a person or event to be covered, email Kelly Radding. Products cited by article writers do not imply endorsement by the SAA. *Catasus* does not accept advertising.

## Deadlines for Articles

February Issue: January 15

July Issue: June 15

November Issue: October 15

## Where to find our issues

*Catasus* is hosted on the online platform Issuu.

**Note:** Issuu is a public space where *Catasus* will be available for the general public to read. All content is copyrighted.

## Catasus Magazine

Learn more about [Catasus Magazine](#) and the SAA here.

## Membership

Visit [societyofanimalartists.com](http://societyofanimalartists.com) to learn about more about becoming a member of the Society.

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)



## Cat Herding Report

I often joke that the job of Executive Director is like herding cats into a bathtub. It is an apt analogy, considering most artists follow their muse and are easily distracted by inspiration, life, and career. Few are adept at concentrating on business details, and, frankly, who wants to do business when you have the options of field research and fun in the studio? As a fellow artist, I am one of you who chases butterflies and gets distracted by squirrels. I slip into the minority as one who can be equally distracted, crunching data on sheets or spending hours researching organizational policies and history. However, playing with the herd is far more fun than rounding up strays! I anticipate spending time with many of you next year for our 65th Annual Exhibition at The Art Museum of Eastern Idaho!



Wes Siegrist, SAA Executive Director

## From Our President

It is our special privilege to bring back a piece of history, the *Catasus*, a remarkable magazine of its time. This is a big undertaking, but one that we hope all of our members will enjoy and will be encouraged to contribute future articles. With the digital age, this magazine can be reestablished as a tool for awareness of what is happening in our society as well as staying in touch with our members by reading about their expeditions and explorations that encourage creativity. The initial return of the *Catasus* has elegantly written articles with some pertinent academic material.

It is appropriate to thank our high energy, hardworking, visionary board, and especially Kelly Radding who has worked tirelessly for resurrecting this magazine and giving our artists another opportunity to share their thoughts and provide educational content for each other.



Please enjoy,

Renee Bemis, SAA President

**Society of Animal Artists  
Upcoming Annual Exhibitions**

**2025:** The Art Museum of Eastern Idaho, Idaho Falls, ID

**2026:** The Elliott Museum, Stuart, FL

**2027:** The Booth Western Art Museum, Cartersville, GA

**2028:** The Briscoe Western Art Museum, San Antonio, TX

**Society of Animal Artists  
Special Exhibitions**

**2025:** [A Boundless World, Phoenix Zoo, Phoenix, AZ](#)  
January 30-May 25, 2025

**2025:** [The SAA Comes to the MACC, Bennington's Monument Arts and Cultural Center, Bennington, VT](#)  
June 28-October 26, 2025

**2026:** [Brookgreen Gardens, Murrells Inlet, SC](#)  
May 9-July 26, 2026

Visit the [Society's YouTube](#) channel for member interviews, opening weekend festivities and member happenings.



Jhenna Quinn Lewis, *When the Butterfly Came to Tea with Hiroshige*, Oil, 16 x 8  
ART AND THE ANIMAL -64<sup>th</sup> Annual Members Exhibition

# Art & the Animal - Our 64th Annual Exhibition

Art and the Animal, The 64th Annual Member's Exhibition of the Society of Animal Artists was hosted by the beautiful Sioux City Public Museum, located in Sioux City Iowa from September 1 - November 30, 2024.

There were 267 entries from 165 artists submitted to the jury; 221 2-D and 46 3-D.

The exhibition consisted of 92 2-D works and 26 3-D works, representing many different mediums.

Our opening weekend was October 10-12, 2024 and it was attended by many SAA artists and their guests.

Festivities included exploring the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha, Nebraska, the Lee G. Simmons Wildlife Safari Park and other exciting places. On Saturday, October 12, at the Museum, SAA artists demonstrated for the public and celebrated the exhibition with a dinner and awards presentation.

Visit the exhibit online [here](#).

Visit the SAA YouTube channel and experience the fun of our [64th Annual Exhibition](#) Opening Weekend for yourself!



Above: 64th Annual Exhibition Opening Weekend.



At right: SAA members demonstrations

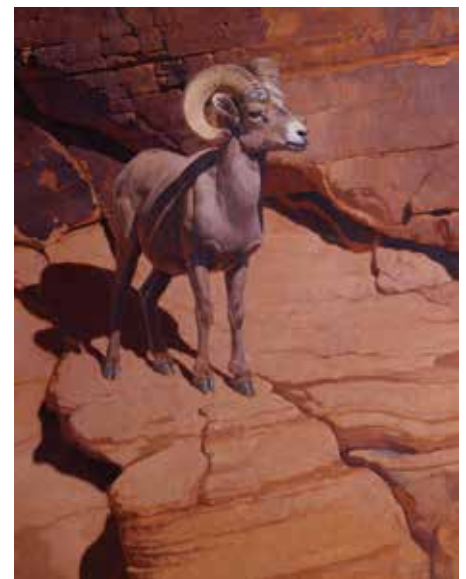


Above: Sherrie York, *Out of the Blue*, linocut, 18 x 18

Below: Lisa Gleim, *Frozen Shakes*, soft pastel on board, 16 x 20



Amanda Markel, *Aria*, bronze, 19 x 10 x 6



Above: Lucrezia Bieler, *Time is Fleeting*, paper cut with scissors, 15 x 25

Below: John Perry Baumlin, *Desert Solitaire*, oil, 20 x 16

# Society of Animal Artists Presents: A Boundless World

Phoenix Zoo, Wild Side Gallery, Phoenix, AZ - January 30 through May 25, 2025



This captivating exhibition brings together masterful works from the Society of Animal Artists' distinguished members who produce the best animal art in the world. This showcase explores the intricate beauty of animals, their habitats and the broader natural world, offering a profound reflection on the interconnectedness of life on Earth. Featuring paintings,

sculptures and mixed-media pieces, the exhibit highlights the extraordinary talent and vision of artists dedicated to portraying the richness of the animal kingdom and its environments. Join us for an immersive journey into a world without boundaries, where art and nature converge to ignite imagination and reverence for the planet we all share.

Visit the exhibit online [here](#).

Join us in a [video tour](#) of the exhibit and our opening weekend.



Above and at right: A Boundless World installation photos in the Wild Side Gallery at the Phoenix Zoo, Phoenix AZ.

Top of page: SAA members at the A Boundless World opening reception.



Above: SAA members at the Liberty Wildlife Center, Phoenix, AZ.



**Exciting opportunity to meet a SAA Artist at a location near you!  
Join us on May 3rd, 2025, for the Inaugural  
Society of Animal Artists Animal Art Experience!**

On May 3rd, 2025, the Society will have SAA artists conducting demonstrations and Q&A sessions, at zoos and wildlife refuges throughout the United States.

In addition to showcasing their skills, the SAA artists will be available to engage with visitors of the facility to provide information on the SAA's mission and answer questions like; what it's like to be an artist, how to get started in art, information about their technique and materials used, and whatever other art related questions that may arise.

Details on participating artists and locations to follow soon, so be sure to keep an eye on the SAA social media page and website for updates.

For SAA Artists that would like to participate, please contact Renee Bemis, SAA President as soon as possible at; Renee at: [admin@societyofanimalartists.com](mailto:admin@societyofanimalartists.com).



Kelly Leahy Radding, Okapi, gouache sketch,  
Henry Doorly Zoo, Omaha, NE.



“There is no substitute for sketching and observing these guys in real life! It feels like such a privilege to be in their presence and spend real time with them. I used to go to the zoo with my kids when they were little and I would make sure we all had sketchbooks so we could really sit and watch them. I was honored that this guy more or less held a lovely pose for me for quite some time! You can see in my sketch that he had had his left hand resting on his chest and later moved it up to his forehead.”

– Anik McGrory  
Sketching a male silverback gorilla  
Henry Doorly Zoo, Omaha, NE



## CATHLEEN SAVAGE

Which wildlife artist inspired you in your own journey of wildlife art and how?

One artist who sparked my interest in painting birds is Raymond (Ray) Harris Ching, a former signature member of the SAA. His incredible knowledge of bird anatomy and behavior, coupled with his absolute mastery of oil painting, first grabbed my attention back in the 1990s. At that time, I had a general interest in oil painting and a specific interest in birding as a hobby.

Harris Ching's paintings, which appeared in *Wildlife Art News* magazine and in other publications, showed me the magic that could happen when those two things were combined. I had never been exposed to anyone who had his ability to render a complex subject accurately while at the same time imbuing life into his subject on a two dimensional surface. It was both thrilling and inspirational.

As I learned more about him, I was in awe of the measures he took and the lengths that he went to in order to create his paintings- wiring up specimens, painting sketches in the field and in the studio, and making many preparatory drawings and studies of his chosen subjects before beginning a painting in earnest.

Later, I learned that there were many wildlife artists who worked in this way. I wanted to be one of them.

### BIOGRAPHY

My artwork reflects a lifetime of exposure to the visual arts,

starting with the influence of my father, a draftsman. He taught me to draw, handcrafted my first easel, and, along with my mother, arranged for me to take oil painting lessons beginning at age seven. I also attended a fine arts elementary school in Chesapeake, Virginia, where my creativity was

encouraged and developed. In college, I studied printmaking and painting. After a career as a human resources executive in the nonprofit sector, I began making art full time in 2010. I live with my husband in Saratoga Springs, New York.

### ARTIST'S STATEMENT

My paintings provide a closeup, intimate look at the subject, whether it is a living bird, a wild animal, or a seashell on the beach. Others have described my paintings as delicate, luminous, even sensual, and imparting a sense of peace. Although my art is realistic in style, I do more than simply document, often incorporating abstract backgrounds. My goal is to capture the spirit, the essence, of the subject as I first encountered it and to infuse it with life that creates a bond with the viewer. Many of my subjects are those of nature, requiring and deserving special attention. I believe that each work of art reflects the energy of the artist.



Cathleen Savage

Top: *African Beauties*, watercolor, 22 x 30  
Bottom: *Masked Beauties*, watercolor, 22 x 26  
all art ©Cathleen Savage

# The Society of Animal Artists Welcomes the Class of 2025 New Members!

The Society of Animal Artists would like to welcome our new members that were juried into the Society in January 2025.

## New Signature Members

- Zoltán Boros
- George Davies
- Dustin Edwards
- Michelle Grant
- Rana Jordahl
- Matt Patterson



## New Associate Members

- Mark Adams
- Nancy Allen
- Asya Baldwin
- Andrew Barker
- Randall Bennett
- Sophie Brouillet
- Jenny Buckner
- Agnieszka Elliott
- Duane Frey
- Joseph Grice
- John Keeling
- Elise Mahaffie
- Diana McClaran
- Angela Parr
- Morgan Sayle
- Anne Singer
- Randall Singleton
- Diane Ubelhor-Wunderlich



### Clockwise from upper left:

Zoltán Boros, George Davies, Dustin Edwards, Rana Jordahl, Michelle Grant, Angela Parr, Asya Baldwin, Mark Adams, Matt Patterson

**Below:** Duane Frey





- 1. Andrew Barker
- 2. Agnieszka Elliott
- 3. Anne Singer
- 4. Elise Mahaffie
- 5. Diana McClaran
- 6. Nancy Allen
- 7. Randall Singleton

- 8. Sophie Brouillet
- 9. Joseph Grice
- 10. John Keeling
- 11. Diane Ubelhor-Wunderlich
- 12. Jenny Buckner
- 13. Randall Bennett
- 14. Morgan Sayle

# The History of *Catasus* Magazine

The *Catasus* was an annual magazine sent to members each spring. It was published for 5 years (1986-1990) and featured black and white illustrated articles of interest to the membership in each issue with color covers (front and back, inside, and outside... thus, 4 color pages). The editor was Wayne Trimm, and the assistant editor was Evelyn Haller.

The newsletter of June 1st, 1967, introduced three new members who are still with the Society today, including one who has exhibited in 50 Annual Exhibitions! Do you know who these members are? A fourth member joined into the membership before them in December 1966 was busy illustrating two books at the time. Any guesses? Hint: One of

them is featured in the photo below! *(The answers are on page 19 of this issue.)*

How Times change! The SAA office struggles to get email successfully delivered to everyone through spam filters... in 1967, the U.S. Post Office was getting fussy... they wanted zip codes with the artists' addresses!

