



MARCH NEWS AND UPDATES

This month we feature Janet Roberts and Gary John Gresl – who affectionately refer to themselves as “ARTNERS”. Accomplished and well known artists throughout the state art scene, chances are you already know of them - or of their work. But how did they ever end up on the same life path?

"ARTNERS": Janet Roberts and Gary John Gresl

JANET ROBERTS

Janet Roberts has made art in some form her entire life. Her mother told her that she used to chew crayons, so it seems an art career was inevitable.



At Indiana University, Janet majored in Fine Arts with a concentration in painting. She painted lush, impressionistic landscapes for many years, showing and selling at area shows and fairs in the Chicago area. Moving to London in the early 80's brought the opportunity for new exhibitions, and she was juried into the Royal Academy of Art's 200th Summer Exhibition! A move back to Milwaukee led her to various gallery representations, juried exhibits, and notable awards.

But Janet felt the need to branch out artistically, and began experimenting by painting images of objects or people over

GARY JOHN GRESL

While in high school considering what field he would like to pursue, Gary was most interested in fine art. Paleontology, Archeology, and Natural History also held strong interests. It was consequential too that he played the clarinet and sung in the high school choir. But, when it came to choosing a curriculum, his choice would be largely directed by his parents – who were generously paying for his college education.



His parents didn't believe art would provide a living, nor did they understand those other interests. As a result, he followed their direction and earned a BS in Elementary Education with a Music Minor... but with a concentration of art and art history classes!



collaged and toned backgrounds. After completing a number of these, and having a successful duo show in Wausau with these works, Janet came across a notice in a WP & S newsletter. Gary John

Gresl, who owned and worked at the Milwaukee Antique Center, had a small gallery in the building called After Image. He was seeking artists creating work having to do with nostalgia and the past. After seeing Janet's work, Gary gave her a show. They became friends ... and a few years later ... "Artners". One of Janet's favorite shows was one they did together titled "He Said-She Said".



Janet continues to experiment with paint on varied surfaces. Because Janet and Gary both love antiquing, she frequently finds items that became inspiration for paintings. Once she bought a white hat that she described as "sculptural" and did a large still life, using it with other hats and interesting objects. She loves incorporating old dolls, toys, costumes, and even mannequins in her still lifes. One of her favorite pieces is The Bee Keeper's Dream.



Along the same lines, Janet utilizes vintage fabrics which inspired an entire series she calls Retro Portraits. She uses images borrowed from 40's, 50's, and 60's photos and selectively paints over the patterned fabric. These have evolved into painting models in costume on the fabrics and wallpaper. These storied paintings convey a "behind the scene" experience for the viewer. Janet is also well known for her portrait commissions (and I must confess, I am a very satisfied customer!)



During her frequent antique trips, she often finds those old paint-by-number paintings, and had an idea to do something fun with them! After studying these completed paintings, she envisions a new subject - which is added to, and painted over parts. This gives a completely new feel and meaning to the piece and has proven to be very popular with clients!



Gary has asked Janet to paint on his 3D assemblages as well. One of them, The Up North Stele, was acquired by the Museum of WI Art, and another, Requerdo, holds a place of honor in their home.

His sense of loss related to art and art-making nagged him for years.



After teaching elementary children for 5 years, Gary decided to pursue a Master's Degree. At UW Madison he entered the School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences



(previously known as Home Economics)! Why? Through the Dept. of Related Art he could build his own course of study. This allowed Gary to take classes in the History of Interior Design, History of Textiles, Art History, and Museum Studies offered by the Elvehjem Museum and Wisconsin Historical Society.

Gary's Master's thesis was about Harvey Littleton - a glass artist and former professor at UW who became known as the "Father of American Studio Glass". This course work- along with his passionate interest and avocation of collecting and dealing in antiques - mostly satisfied his visual art interest.



In his thirties however, that internal nagging of making art returned. This time he began to produce dozens of paintings, usually abstracts and non-

objectives in bold acrylic colors. Within a couple of years, he was incorporating 3D objects to the canvases, expanding their outlines and reaching outward.

Eventually, he ignored using canvas altogether and became consumed by building large, 3D assemblages that are both free standing and wall hung. He blended his interests in archeology, paleontology, antiques, and 3D objects by shaping curious sculptures with man-made materials that have evolved and been transformed by time and nature.



The themes of "rustic, rural and primitive" are inherent in Gary's creations. Furthermore, he expands what galleries traditionally support - paintings and sculpture made from well understood mediums. He recognizes how important it was to his youthful psyche spending time outdoors on farms, in woodlands, and around rivers and lakes. He merges these memories with materials and objects that are often raw, and formed by natural processes without influence of human hands. When choosing items that are made by humans, pieces modified by natural forces are preferable to new "unweathered" objects.



Fortuitously, through a shared interest in art, antiques and aged collectibles, Gary found a partner in Janet Roberts. Her



Together, in a Brookfield home they call "The Fairy Tale Cottage" Janet and Gary feel fortunate to enjoy a bright and light filled upstairs studio. It overlooks a tree filled back yard, where they enjoy deer, squirrels, and even an occasional coyote!