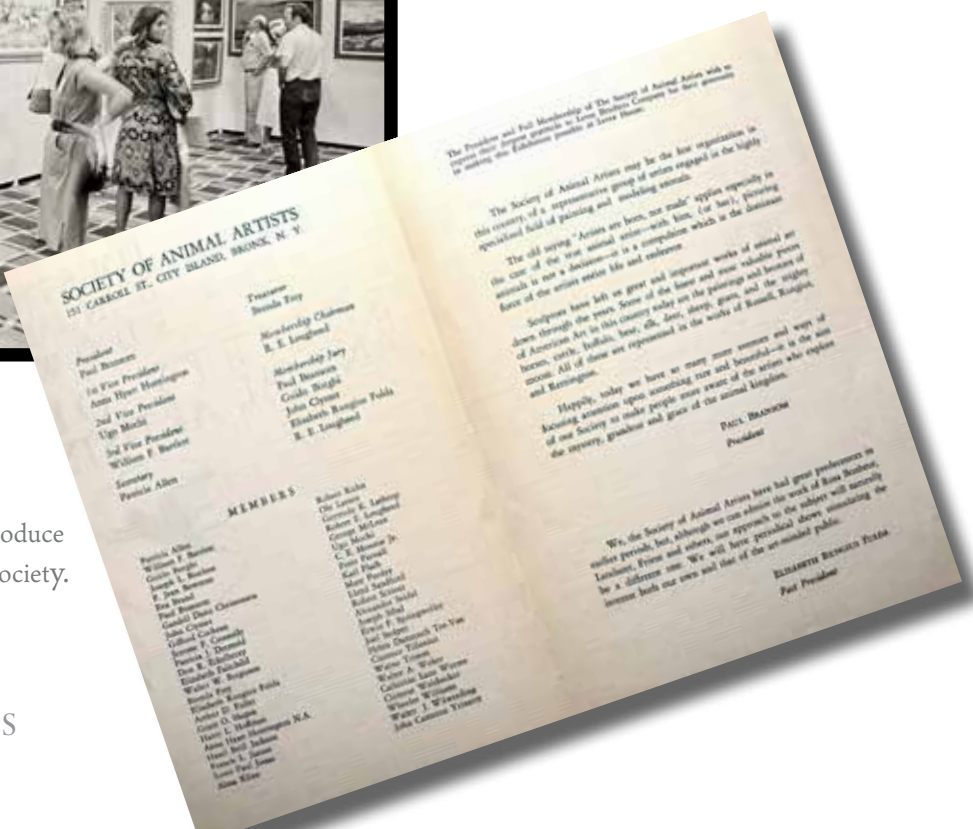
On January 23rd, 1968, the SAA's first president, Elisabeth Rungius Fulda passed away. In 2023, the Society acquired a painting by Elisabeth that now hangs inside the SAA office as part of our physical archives. Thanks to the Archives of American Art at the Smithsonian Institution, I acquired papers from our first President, Elisabeth Rungius

Fulda. These included documents given to the Smithsonian by one of our Founders, Pat Allen Bott. In 1961, in a letter among them, Pat stated the initial officers were the individuals who organized the Society. Another document identified them as Elizabeth Rungius Fulda (President), Anna Hyatt Huntington (1st Vice-President), Patricia Allen Bott (2nd Vice-President), Walter J. Wilwerding (3rd Vice-President), Brenda Frey (Secretary), Gifford Cochran (Treasurer), Paul Bransom (Membership Chairman), Guido Borghi (Jury of Admissions), John Clymer (Jury of Admissions), Robert Kuhn (Jury of Admissions), and R.E. Lougheed (Jury of Admissions). Our Society was founded by extraordinary animal artists who would be delighted to see the scope and talent of their esteemed organization today.



20th Annual SAA Exhibition, 1980

Our "catalogs" were easier to produce in the early days of the Society.





**Al Gilbert,**  
SAA President Emeritus  
(1978-1984)

*Article reproduced from the  
1979 Exhibition Catalog*

“Wildlife art has come of age,” said Roger Tory Peterson at the Leigh-Yawkey Woodson Museum’s impressive exhibition of bird art in 1978. David Lank voiced this same belief in his appraisal of the magnificent “Animals In Art” exhibit at the Royal Ontario Museum in 1975.

But realism was out of fashion in the New York art world until very recently. The ‘50s and ‘60s saw the rise and fall of abstract expressionism and an infinity of other “isms,” as well as a polarization of the art world. At that time, battle lines were clearly drawn; one was either nonobjective and avant garde or representational and reactionary. It was largely the work of Andrew Wyeth which signalled acceptance of figurative art once again in major museums. And by the 1960s, there was a deep-rooted resurgence of realism in American art, led by a dynamic group of western and wildlife painters. The limited edition art print, a concept pioneered by wildlife artists, brought realistic art into the living rooms of America. Today there is

no doubt that realism—especially wildlife art—is center stage.

It has arrived by a circuitous route. The first artists, from the dawn of human history, concerned themselves with animal portraiture. Their magnificent renderings in the caves of Lascaux and Alta Mira, done with elemental simplicity and power, speak to us with haunting intensity across 20,000 years. Animals were important motifs in the art of many ancient cultures, as witness the treasures from the tomb of Tutankhamen.

In the art of Eastern civilizations, animals and nature have always been major elements; when people were portrayed, they were often insignificant in relation to mountainous landscape-indicating philosophic and religious concepts of man as part of nature. In contrast, Western civilization has always viewed mankind as having dominion over nature. Because of the Judeo-Christian concept of man as apart from and above nature (especially the animal world), the focus of art was for centuries heavily egocentric. Great works of art were created, but animals for the most part were relegated to the manger in nativity scenes. Though there were notable exceptions such as Durer and Rembrandt, it took centuries before animals became acceptable subject matter for art.

A dichotomy between science and art existed at least until the late 19th century, hindering the development of wildlife art. Scientists wanted accurate illustrations of dead specimens from museum cabinets with no hint of perspective, shading or movement. And, paradoxically, portrayals of live animals were regarded by the art academicians

as “objects of natural history,” unfit for exhibition in art museums! This absurd attitude still persists among some museum curators.

Despite prevailing fashions, a few great artists of every age, working in relative obscurity, have produced timeless animal art.

In Europe, animals became important elements of fine art with the 19th century pastoral painters - Troyon, Van Marcke and Mauve. Antoine-Louis Barye, foremost of “Les Animaliers,” became famous for his small bronzes. And Rosa Bonheur, one of the first women to gain recognition as an artist, was also one of the first animal painters.

Toward the end of the 19th century a great school of animal art developed in Germany on foundations laid by Mey-

“Wildlife art  
has come  
of age.”

Roger Tory Peterson

erheim, Specht and others. But the crowning achievements belong to Richard Friese and Wilhelm Kuhnert. Kuhnert was the first artist to go to Africa and sketch directly from life. Known as “Lion Kuhnert,” he portrayed the king of beasts with reality on the African plains. Before Kuhnert, artists were content to paint rather fantastic and purely imag-

inary visions of lions attacking Arab Caravans.

Bruno Liljefors, who lived and worked in Sweden in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, has been called the greatest epic wildlife artist of all time. His work was so innovative that it has had far-reaching influence on generations of artists up to the present day. This influence can be seen in the works of the contemporary Swedish masters Lars Jonson, Gunnar Brusewitz and Harold Weiberg, and is also evident in the works of Rien Poortvliet of the Netherlands and Manfred Schatz of Germany.

In England, Joseph Wolf was the first of the great 19th century animal painters working to illustrate the sumptuous Victorian monographs on natural history. The tradition of wildlife artists in England includes Lear, Millais, Thorburn, Lodge and, in our time, such masters as Sir Peter Scott, David Reid-Henry, David Shepherd, Charles Tunnicliffe, Robert Gillmor and many others.

America has a rich heritage of wildlife art, beginning with the early illustrations of Catesby and Wilson. The work of John James Audubon stands forever as a tour de force of art and science.

At the turn of this century the mantle of Audubon fell upon Louis Agassiz Fuertes, considered by many to be the greatest portrait painter of birds of all time. This tradition of American bird art has been continued to the present day by such masters as George Sutton, Francis Lee Jaques, Owen J. Gromme, Roger Tory Peterson, Arthur Singer, Don Eckelberry, Robert Verity Clem, Don Malick and Guy Tudor.

In the early 1900s Charles Livingston Bull, Lynn Bogue Hunt and a young man named Paul Bransom emerged as leading illustrators of books and magazines. Paul Bransom's career has spanned more than half a century; he is today the dean of American wildlife artists and honorary President of the Society of Animal Artists.

The wildlife paintings and bronzes of Rungius, Remington and Russell are considered masterpieces today. Just as these artists witnessed and recorded the passing of the old west, so today are artists like Bob Kuhn, Kent Ullberg and others, preserving in paint and sculpture the splendor of African wildlife before it, too, vanishes forever.

Bob Lougheed and John Clymer paint the wildlife of the American west as well as the historical and contemporary western scene. And Stanley Meltzoff, George Schelling, Richard Ellis and William Brown have gone underwater to portray the fantasy world of coral reefs, sharks and whales.

Charles R. Knight and, more recently,

Jay Matternes have specialized in the reconstruction of prehistoric beasts. James Perry Wilson, undoubtedly the greatest American landscape artist of all time, was also a master at incorporating wildlife in his scenic canvases. Perhaps his finest works are the habitat dioramas at the Peabody Museum in New Haven, the Boston Museum of Science and the American Museum of Natural History.

John Yrizarry is known especially for his paintings of reptiles and amphibians while the versatile Walter Weber excelled at everything from botanical subjects to big game. The art of Ugo Mochi stands alone for unique achievement. Called the "art of outline" by Mochi, his "shadows" are flawless interpretations of form, done with utmost economy of means.

Other contemporary masters include Bob Abbett, Harry Adamson, Douglas Allen, Ed Bierly, Ken Carlson, Guy Coleleach, Maynard Reece, John Schoenherr, Ned Smith, Nick Wilson and Bill Zimmerman. Fine work is also being done by a younger generation of artists such as Bonnie Marris, Gary Moss



*From left to right: Doug Allen, John Schoenherr, Al Gilbert, Leslie Delgyer, Bob Bateman.*

and John Pitcher. Anna Hyatt Huntington, Marilyn Newmark, Ken Bunn, Don Miller and others have produced outstanding sculpture and bronzes.

Canadian artists Clarence Tillenius, Terry Short, Bob Bateman, George McLean, Jan Sharkey Thomas and J. F. Lansdowne are renowned for their fine work. Their younger contemporaries, Glen Lates and Bronwen Stanley-Jones, are fast becoming part of this rich tradition.

Even the small country of Kenya has many important wildlife artists such as sculptor Robert Glen and big game painter Simon Combes. Walter Ferguson, known for his paintings of desert wildlife, makes his home in Israel.

Wildlife art is exceptional in its recognition of women painters and sculptors. Times have changed since Rosa Bonheur's era, and now many women wildlife artists are making major contributions.

A phenomenon in recent years has been the quantum leap in the artistry of woodcarving. This dramatic evolution has become evident in the major decoy and carving competitions over the past five or six years. Some of the master carvers are Al Glassford, Larry Hayden, Bill Koelpin, Dick Le Master, Gilbert Maggioni, Granger McKoy, John Scheeler, Bill Schultz, Robert Searles, Philip Zeller and of course the old masters Lem and Steve Ward.



*From left to right: Joe Vance, Leslie Delgyer, and Al Gilbert.*



*From left to right: Joe Vance, Charles Allmond, and Al Gilbert, 1999.*

Today, with space-technology, we have become graphically aware that we share this good green planet with other life forms; that we are all travelers on "space ship earth," sharing the same life support systems.

Artists have always reflected the philosophies and concerns of their age; and wildlife art is a natural reflection of this age of ecology and environmental concern.

We are certainly entering a new era of appreciation for figurative art; one need only recall the '50s to appreciate how far

the pendulum has swung. A tiger now takes precedence over a tomato soup can. And the biggest prize in the entire art world is for a 5 x 7 inch wildlife painting - the Federal Duck Stamp design.

It is interesting to speculate on the future direction of wildlife painting. Will it adopt some of the innovations made by the abstractionists? Bateman, McLean and others are using abstract shape and design within the context of realism to emphasize character and mood. Motion and flight are yet to be fully explored by contemporary artists.

Too many artists are imitating instead of innovating. The camera can be both help and hindrance. Field work is difficult and sometimes dangerous, causing many artists to depend on photographs for reference.

Too often in wildlife painting, technical ability, without feeling, masquerades as art. The artist must communicate the intensity and immediacy of his experience, producing an emotional response in the viewer.

As Bob Kuhn warned: "There is great room for interpretation in this area via impressionism and many other 'isms but most current practitioners hew to their source material, barely dipping a toe into the dark waters of improvisation."

Certainly, more vigorous and varied approaches will be demanded of wildlife art in the years ahead.





Guy Colebatch ©



# Guy Coheleach

## *A Remarkable Achievement*

story by Wes Siegrist

The Society of Animal Artists is honored that one of our members has faithfully participated in fifty of our annual member exhibitions. Guy Coheleach became a member of the SAA in 1967 and a Board of Directors Member in 1978. He served in multiple ways, including Vice-President and Exhibition Chairman, until 2005.

The Award of Excellence is our coveted “Best of Show” in Society exhibitions. It was introduced in 1979 as an Award of Merit, signified by a bronze medallion and bestowed by a panel of qualified experts in

natural history and art. Mr. Coheleach received his first of eight such awards at the 1979 exhibition. In later years, as the Society developed criteria for Master Signature and Distinguished Signature status, he was one of the few members to have both retroactively conveyed upon him. In total, Guy has received eleven awards in SAA exhibitions and has been awarded an additional two by the Board of Directors. In recognition of his service to the Society, he was given The Bott-Borghetti-Bransom Legacy Award in 2004. For his achievements and contributions in the field of animal art, he received

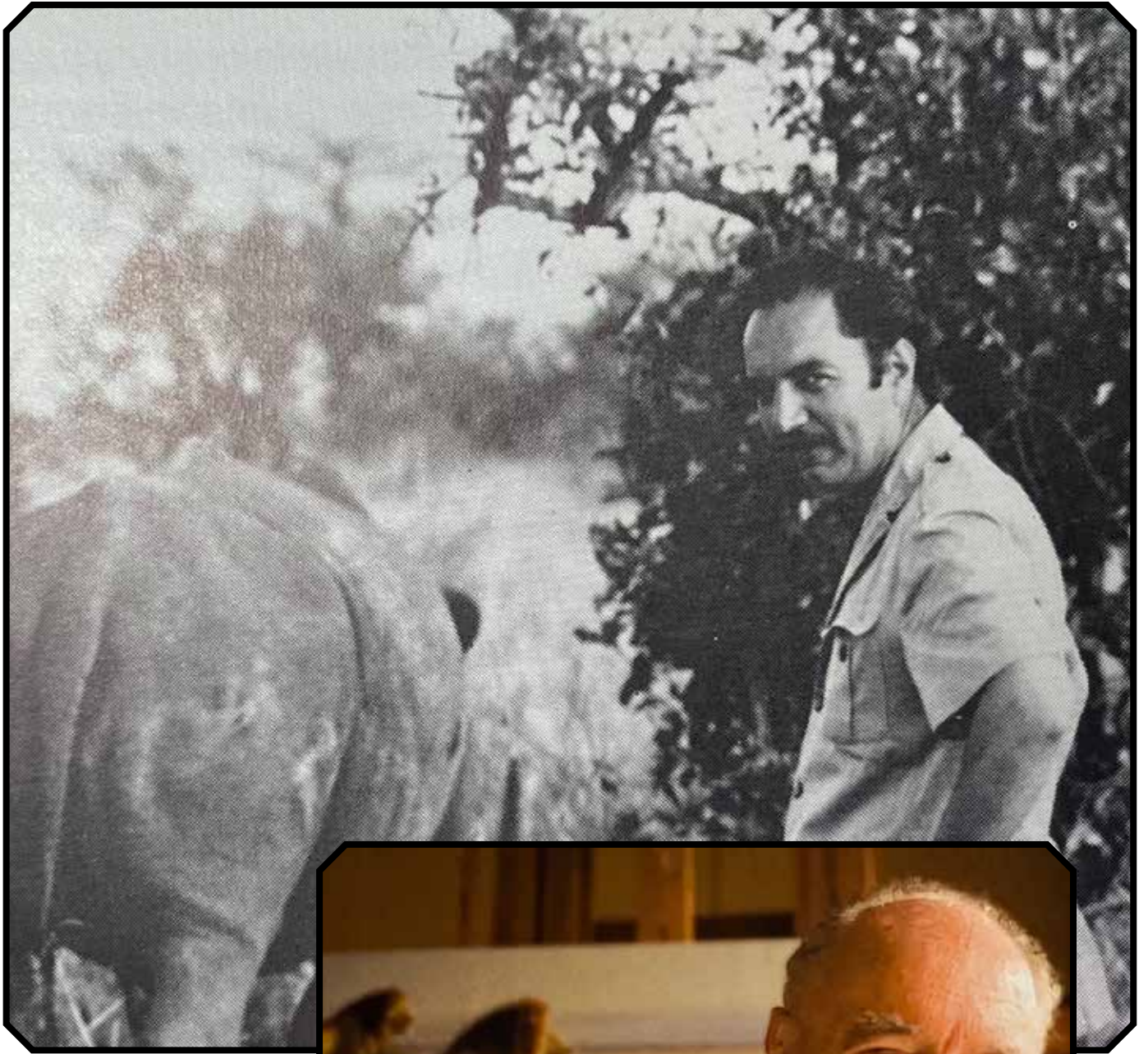
The Lifetime Achievement Award in 2012.

Guy has distinguished himself as one of the greatest wildlife artists of all time and this bar of quality and activity will be a tough goal to match for those following in his footsteps. As a Society, we express to him our deepest appreciation as an inspirational vanguard for generations to follow. ... and yes, he’s not done yet!

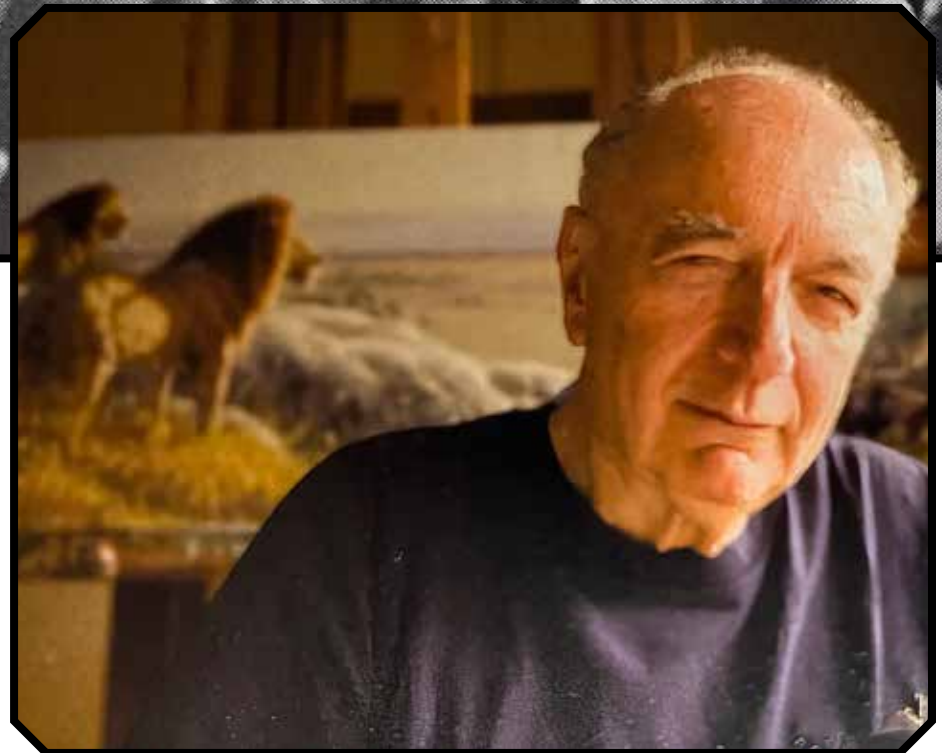
[Visit Guy’s website.](#)

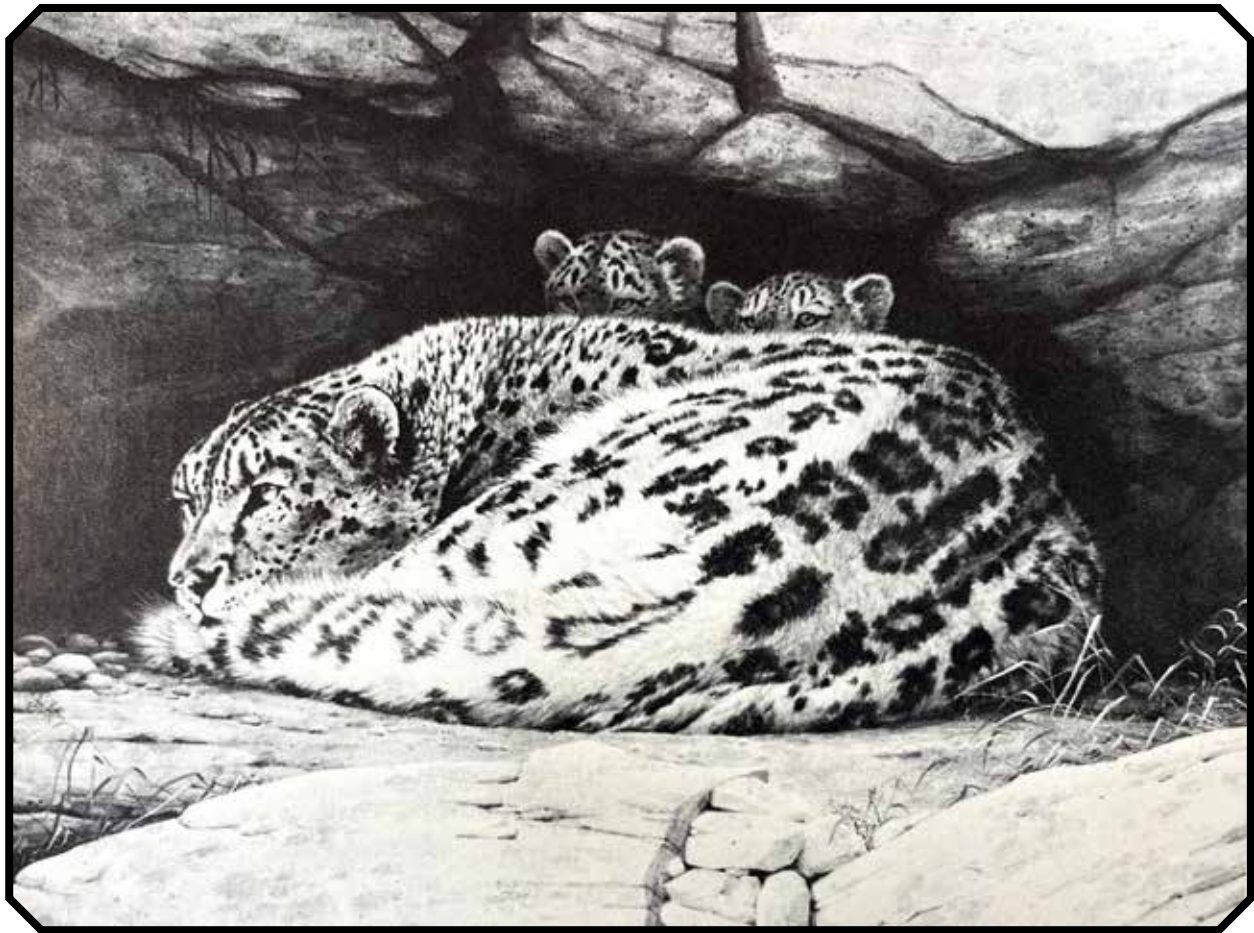


At left: *Moose Portrait*, oil on canvas, 20 x 16. Above: Guy (left in the photo) at the 1980 Annual Exhibition.



*Above: Guy on safari.  
At right: Guy in his studio.*





*Snow Leopard Family*, watercolor, 30 x 40



**History of Catasus Magazine answers:**

Doug Allen, Guy Coheleach, and George Schelling. The 64th Annual marked Guy's 50th to be exhibiting! Al Gilbert became a member in 1966.

*From left to right:* Guy, Leslie Delgyer, Al Gilbert, 1998.

# Birds of a Feather Flock Together

## SAA Members at Birds In Art 2024

story by Jim Coe



Attending SAA members from left to right: Kelly Singleton, Kimberly Beck, Cindy House, Ute Bartels, William John Ritchie, Jim Coe, Don Rambadt, Claire Duncan, Shalese Sands, William Alther, Gunnar Trygmo, Rebekah Knight, Mary Cornish, Jeremy Bradshaw, Monique Wales, Jenna Quinn Lewis, Jim Rataczak, Sherrie York, Paul Rhymer, Barbara Banthien, Kelly Leahy Radding, Andrea Rich, Chris Bacon

On a beautiful and sunny weekend last September many SAA artists ‘flew’ to Wausau, Wisconsin to attend the opening of the prestigious Birds in Art exhibition hosted by the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum. It is one of the premier events of the year for any artist who paints birds. Indeed, being accepted into this show is the goal of nearly every one of those artists, and the Birds in Art Jury (which changes composition each season) is notoriously selective.