You can view [Janets work at the gallery by clicking here](#), or check out and purchase her personal website at: JanetMRoberts.com

Looking for something special? Ask Janet about a commission! JaninEagle@msn.com

Preview

paintings and collage work merge the materials they both admire. They have collaborated on individual pieces, and exhibited their work jointly in a show they titled, "He Said – She Said" – which showed in two public WI galleries.

You can [discover more about Gary and see MUCH more of his work at his website: Gresl.com](#)

Gary's email is: saganguy@aol.com



The "Artners" continue to share their collective motivations, discuss their ideas, and support each other's work as artists. Together they hope to be making art for many more years. As "Artners", they also share their lives as Life Partners and will be going through life's journey together for years, and years!

Beyond their personal credentials, Janet and Gary are two of the most talented, well-respected, and modest artists I've met. Their knowledge, notoriety, and reputations in the Wisconsin art world are deep and well-deserved and its been an honor showing their work - including together as part of [GOWA's "REMEMBER" show in 2018](#).

It has truly been an honor getting to know Janet and Gary as friends too! They are supportive, and deeply caring people who I value tremendously. I am so happy these two kids both love old stuff. Keep an eye out, and you will definitely find them in the art galleries and antique malls throughout Wisconsin!
- Ric Hartman



Henry (Heinrich) Vianden

"The Father of Wisconsin Art"

The "Father of Wisconsin Art", Henry Vianden, was born in Poppelsdorf, Germany in 1814 and passed in Milwaukee in 1899.

At the age of fourteen he became a goldsmith's apprentice and then attended the Dusseldorf Academy. In 1836, he began studying at the Royal Academy of Art in Munich and later continued his education in Antwerp, Belgium. By 1845, he worked in Cologne, Germany as a professional artist.

After the failed German Revolution of 1848, over 4,000 German intellectuals came to America, Vianden one of them. In 1849, he arrived on July 4th in New York and soon traveled to Wisconsin, eventually settling in Milwaukee. There, he taught at the Peter Engelmann's German and English Academy and

the Mathilde Franziska Anneke's German, French, and English Academy. He also privately tutored some of Wisconsin's most successful artists including Susan Frackelton, Robert Schade, Frank Enders, Carl von Marr, and Robert Koehler.

Vianden was the first professional landscape painter in Wisconsin. His work is highly detailed and often consisting of elements derived from various sketches made while studying nature. Within his landscapes, he often included trees. Known as the "oak tree" painter, Vianden related that trees were God's noble creatures and said to his students, "When you paint a tree, you have a king sitting for you." He frequently took his students on fieldtrips by horse and cart to the Wisconsin Dells.

Vianden's work uses a limited palette of green and blue following in the Dusseldorf style. In addition to his paintings, he also created copper plate etchings and lithographic prints. His paintings can be found in notable museums, [and the gallery is happy to offer two on its website.](#)



SOURCES:

Museum of Wisconsin Art (MOWA) Archives: <http://www.wisconsinart.org/archives/artist/henry-vianden/profile-179.aspx>

Milwaukee Art Museum: <http://collection.mam.org/details.php?id=8090>

Wisconsin Visual Art Achievement Awards: <http://wvaaw.com/inductee/henry-vianden-4>

AVAILABLE ARTWORK BY HENRY VIANDEN



[Untitled \(River Scene\) by Henry Vianden](#)

Oil on canvas, 20 x 30 in., Frame: 30 x 40in

Painting has been professionally cleaned, restored, relined, and an incredible period frame added. Signed lower left corner. They don't come any better than this large, historic, and beautiful painting!

Contact the Gallery for Price



[Untitled \(Landscape with River Bluffs\) by Henry Vianden](#)

Oil on canvas, 9.5 x 17.5 in., Frame: 17.25 x 25.25 in.,

Signed lower left corner in original gold period frame showing age. Small painting professionally cleaned, restored and archival varnished.

Sale priced at \$3,000

CONTEMPORARY ARTWORK

(Click on the photos below to see their entire collection)