Incredibly, this annual exhibit will celebrate its 50th Anniversary next year. During its unprecedented run, not only has the show grown in importance and world-renown, but the museum itself has more than tripled in size. When I first attended the show in 1980, The Woodson consisted only of the stately home that had been donated by the founding couple John and Alice Forester, and which was nestled into its residential neighborhood on a hillside of a sleepy Wausau. Half a century later, Wausau is a bustling city and the museum has expanded with several significant additions. It also has acquired surrounding

properties to establish an expansive sculpture garden, additional parking areas for visitors and most recently a nearby studio annex in which workshops are held. The Woodson has become a world class arts institution with a powerful footprint in metropolitan Wausau.

At each year’s Birds in Art show (with some exceptions), The Woodson honors an individual artist as a “Master” – based on the quality and consistency of the artist’s work over the years of their career. There are 28 living Birds in Art Master Artists, of which eleven are currently members of the SAA. Of those, seven attended the 2024 opening weekend, including The Woodson’s two most recent Master Artists, Paul Rhymer (2023) and newly honored Gunnar Trygmo (2024).

Many other Society members were juried into last year’s exhibition that did not attend the opening in person, including: Sue deLearie Adair, Robert Bateman, Guy Coleheach, Lori Anne Dunn, Kathleen Dunphy, Gary Eigenberger, Peter Gray, Elwin van der Kolk, Rebecca Korth, Walter Ma-

tia, Terry Miller, Calvin Nichols, Gerald Painter, Kris Parins, Tony Pridham, Derek Robertson, Julia Rogers, Lennart Sand, Jan Stommes, and Kent Ullberg.

The collection housed at The Woodson Museum also continues to grow with ongoing acquisitions of significant historical artwork. Plus, the museum prides itself in purchasing work from the living and breathing artists who show in each Birds in Art exhibition. On average, close to ten percent of each year’s show is acquired for the museum’s permanent collection.



Jeremy Bradshaw - Signature Member  
*Caw of the Wild*, Bronze, 16 x 11 x 18



**James Coe** - Distinguished Signature Member and Birds in Art Master Wildlife Artist  
*Summer Evening Along the Creek*, oil on linen, 16 x 24, purchased by the museum.

## *Persistence, Patience and Passion Pays Off!*



**Jim Rataczak** - Signature Member  
*First Light, Last Ice*, oil on linen, 20 x 26, purchased by the museum.

*“The locale for this painting is a spot I have spent decades painting at, really near and dear to my heart. In late winter and early spring, it can be just a magnet for the early returning waterfowl, and the patterns and colors that occur under different skies and thawing and re-freezing creek ice are constantly changing. No two days are alike! So, to have my first BIA acceptance (after MANY tries), be a painting that is quite personal to me made the whole thing all the more memorable. And that it is now in LYWAM’s permanent collection is a wonderful exclamation point.”*

—Jim Rataczak



**Monique Wales** -Associate Member,  
*Fall Visitors*, reduction linocut on Rives BFK paper, 24 x 16, purchased by the museum and selected for the traveling exhibition.



**Ute Bartels** - Signature Member  
*Hazelhurst Friends*, silk colors on Pongee Silk, 24 x 24, purchased by Alice and Joe Smith; now in the family collection.

# From Ducks to Dreams

story by Rebekah Knight

The Federal Duck Stamp program has played an important role in the success of a handful of wildlife artists, including names like David Maas, Daniel Smith and the Hautman brothers. While I wouldn't want to compare myself to such great artists, nor do I have the "Duck Stamp win" feather in my cap yet, I can say that I would not be where I am now as an artist if it were not for my involvement with this wonderful program and it is something I will always be proud to be a part of.

My art career began with my success in winning the Federal Junior Duck Stamp Contest in 2006. This program is the "kids" version of the Federal Duck Stamp Contest, which is the only federally run art competition in the US and is the process used to determine the artwork that appears on the Federal Duck Stamp (which waterfowl hunters are required to purchase as a part of their hunting license to generate revenue for conservation). I've had a fascination for drawing animals since I was little, and when a local art mentor, Susan Hearting, noticed my talent and passion for wildlife, she introduced me to the Junior Duck Stamp contest. After two consecutive years of taking first place in my age category, I then won the national contest at the age of fifteen with a painting of a redhead drake titled "Morning Swim". I never knew the importance of this contest until after I won, and it was at that moment that I realized I had what it took to become successful at doing something I am passionate about. The dream of becoming a professional art-



Rebekah with her 2006 Federal Junior Duck Stamp Contest winning entry.

ist who gets to paint animals and travel the world suddenly became a realistic goal. Winning the Junior Duck Stamp led to many connections with government officials within the US Fish and Wildlife Service, philatelic experts, stamp collectors, artists, art collectors, wildlife biologists, photographers and conservationists, many of whom I still call friends to this day. The program has also created numerous opportunities for me as a young artist, including a summer internship working at the Federal Duck Stamp office in Arlington, VA. After I turned eighteen and outgrew the Junior contest, I continued on to enter the Federal "adult" contest.

One of the biggest opportunities that the Duck Stamp contest has led me to

is my participation in the documentary titled "[Million Dollar Duck](#)" by Brian Golden Davis, which aired on Animal Planet in 2016. This feature-length film follows several artists (including myself) as they prepare their entries for the Duck Stamp contest, and highlights the judging process and the importance of the stamp. It's dramatic, funny and educational and drives home the crucial role that the stamp plays in conservation. Being a part of this film provided a variety of opportunities to talk about the connections between art and conservation, and it had a positive impact on my career. At that point, I had become one of the major voices for the Junior Duck Stamp program and young wildlife artists in general, even though I was still in the process



Rebekah with her 2016 Federal Duck Stamp Contest entry with judges SAA artists Jan Martin Maguire (left) and Sue deLearie Adair (right).

of figuring out my own artistic style. My first in-person connection to the Society of Animal Artists was made at the Federal contest in 2016 in Philadelphia, where I met two of the judges after the contest, SAA artists Jan Martin McGuire and Sue deLearie Adair. It

was through my connection with Jan that I eventually joined her on a photo safari in Kenya, which started my trajectory toward “fine art” instead of the stamp designs that I was primarily doing for various stamp contests. Through workshops and connections with more artists outside of the Duck Stamp sphere, my painting style has changed and I have become better at creating effective and unique compositions.

To this day, I continue to enter “The Federal” (as many artists call it). Some artists who used to enter do not enter anymore. The criteria for a good stamp design creates artistic limitations which can hinder creativity. A good piece of art is not always a good stamp design, and many artists don’t like to be put in a box. Some artists become tired of pouring their heart and soul into a painting (that is often objectively good) only for it to be shot down by the judges year after year. For myself, I see it as a challenge to bring the fine art skills I have learned outside of the stamp world into this contest and create a good piece of art that is also suitable for the stamp. I feel that I have painted and entered the Federal for enough years to have what it takes to achieve this. When my entry doesn’t do well, I tell myself to “try harder.” Although I have come close to winning (placing second twice and in the top ten numerous times), this contest is not just about winning for me. It’s about the challenge, the old and new friendships and the involvement



Rebekah's 2024 Federal Duck Stamp Contest Second Place finish.

in such an impactful conservation program. I owe much of my success as an artist to the Duck Stamp contest and it means a lot to me to still be a part of it. It has become an annual tradition and something I look forward to participating in each year, and each year brings new connections and new opportunities. My work is still developing and I am still chasing an ever-growing list of goals surrounding art, but when I look back on the dreams I had as a teenager I realize I have reached those dreams and beyond. My success so far has been a combination of hard work and a chain reaction of opportunities, and it all started with the Duck Stamp program.

I would encourage all wildlife artists from the U.S. to accept the challenge and enter the Federal Duck Stamp contest, or at the very least, purchase a duck stamp. It’s the only government program that brings art and conservation together, and has helped to conserve millions of acres of wetlands. Ninety-eight cents out of every dollar spent on duck stamps goes directly into the purchase of wetlands

which is home to many of the animals, waterfowl and beyond, that we wildlife artists are passionate about. If you know a young artist, encourage them to enter the Junior Duck Stamp contest. I learned more about ducks and conservation in my years with the Junior contest than I ever imagined I would. Participating in the Federal and the Junior

Duck Stamp contest is a win-win for everyone regardless of where you place in the competition. Information about the contest can be found on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife website.



Rebekah discovered her love for drawing animals as a child and began her career at an early age as a result of her success in conservation stamp competitions, most notably the Federal Junior Duck Stamp contest. Her oil paintings now encompass a broad range of wildlife from the Arctic to Alaska, and she continues to set her sights on more goals surrounding wildlife, art and conservation.

**To learn more about Rebekah, visit her website.**

## SAA Members are recognized in the 17th International ARC Salon Competition of The Art Renewal Center®

The Art Renewal Center® has announced the winners and finalists of the 17th International ARC Salon Competition, the largest competition in the world dedicated to representational art. The ARC received over 5,000 entries from 87 countries.

The 17th ARC Salon Competition has been a combined effort of over 50 jurors, the incredible ARC Staff and all our participating 1,970 new works by some of the best contemporary artists in the world are now available to view on the [ARC website](#).

We are excited to note several of our SAA members were recognized for their excellence in art. We send special congratulations to Anni Crouter who was honored in several categories and received the top honor in the Animal category. We also are delighted that both Second and Third places in that category were captured by two other SAA members, Kathryn Hansen and James Swanson. We congratulate all of our SAA members who received additional category awards as well as Honorable Mentions. Great job, ALL!

### Animal Category

#### First Place

Anni Crouter

#### Second Place

Kathryn Hansen

#### Third Place

James Swanson

#### Honorable Mentions

Kim Diment

Anni Crouter

Holly Kavonic

Bruce Lawes

#### Finalists

Randall Bennett

Linda Besse

Jenny Buckner

Jamie Cassaboon

Rosanna Gaddoni

Rebecca Korth

Deborah LaFogg Docherty

Rod Lawrence

Amanda Markel

Adam Matano

John Mullane

Carrie Nygren

### Landscape Category

John Wytock

### Drawing Category

Rosanna Gaddoni

### Figure Category

Anni Crouter

### Special Awards

#### *Fashion week San Diego Award*

Anni Crouter

#### *33PA Publishing Award*

Rosanna Gaddoni

#### *ARC Staff Picks Award*

Yelena Lamm

### Animal Category Award Winners' Images:

**Row 1:** Anni Crouter

**Row 2:** Kathryn Hansen, James Swanson

**Row 3:** Holly Kavonic

**Row 4:** Bruce Lawes

**Row 5:** Kim Diment





**Ohio Valley Art League  
2024 15th Biennial Kentucky  
National Wildlife Art Exhibit**

Henderson Kentucky  
October 5-November 29, 2024

*Congratulations to our members who  
received the following awards!*

**Jamie Cassaboon**

Kentuck Wildlife Award presented by  
Owensboro Health

**Wes Siegrist**

Henderson Breakfast Lions Club Award

**Janis Mattson**

Lester E. Yeager Foundation Award

**Ron Orlando**

Henderson Lions Club Award

**Rachelle Siegrist**

Ronald & Libby Smith Foundation  
Award

**Terry Miller**

Dr. Dick & Dianne Wham Wildlife  
Award

**Ann Geise**

Dick & Sheila Beaven Family  
Foundation Award

**Sue deLearie Adair**

Rotary Club of Henderson Award

**Debby Lentz**

The Edward Jones Award

**Debra Trent**

The Henderson Society of Art Award

**Anne Peyton**

In Memory of Marvin H. Moran Award

**Cynthia Fisher**

The Preston Foundation Award

**John Guiseppe**

The Cypress Foundation Award

**Margaret Hopkins**

Skinner Design Associate  
Architecture Award



## American Women Artists “Expanding Horizons” 2024

story by Diane Mason

### SAA Members SHONE in the 2024 American Women Artists exhibition, “Expanding Horizons” at the Loveland Museum & Gallery in Loveland, Colorado.

Eighteen of our fellow SAA members, who are also members of the American Women Artists organization, had their work selected for inclusion in last year’s exhibition which ran from September 14 – November 10, 2024. It was a stunning exhibition with 126 works in all genres and art media. The AWA is a large organization of primarily professional women artists from throughout the U. S. and Canada dedicated to celebrating, uniting, and promoting women in the visual fine arts. They do this through annual museum shows, juried competitions, symposiums, and workshops. The goal is to increase the number of professional opportunities for women in the visual fine arts that lead to greater inclusion. Each year, the competition for a place in the annual museum exhibition is fierce. This year’s selection jurors included the Curator of Contemporary Art at the Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha, NE; the Director of the Broadmoor Galleries, Colorado Springs, CO; and a Marketing Specialist from Streamline Publications.

Our participating SAA members included Kimberly Beck; Kathleen E. Dunn; Sharon Fullingim; Kim Kori; Laney; Amanda Markel; Diane D. Mason; Sally Maxwell; Pokey Park; Victoria Parsons; Elizabeth Pollie; Anne Peyton; Diana Reuter-Twining; Rosetta; Susie Seerey-Lester; Monique Wales; Lorraine Watry, and Ellen Woodbury. There were several wonderful animal-themed works included by non-SAA members, too. If any of them had been there in person, I would have been bending their ear about the SAA!

Several of our members were recognized with awards: Kimberly Beck (Frances Trachok Award of Excellence); Kathleen E. Dunn (Award of Excellence); Diane D. Mason (Award of Merit); Sally Maxwell (Fine Art Connoisseur Award); Diana Reuter-Twining (Christine Grafe Drewyer Award of Distinction); Susie Seerey-Lester (Celebrating the Natural World Award); and Ellen Woodbury (Jurors’ Choice Award). Had I been one of the jurors... there would have been many more SAA winners! The works of SAA members truly stood out for their excellence.

The “Expanding Horizons” Exhibition is available for viewing on the American Women Artists’ website and Facebook page.



**Kathleen Dunn**  
Award of Excellence  
*A Small Measure of Shade*  
Scratchboard, 19 x 36



**Diana Reuter-Twining**  
Award of Distinction  
*The Fox's Prophecy*  
Sculpture  
28.5 x 13.5 x 5



(Clockwise from upper left.)

**Suzie Seerey-Lester**  
 Celebrating the Natural  
 World Award  
*Birds of a Feather -  
 Petroglyph*  
 Acrylic on Panel, 36 x 18

**Sally Maxwell**  
 Fine Art Connoisseur Mag-  
 azine Award  
 Circle of Life  
 Colored Scratchboard  
 24 x 18

**Ellen Woodbury**  
 Juror's Choice Award  
*Arctic Wind*  
 Sivec Marble, 14 x 18 x 12

**Diane Mason**  
 Honorable Mention  
*The Artist's Muse*  
 Sculpture, 13 x 8 x 8

**Kimberly Beck**  
 Honorable Mention  
*Comings and Goings*  
 Sculpture, 13 x 8 x 8

**Richeson75 International  
Art Competitions  
Animals, Birds & Wildlife  
Online Exhibition**

**Twenty nine SAA members made  
the Finalist List and four members  
received top honors!**

**Award Winners**

**Best in Show** - Holly Kavonic

**2nd Place** - Rebekah Knight

**3rd Place** - Barbara Bramham

**Honorable Mentions:**

Anni Crouter

Cary Hunkel

**Finals List**

Kimberly Beck

Linda Besse

Beatrice Bork

Barbara Bramham

James Coe

Anni Crouter

Kim Diment

Claire Duncan

Kathleen E. Dunn

Joyful Enriquez

Christopher Forrest

Shawn Gould

John Guiseppi

Cary Hunkel

Holly Kavonic

Rebekah Knight

Rebecca Korth

Rod Lawrence

Patsy Lindamood

Pete Marshall

Karie O'Donnell

Kris Parins

Anne Peyton

Kelly Leahy Radding

Ann Ranlett

Kelly Singleton

Cindy Sorley-Keichinger

Jan Stommes

Debra Trent



**Holly Kavonic**

*On the Prowl*

Oils, 20 x 30

**Cary Hunkel**

*Innocence*

Watercolor, 14 x 20



**Rebekah Knight**

*First Dibs*

Oils, 24 x 20

**Barbara Bramham**

*Where Did the Rabbit Go?*

Oils, 24 x 18

**Anni Crouter**

*Lords of the Rings*

Acrylic, 30 x 24

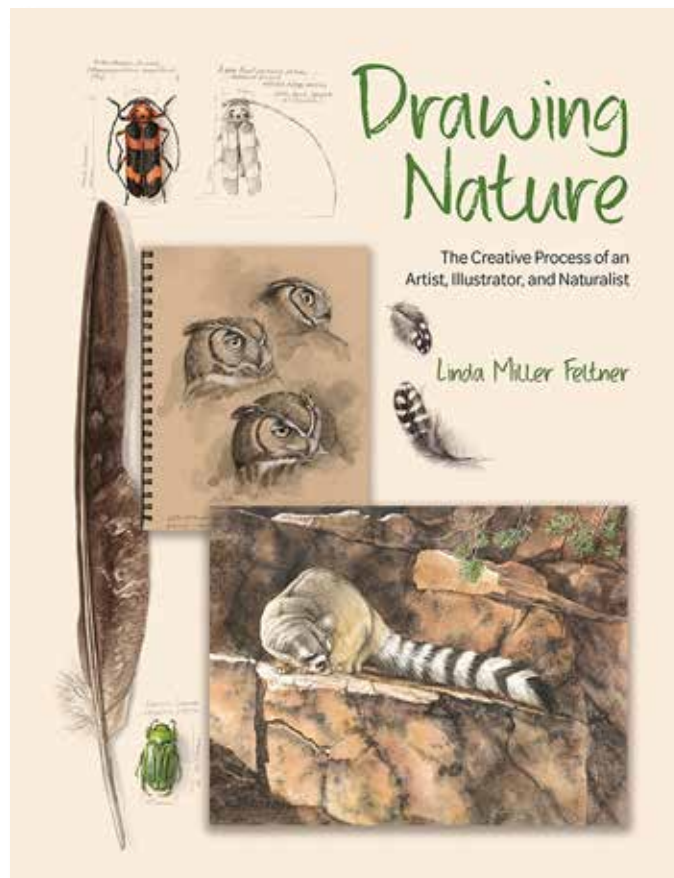
review by Nancy Halliday

## ***Drawing Nature: The Creative Process of an Artist, illustrator, and Naturalist***

by Linda Miller Feltner  
published by Princeton  
University Press, Princeton,  
N. J., 2024

The title seems to indicate that this is yet another drawing instruction manual, but the author, Linda Miller Feltner, instead invites us to join her on a life-long journey in artistic fulfillment through personal discovery.

The inspiration behind Feltner's prolific career is her childlike fascination with nature. She begins the book by examining a shed feather and asking why it is curved and how that might benefit its wearer. Feltner has a particular affinity for birds, and will bring live raptors from a rehabilitator to her drawing classes. Although she offers some drawing tips such as proportional measurements and cognizance of internal structure, the primary purpose for these visits is for the students to fully realize the crucial necessity of drawing from the living animal. She cajoles her students to keep their pencils on the paper, for even the most unfinished gesture drawing can reveal the distinctive fluidity of an animal's motion.



Feltner then explains how raw sketches can be refined for inclusion in a painting. Museum specimens and photo references are invaluable for providing those important details that add to the credibility of an image. As the work progresses, she suggests the use of tracing paper overlays for corrections and additions, thus eliminating erasing and losing the spontaneity of the initial drawing beneath. Planning more complex paintings requires careful notan and value studies before color ever touches paper.

Feltner's paintings are executed primarily in transparent watercolor and sometimes gouache, but much of her career has been producing illustrations on commission, often in scratchboard. She outlines the steps involved in accepting the assignment, learning as much as possible about the

subject (even to wading in a swamp to gather information), then collaborating with the curator/writer/designer and making many revisions as the work progresses and each stage is approved. Feltner's list of clients is impressive. She has done small illustrations for numerous publications to large interpretive signage and murals for local, state and national parks, sometimes including portrayals of massive landscapes. She is involved in conservation efforts and has donated her artwork to natural restoration efforts.

Not many artists would be willing to divulge their entire creative process, from the wellsprings of their deepest inspiration through the steps to final production. They might lack the command of language to do so or feel too vulnerable by such exposure, leaving the artwork to speak for itself. Feltner not only enthusiastically shares her artistic journey, but she personalizes it by her own script that graces many of the pages.

This delightful romp through an artist's life is a feast for the eyes and an inspiration for the soul.

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Reviewed by Nancy Halliday  
Member, SAA, GNSI, NAGMA



## “Sled Dogs in America: Alaska & Beyond” Exhibition at Western Spirit: Scottsdale’s Museum of the West

story by Veryl Goodnight

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz., May XX, 2024 – Western Spirit: Scottsdale’s Museum of the West hosted the opening of *Sled Dogs in America: Alaska and Beyond* by Western painter and sculptor Veryl Goodnight, on July 17, 2024. The exhibition will run until April 27, 2025.

A Colorado native, Goodnight’s artistic journey began in the early 1970s as a wildlife painter. Her fascination with anatomy led her to sculpture, which became the primary focus of her career throughout the late 20th century. With over 200 sculptures and 20 life-size or larger monuments to her name, Goodnight’s work has always been deeply rooted in the Western tradition.

The exhibition, *Sled Dogs in America: Alaska & Beyond*, marks a notable shift in Goodnight’s artistic exploration, showcasing her return to oil painting. This collection delves into the captivating world of sled dogs and their drivers, shedding light on their often-overlooked roles in American history. Visitors had the unique opportunity to witness Goodnight’s creative process firsthand, with props used in the creation of her art on display alongside historical texts that

narrate the remarkable stories behind these noble creatures and their intrepid handlers.

“We are honored to host Veryl Goodnight’s latest masterpieces at Western Spirit,” said Todd Bankofier, CEO and Executive Director of Western Spirit Scottsdale’s Museum of the West. “Her innate ability to capture the spirit of the American West is unparalleled, and this exhibition promises to offer a captivating journey into the heart of one of the region’s most iconic traditions.”

Goodnight expressed her excitement about the exhibition: “Through ‘Sled Dogs in America: Alaska and Beyond,’ Western Spirit recognized the little-known but crucial roles sled dogs and their drivers have had in shaping our continent. I am thrilled to see my own work shine a light on these unsung canine heroes.”

Goodnight has pursued the sled dog story for 15 years with the help of Alaska historian Helen Hegener, whose vast knowledge and contributions are integral to this exhibition. Hegener’s book, now referred to by many around the globe as “the sled dog bible” was the basis for formatting the exhibit. She used 17 of Goodnight’s paintings, including the

cover painting, in the 416-page book, “The History of Sled Dogs in North America.”

*Sled Dogs in America: Alaska & Beyond* is a testament to Veryl Goodnight’s artistic versatility in exploring a new frontier in Western art and her continuous unwavering commitment to preserving the rich tapestry of Western heritage.

Western Spirit features regularly changing and permanent exhibits of Western and Native American art and artifacts, entertaining events, and informative programs that bring the West’s heritage, culture, and community to life. Recent special exhibitions were *Inner Light: The Art of Tom Gilleon*, through August of 2024; *William Matthews: Decades*, through Fall, 2024; *Kids in Focus: Focus on Western Spirit by local youth* through August 2024, and “*Dazzling Array: The Richard A. Gates Collection of Native American Jewelry*,” currently on display.

Permanent exhibitions continuously on display include *Canvas of Clay: Hopi Pottery Masterworks from The Allan and Judith Cooke Collection*, featuring 65 of the finest examples of Hopi pottery spanning six centuries; the *Frankie and Howard Alper*

Collection of John Coleman Bronzes; and The Abe Hays Family Spirit of the West Collection, a showcase of more than 1,400 saddles, spurs, cowboy gear and other Old West objects.

For more information on Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West, go to [Scottsdalemuseumwest.org](http://Scottsdalemuseumwest.org).

About Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West

Western Spirit is located in the heart of Old Town Scottsdale. Within months of opening in January 2015, Western Spirit qualified as a Smithsonian Affiliate. The museum has also received the TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence, enjoys a 4.5 out of 5-star rating on both TripAdvisor and Yelp, and is continually recognized as one of the "Nation's Best Western Museums" by True West magazine, most recently named the #1 Western Museum in the United States for 2023. Also, named to Phoenix Magazine's 2022 Best of The Valley Readers' Choice, Arizona Foothill's Best of Our Valley: "Best Museum" & "Best Annual Charity Event: Saddle Up" and the winner of Your Valley's "East Valley Favorites" for the museum category. For more information, visit [www.scottsdalemuseumwest.org](http://www.scottsdalemuseumwest.org)

Instagram @smowest  
Facebook @scottsdalemuseumwest  
Media Contact: Alison Rose  
[alison@48westagency.com](mailto:alison@48westagency.com)



Page at left: *The Gold Rush Dogs*, oil on linen, 40 x 80, Veryl Goodnight

Below: *Village Kinship*, bronze, 18 x 27 x 10, Veryl Goodnight

## Signature Member Chris Maynard showcases his extraordinary feather art in an episode of the PBS Documentary Series *Craft in America*



*May Fly*, Mixed Media, 10 x 7 x 2  
ART AND THE ANIMAL -  
64<sup>th</sup> Annual Members Exhibition

"Birds were always a part of Chris Maynard's childhood. As a young person, he took refuge in the woods around his home in Washington State where, his head nestled in moss, he watched the birds up in the tall trees. He began working with feathers at age 12. Today, Maynard carves feathers into intricate art in order to make their natural beauty more noticeable. His work highlights the patterns and colors of the feathers themselves, inviting the viewer to look and look again. For him, feathers represent flight, transformation, and a bridge between our present lives and our dreams. He displays his

work in shadow boxes, a signature art form he developed that enchants people around the world. Maynard works with feathers from turkeys, parrots, peacocks, and other birds and crafts them into scenes that are displayed in his world-renowned shadow boxes. A conservationist at heart, Maynard's feathers are legally obtained. Many of the feathers are naturally shed which means that the birds they came from may still be alive today."

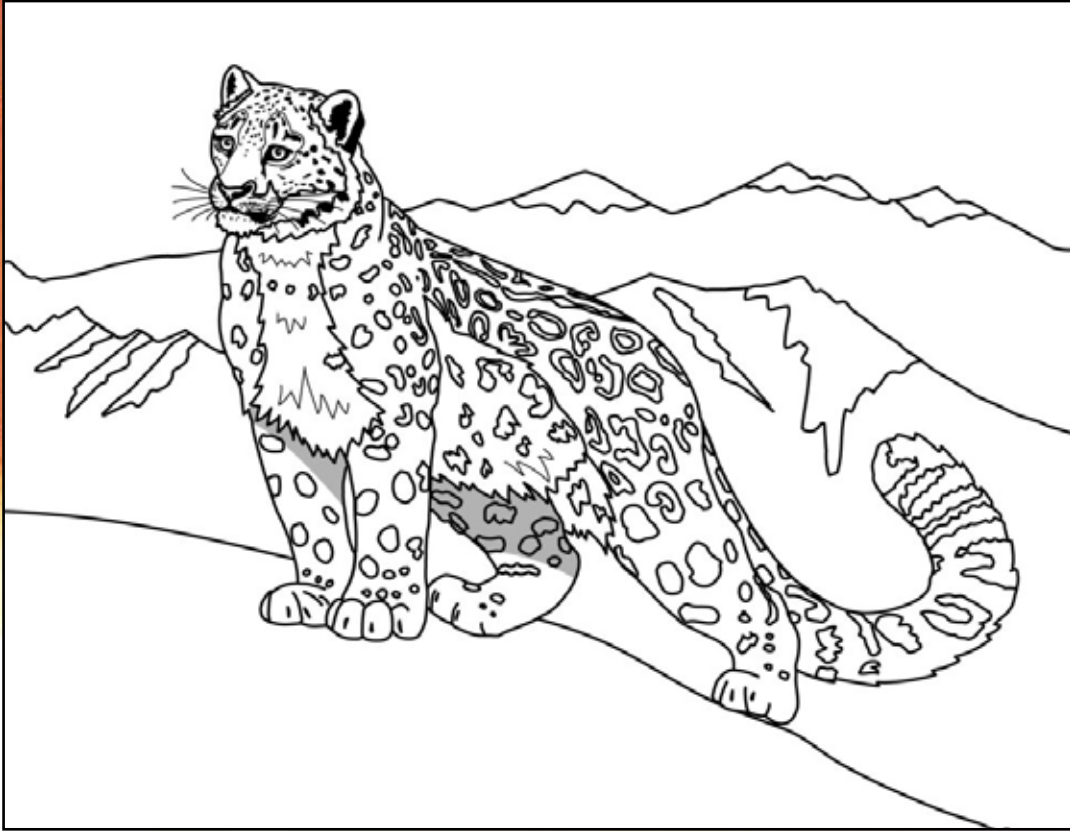
-*Craft in America*

[Craft in America - Chris Maynard](#)  
[Visit Chris Maynard's website](#)

Chris's work is also featured in **Soar**, an exhibition at Craft in America Center, January 18 through April 26, 2025, 8415 W 3rd St, Los Angeles, CA

# It's a Colorful World... The Animal World, That Is!

story by Wes Siegrist



Snow Leopard by Morgane Antoine

If you missed our previous announcement, Society members are now contributing line drawings to our website's coloring pages project. You can view and download the current drawings at this [page](#) on our Society of Animal Artists website. This project makes available for free, with no strings attached, coloring pages to download, print, and distribute to kids, adults, schools, and organizations for fun and education. It adds

to our non-profit status based upon education, specifically the animal kingdom in art. We have partnered with the non-profit organization [Champions For Wildlife](#) to increase the interaction with this project. Champions For Wildlife will also work with our members in other ways soon.

What can you, our Society of Animal Artists, do? Email the office your drawing(s). (JPEG is preferred)

This is an ongoing project we hope eventually encompasses hundreds of different species. Our current categories are Birds, Mammals, Insects, Fish & Aquatic Life, and Reptiles & Amphibians. A special thank you to members who contributed the 57 pages we received and have online.



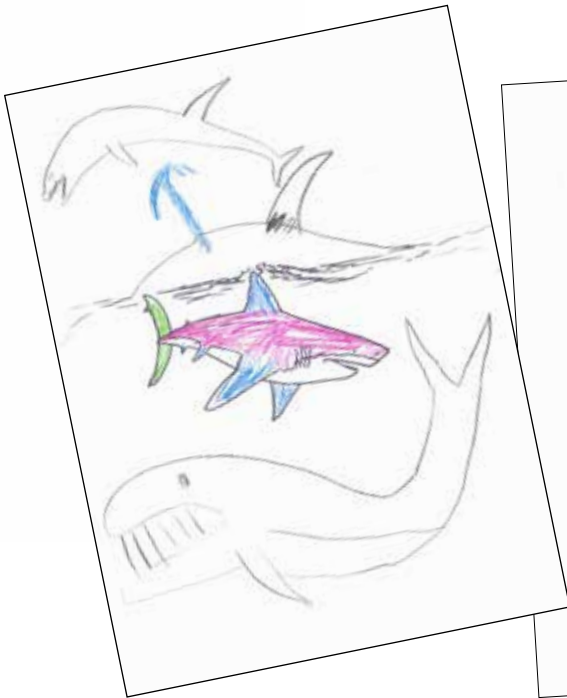


European Robin by Elwin van der Kolk



Xenopus frog by Carel P. Brest van Kempen

**Explore a world of creativity and fun with our collection of free coloring pages, designed by SAA member artists to inspire and educate young minds.**



Coloring Pages by Connor Fabun, aged 5. His favorite? The shark!!

I look up from my drawing board and there it is, a little note reminding me...always... that composition - the overall design of a work of art - is one of the keys to making art that stands out from the crowd.

Sure, technical expertise in one's chosen medium, and how to use that medium to its best advantage, is necessary to make art that can command attention. But without a thoughtful process of design and storytelling, an artist's knowledge of and use of paint or ink or chalk cannot overcome a work that lacks dy-

namic interest and an approach that is uniquely different from the next

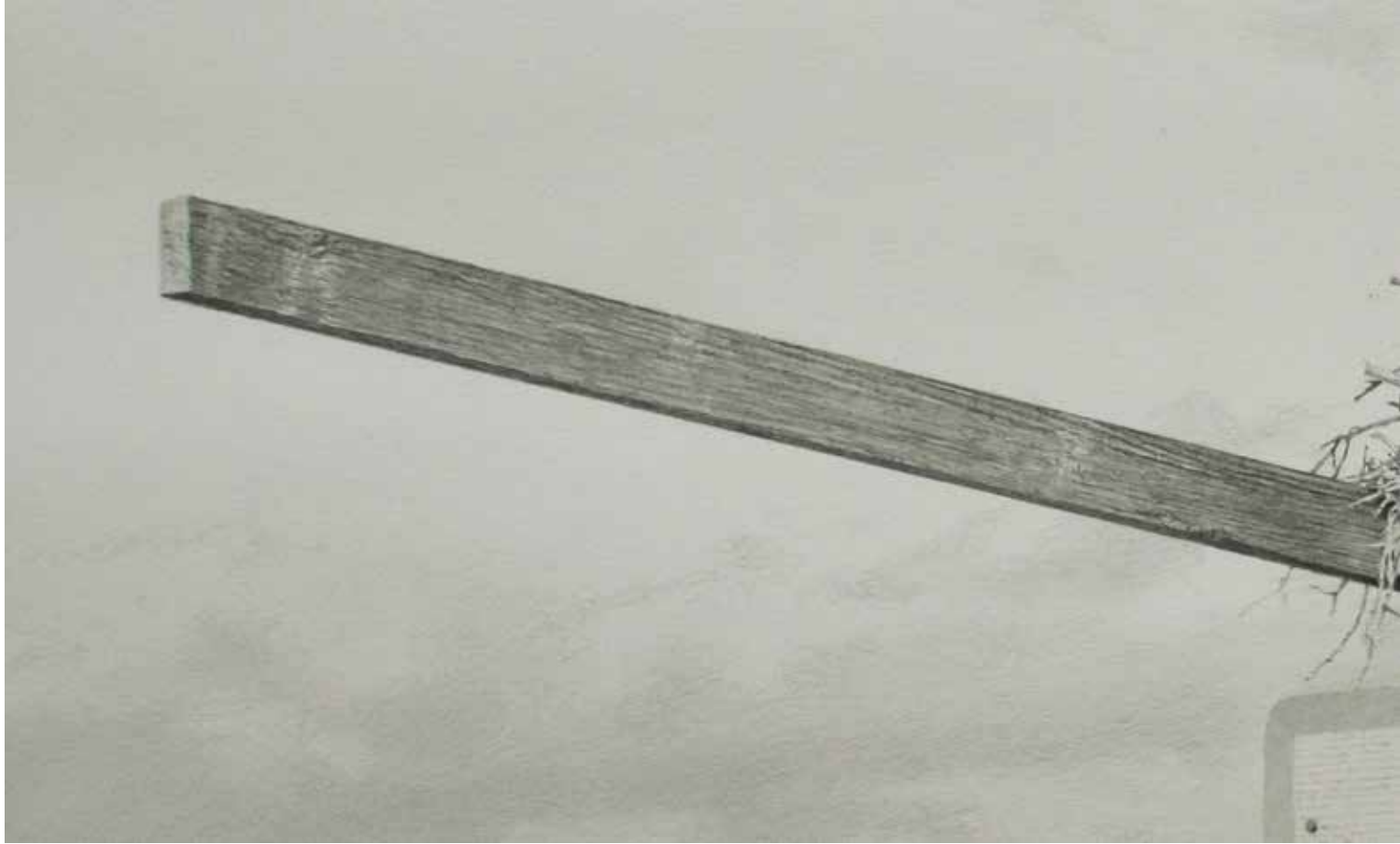
corporate collections, and other works of art do not get a second glance. Those reasons encompass an understanding of, or lack of understanding of a certain set of principles of design that have come down through all the historic periods of art.

For the purposes of this short discussion, let us focus on one of those principles of good design - balance. The dictionary states that balance can be an even distribution of weight, a condition in which different elements are equal, or an offset/comparison of the value of

**“It’s the composition, stupid!”**  
story by Terry Miller

artist down the line. This can be especially true in producing work for competition or jurying situations where any artist is up against, sometimes, hundreds of other artists all vying for a precious few exhibition slots or consideration for publication or organizational membership.

There are reasons why certain works of art hang in museums or grace the walls of major private or



one thing to another. In a work of art, balance is achieved across the entirety of any given rectangle or square, in two dimensions, when all individual elements of the composition harmonize with equal weight given both vertically and horizontally, and with the elimination of any appearance of awkwardness in the positions of those elements.

We can look at several examples of my work to see how I attempt to incorporate the principle of balance within my compositions.

Sitting a subject smack in the middle of a canvas or sheet of paper can have its merits but making use of

unique and/or uncommon subject placement within the bounds of that canvas or sheet of paper, can offer so much more, in my estimation, in the way of capturing a juror's eye, making an emotional connection, or telling a more interesting, engaging story.

Having subjects disappear off the margin can also add dynamic interest, when appropriately balanced. Looking at **FIGURE 1** (below) you can see the disappearing wing of the osprey off the top of the drawing. You may then wonder why I have created such a long, horizontal design considering the extreme righthand position of the major subjects – birds,

intricate nest and the hint of the sign. That “negative space” – all that open area to the left without much detail but for a soft indication of some clouds and of course, that long extended wood element - is needed to counteract the extreme weight of that jumble of birds, nest and sign to the right of the vertical center line – the “positive space” in the overall composition.

That long wood element thrusting left, which I intentionally exaggerated from its actual shorter length in my reference material, also acts to balance the perceived movement of the one osprey lifting off and moving right. The inclusion of all that



FIGURE 1: *Channel Creche*, graphite, 7 x 23



FIGURE 2: *Grandmother's Chair*, graphite, 8 x 15

“negative space” to the left of the vertical center line would not, by itself, have enough weight to counter the lifting osprey and therefore the need for that long design element of the wood beam which gives that otherwise “empty” space, the balanced weight the overall composition demanded.

In **FIGURE 2**, once again the animal subject is positioned toward the right edge. There is a relatively large, darkened area to the left, seemingly empty but for a few indications of leaves and spider webs. Again, that “negative space” acts as a counterweight in balancing the offset corner position of the napping cat. The strong horizontal movement is balanced by important vertical movement provided by the chair and its disappearing back support

going off the top margin (duplicating the effect of the osprey’s disappearing wing). The position of the chair’s legs and back. The front left leg of the chair sits just to the left of the center line and acts as the pivot point from which both sides of the composition move outward. That work garnered the Best in Show award from the Richeson 75 Animals, Birds, and Wildlife competition for 2015.

**FIGURES 3 and 4** have similar design concepts to each other. The positions of the cat subjects occupy similar locations in both – off to the upper left corner – and are balanced in both designs using strong light and shadow depictions along with more detail in the description of the rug designs else-

where in the composition.

In **FIGURE 3**, I have made the strongest splash of sunspot in the lower right corner, countering the pull of the cat looking off the upper margin. The diagonal lines of the shadow of the window mullions moving down and toward that lower right corner also act to balance the position of the cat and add needed weight to that part of the composition.

In **FIGURE 4**, the subject cat is also looking off the margin to the left and without the perceived weight and importance of details of the rug’s design moving down and off to the lower right, the composition would not be balanced. That drawing was added to the permanent collection of The Brinton Museum a few years ago.



FIGURE 3 (above): *Morning Glory*, graphite, 4½ x 4½

FIGURE 4 (below): *Beguiled Again*, graphite, 7 x 7½

The four drawings exemplified here, as well as the brief explanations of the reasons why things have been done in certain ways, represent the studied use of the principle of balance in composition. Those ideas, time-tested and used by many of the masters of the past, can act as a guide to any artist who would wish to challenge themselves to explore and become more creative, more involved in the thoughtful process of designing a new work of art.

Rethinking how one approaches balance in a composition can be as relatively easy as placing a major subject off to one side of a center line or moving even further away into a corner. That simple act could mean the difference between achieving a higher, more appealing result – one that may mean a work of art that makes the cut for an all-important competition - or a less creative result that may not command a second glance.



Terry Miller has been a professional artist working solely in graphite for 34 years. A long-time member of the SAA, he was also honored as Master Wildlife Artist by the Woodson Art Museum in 2013.

All artwork ©Terry Miller

# Adventures in Antarctica

story by Sean Murtha

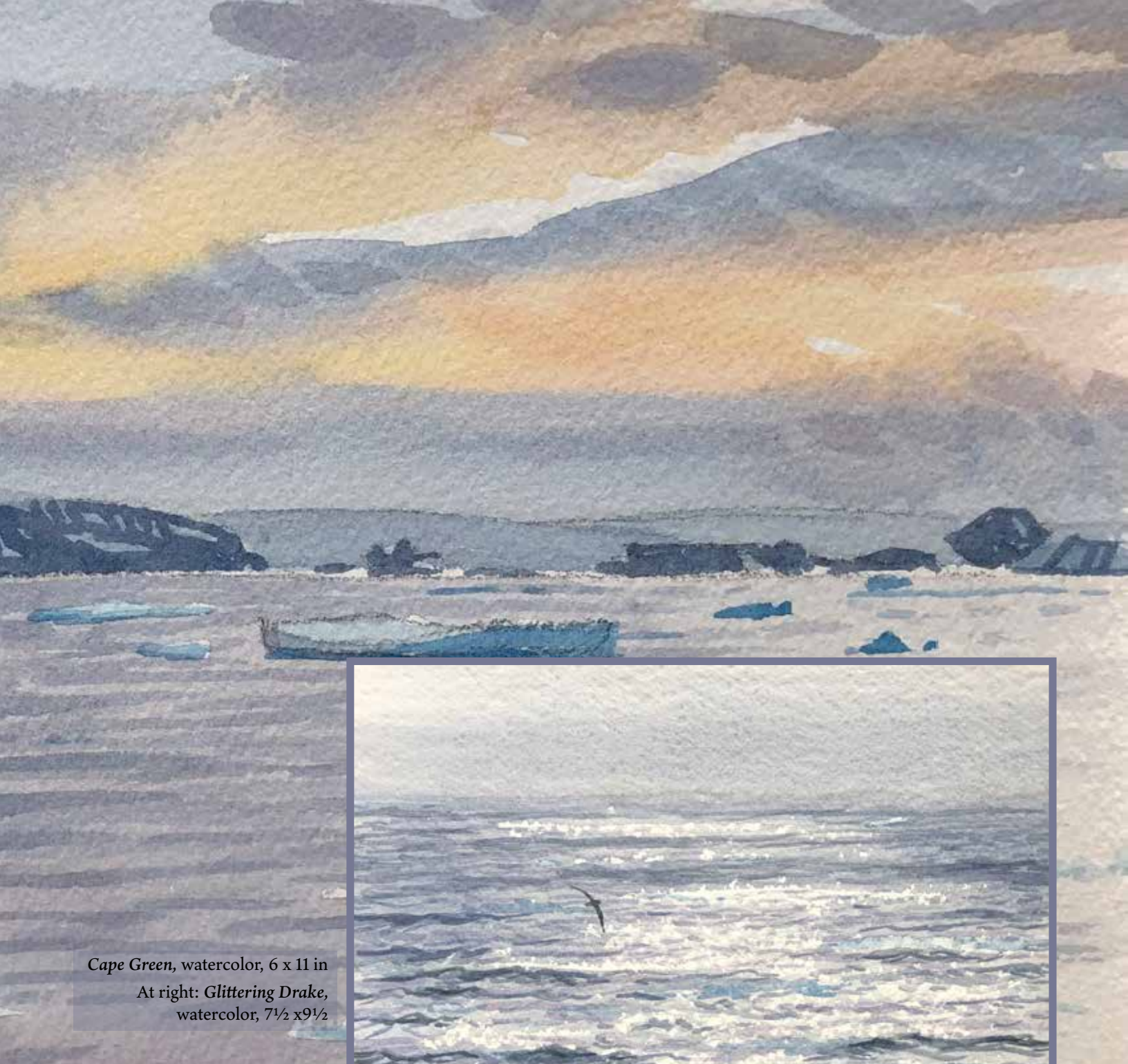


I have long described myself as a painter of my local environment, generally centered on the birds and landscapes of the Long Island Sound. But in December of 2023 an opportunity arose that expanded my artistic horizons in a way I never anticipated, when I joined the HX (formerly Hurtigruten) ship the MS Roald Amund-

sen as a guest lecturer and artist for two consecutive trips to Antarctica and the Falkland Islands! This trip came about, I am proud to say, thanks to my older son, who works as a shipboard naturalist and helped engineer this guest spot. Antarctica had never been even a bucket-list place for me, as I always figured it beyond my budget and outside my

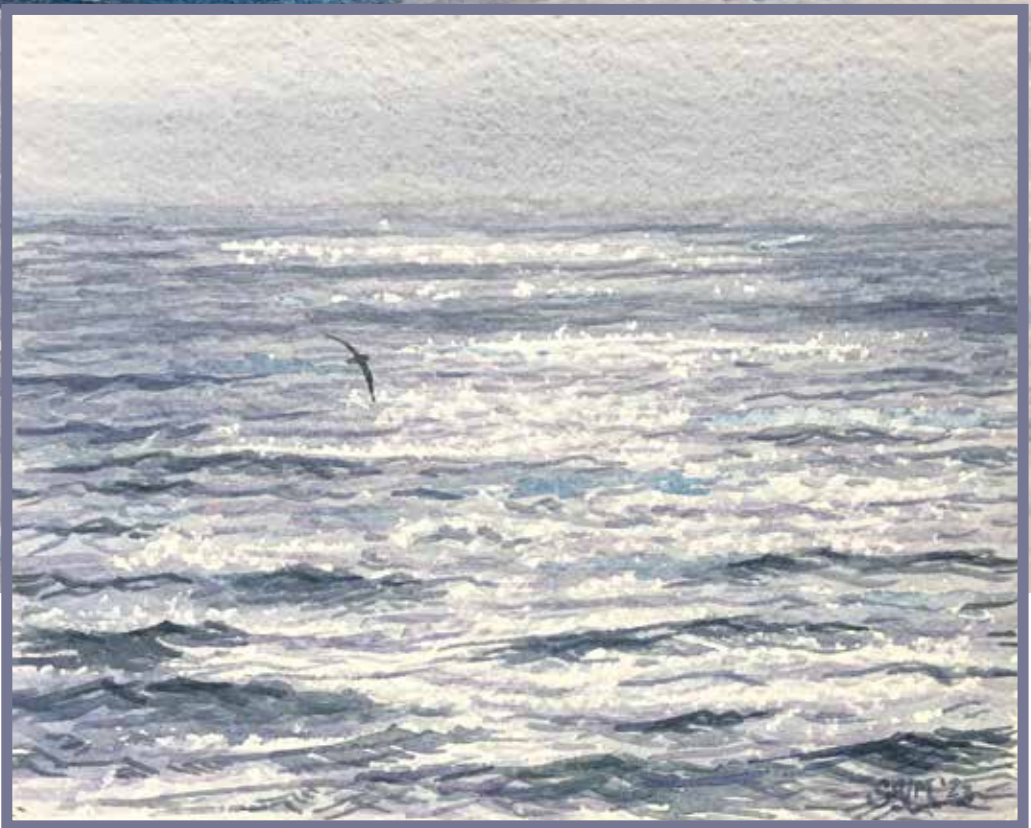
usual range. But here I was, packing up my sketching supplies and long underwear, and flying to Ushuaia, Argentina just as winter was coming to New England. Where I was going, summer was starting!

As a lecturer, I was to discuss the history of artists on expeditions to the frozen continent, a subject



*Cape Green*, watercolor, 6 x 11 in

At right: *Glittering Drake*,  
watercolor, 7½ x 9½



full of great characters, stories and images. As an artist, I was to teach basic drawing and painting to the passengers, but in-between, I managed to squeeze a lot of my own field work. As someone who prefers to work in quiet isolation it took some getting used to, but the scenery, the light, and the

wildlife made that transition inevitable- there was simply so much richness of subject. I had to get used to drawing and painting with

people looking over my shoulders, talking and asking questions, or not drawing and paint at all... and that was simply out of the question!



Above: *Misty Berg*, watercolor, 4 x 8; below center: Sean Sketching on New Island, The Falklands/Islas Malvinas

The Drake Passage, the crossing from South America to the Antarctic Peninsula, is notorious for bad weather. I was lucky on all four of my crossings, experiencing nothing worse than moderate seas, and occasionally the so-called “Drake lake”, with water as glassy and calm as my familiar Long Island Sound back home. The passage takes two days, but was never dull. The ever-changing effects of light and wind on the waves constantly beckoned, and birds were always in view— from the graceful albatrosses and petrels to the flighty prions. Many of these birds followed the ship for hours, swooping and hovering alongside, often at eye-level, providing numerous opportunities to sketch, sometimes without need for binoculars.

The first icebergs came into view late on the first day. I was unpre-

pared for how mesmerizing they would be. Most of the second day was misty, and the sight of bergs emerging from the fog was uniquely inspiring for watercolor. The vast



array of shapes and the subtle effects of atmosphere were the main interest at this point, but later, as the weather cleared and the sun eventually shone, the incredible colors of the ice revealed themselves. Icebergs were a constant companion

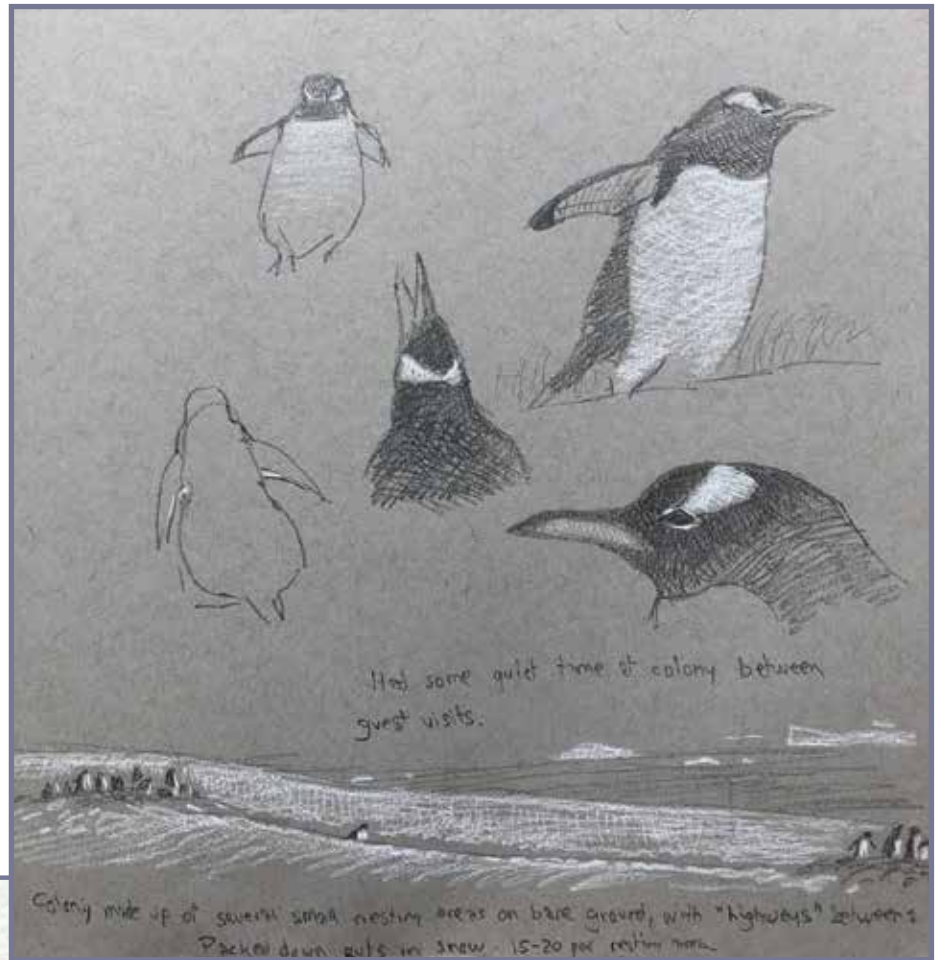
while in Antarctic waters, and never got old, even when competing with the glaciers and snow-clad mountains of the continent which were shortly to come. I found myself painting quick and small, sometimes in a series of small squares as in a comic-book, as the ship moved from one incredible vista to another.

On landings, which were always near penguin colonies, I took part in the operations of the expedition team, marking trails and keeping guests on them. As such I did not have a tremendous amount of time to sketch, but I did find some moments. Penguins are delightful models. Their graphic black-and-whites and comic posture translated well to my preferred method of drawing on toned paper. On these trips we landed exclusively at Gentoo colonies, so Adelies and Emperor Penguin, though seen, were always



at a distance. I sketched Chinstraps only rarely, when one happened to mix with the Gentoos.

More penguins were to come on the Falkland Islands, where I was able to sketch Magellanic, King, Rockhopper, and even an errant Macaroni penguin, making for an 8 penguin trip! Black-browed Albatross breed here as well and made splendid models perched on their columnar nests. The Falklands also brought numerous encounters with Dolphins- both Peale's and Commerson's, not to mention Sei whales. Speaking of whales, let us not forget the Orcas and Humpbacks seen throughout the trip but mainly in the channels and bays of Antarctica, the latter so common that they




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Above: Gentoo  
Penguin sketches

At left: Rockhopper  
Penguins, watercolor

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often found their way into sketches of bergs and glaciers.

While primarily an oil painter, I decided that they were not practical for this trip and instead brought

watercolors and gouache. I have used watercolors since childhood but had never felt intuitive with them, always seeking a tight control that made the medium frustrating. However, something about the lim-

ited palette of Antarctica, the mist and ethereal light, encouraged a looser approach that unlocked for me some of the secrets of the medium. I brought gouache along as well, thinking they might satisfy

*“This trip has redefined my artistic path, as Africa or Alaska has done for many artists I know.”*



ending stream of Sooty Shearwaters outside Stanley Harbor, Falkland Islands 12/26/23

*Shearwaters Everywhere*, watercolor, 3½ x 11

my need for opacity, but in the end I went for the transparent watercolors almost every time.


This trip has redefined my artistic path, as Africa or Alaska has done

for many artists I know. No longer can I restrict myself to the birds of my own native habitat. The “itch” has gotten hold, so much so that I returned again in late 2024, on the same ship, visiting the same region

as well as a good part of coastal Chile. This trip also included visits to Adelie and Chinstrap colonies, and being earlier in the season, featured a lot more sea ice.

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*At right:* Black-browed albatross and marcaroni penguins, sketchbook page



One of the most exciting developments to come out of this trip was an invitation to participate in an art calendar put together by the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust. UKAHT raises funds to maintain several historic sites and artifacts from Britains long legacy of Antarctic exploration, so to be asked to have my work bound together with such artists as Keith Shackleton and Dafila Scott (both relatives of noted polar explorers), as well as Edward Wilson and George Marston (artists who accompanied those noted explorers) is an extraordinary honor. This 2025 calendar is available now, and can be purchased at:

**[UK Antarctic Heritage Trust Shop](#)**



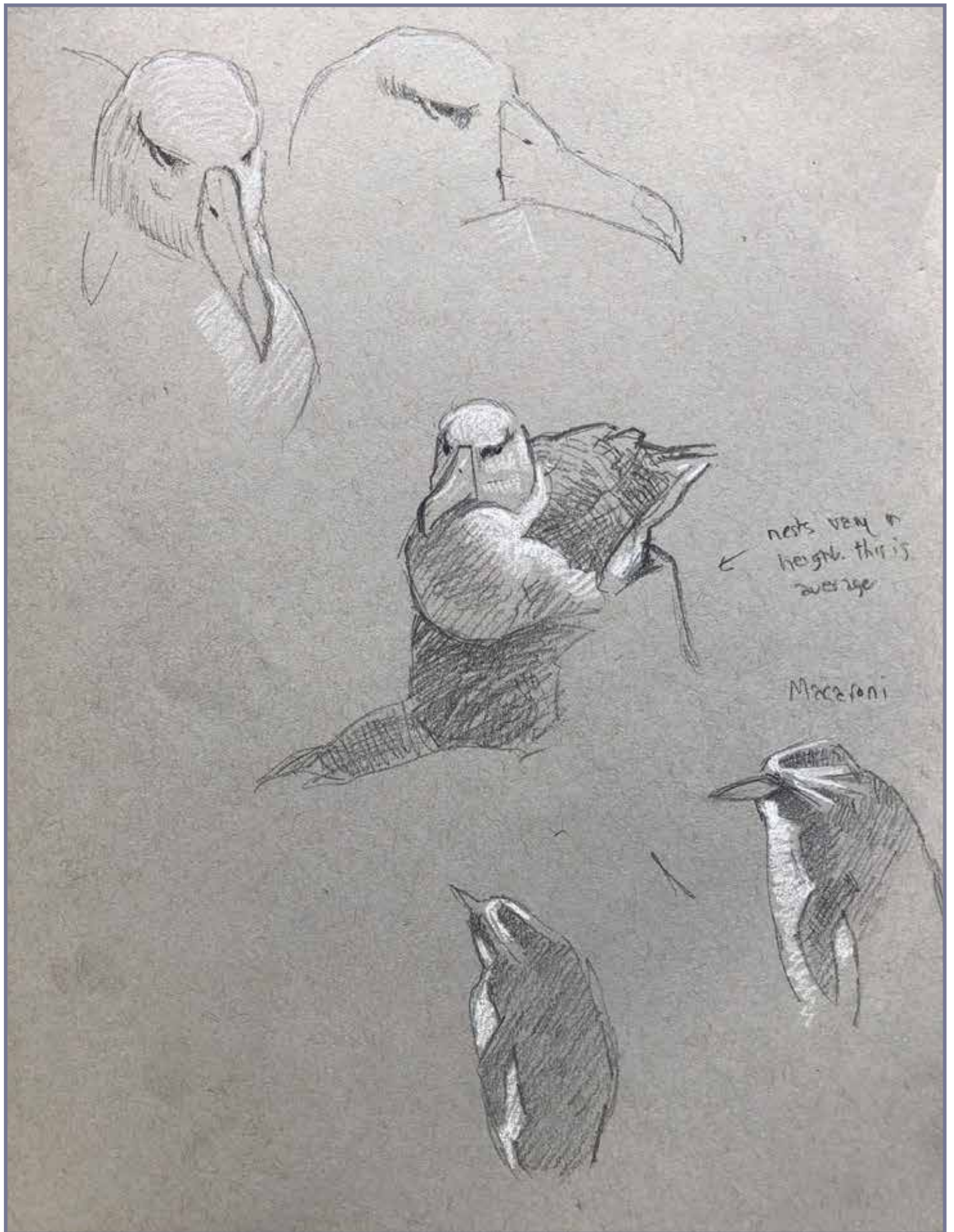
Sean Murtha lives in Norwalk, CT and works in museums, sometimes even painting dioramas, as a day-job. He paints and sketches from life as often as he can, usually, but no longer always, depicting the birds and landscapes of his native habitat, the Long Island Sound.

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## Jennifer L. Cook



*Sinuous*  
Sri Lankan Pit Viper  
Bronze  
14 x 7 x 4

Hello fellow artists! I would like to take the time to introduce myself and express how thrilled I am to be a member of the Society of Animal Artists. So many of the Society's artists have been the benchmark of skill I have tried to emulate and the stars that have guided my path. My name is Jennifer Cook and I am a lifelong artist, graduating from the University of the Arts in 1993 and then working as a commercial sculptor sculpting prototypes for the toy and giftware industries, jewelry design, architectural restoration, ephemeral-art (sand-carving and pumpkin-carving,) prop and set design, and finally my own work, wildlife sculpture.

My current concentration is creating reptile sculptures in bronze. The visceral reaction these animals illicit in people is as intriguing to me as the challenge of their scaly geometry interlacing over anatomy. Reptiles' elusive nature, both in behavior and camouflage, as well as their potential for danger create a difficulty of observation and frequent misrepresentation in both art and public perception.

With each sculpture I try to overcome these obstacles. I want each of my sculptures to be both beautiful and as life-like as possible while maintaining scientific, behavioral and anatomical accuracy. Many of the reptiles I concentrate on are either venomous or critically endangered, so my artwork serves as both a record of and advocate for each species. I work from observing live animals and also work closely with the biologists who study these creatures, eagerly welcoming their input, and frequently sending in-progress castings for corrections and critique.



©Lonestar Brewing

Although my goal is to create fine art, I often find spirited engagement in using my skills in unexpected ways. Before the pandemic, I would join my friends every October, as part of a team sculpting giant pumpkins for the Bronx Zoo's *Boo at the Zoo* weekends as ephemeral and performance art. The engagement of the crowd and the difficulty of creating a massive animal sculpture out of pumpkin over the space of single weekend was a thrill and challenge I truly enjoyed. The opportunity to engage and in-

spire crowds with sculpture while simultaneously educating them about the amazing animals we share this planet with was a cherished experience I hope to return to soon. The freedom of working so quickly and intensely and yet creating something so engaging, yet so impermanent (rarely lasting a few days past completion,) is a reminder for me to enjoy the work and cherish the connections with the people I meet.

As we move into 2025, the Chinese Year of the Snake by the way, I hope to see you all very soon! I look forward to seeing what we are all creating and how we can support and inspire one another. Thank you for work and your fellowship!

Jennifer L. Cook, (JL Cook)  
**IG: [jlcook\\_3D](#)**  
**website: [snakearts.com](#)**



Above: Work in progress Rattlesnake.



Above: Pumpkin carving at the Bronx Zoo's Boo at the Zoo weekends.





Jennifer L. Cook  
*Sinuous*  
Sri Lankan Pit Viper  
Bronze  
14 x 7 x 4