Chuck Bauer



Bruce Breckenridge



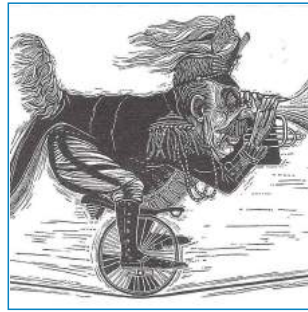
Al Buss



Patrick Doughman



Terry Firkins



Ray Gloeckler



Gwen Granzow



Jo Gross



Reed Jones



Martin Keey



Richard Lazzaro



Claudette Lee-Roseland



Valerie Mangion



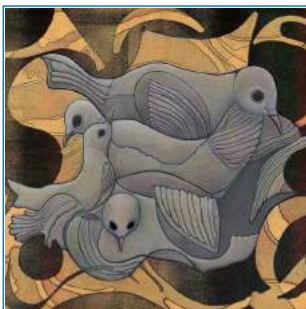
Jack Pachuta



Anthony Pazos



Liz Phillips



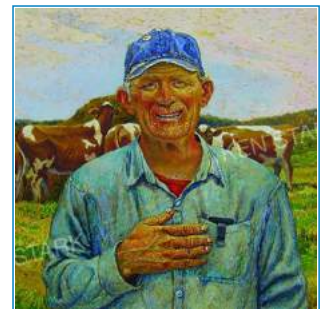
Jewell Riano-Bradley



Janet Roberts



Colette Ody Smith



Ken Stark



Jerry Steingraeber



Mark Weller



Darlene Wesenberg Rzezotarski

!!!! CALLING ARTISTS AND CONSIGNORS !!!

WEB LISTING & PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Gallery of Wisconsin Art is accepting applications for promotion and web listing for artists and/or estates

- Contemporary artists looking for promotion and a place to show and sell your artwork.
- Families/estates of notable Wisconsin Artists who have a lot of work they would like to consign and sell.
- Collectors looking to start downsizing their collections
- Anyone (you?) who has inherited valuable Wisconsin artwork they don't want (from 1-100 pieces)

Promotion includes listing on the GOWA website and newsletter for larger estates.

Download the [2021 Promotion Agreement](#) from the website (under the SUBMISSIONS tab).

Representation is very affordable, and covers the cost of maintaining the website and creating Newsletters.

[Read more about the benefits of PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES WITH GOWA here.](#)

EARLY HISTORIC ARTWORK

We have a large number of pieces available from these Early artists, and are honored to represent MOST of their estates.

[WE HAVE MUCH MORE WORK AVAILABLE BY MANY OTHER EARLY HISTORIC ARTISTS.](#)

If you don't find what you are looking for below, let us know, and we might be able to get it for you.

Share your interests (artist, subject, price, size, era, etc) on our [CONTACT FORM](#), and we will notify you first when works comes available fitting your request. We work with dealers, buyers and sellers throughout the nation offering a wide range of early Wisconsin Artists.

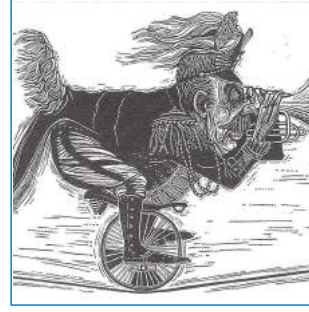
(Click on the artists below to see what is readily available)



Fred Berman



Tom Dietrich



Raymond Gloeckler



Robert Hodgell



Mary Nohl



Carol Rowan



Arthur Thrall



Santos Zingale

– GOWA BUYS AND SELLS –

EARLY WISCONSIN ARTWORK WANTED!

Are you looking to down size, or have you inherited a bunch of "old paintings" from your grandparents? Don't know where to go, or what to do, or who to talk to about them? Well, GOWA may be able to help! We have a large network of Collectors always looking for quality artwork at reasonable prices by Early Wisconsin Artists (1900 - 1960ish). Check out "[CONSIGNING OR SELLING](#)" on the website under the Submissions Tab (Early/Regional section). There, you can also find a list of artists of special interest to collectors.

Our Mission is to preserve, promote, and be the go-to-place for "good old Wisconsin artwork". Rather than artwork ending up under valued in a rummage sale, flea market, or even worse - the curb, we might be able to help find a good second (or third) home for them. **Send an email to: info@GalleryofWisconsinArt.com and include photos (Front, back, signature, details, notations or labels on back, etc). Please include a detailed description of the piece (artist name, media, size, condition, provenance, age, and your asking price.**

The GOOD NEWS is that we may be able to turn them into cash for you. (The BAD NEWS is probably no old Wisconsin artwork is going to make you wealthy.) However, there are artists, subjects and periods that are in high demand and bring good prices. We would love to see what you have available, and will always offer our best, fair and reasonable price.

Most importantly, we may be able to find a good home for your unwanted artwork!

CEDARBURG ART MUSEUM SPONSORS HISTORY OF WISCONSIN ART BOOK – COMING SOON!

A Creative Place: The History of Wisconsin Art

This groundbreaking book- A Creative Place: The History of Wisconsin Art- will span Wisconsin's art from thousands of years ago to the end of the twentieth century. Readers will enjoy experiencing Wisconsin history



through various forms of art including effigy mounds, petroglyphs, pottery, paintings, fiber arts, folk art, printmaking, sculptures and so much more.?

The book will be richly illustrated with more than 400 art images representing hundreds of artists who call Wisconsin home. It is organized telling the story of art placed in context with Wisconsin's general history:?

- Native Presence: The Beginning of Art in Wisconsin
- Encounters and Settlement: Art in Wisconsin: 1634-1870
- The Great Cultural Expansion: 1870-1918
- Transitioning from European Ideals to America's Regional Interests: 1918-1945
- Wisconsin at Mid-Century: The Post War Period: 1945-1965
- The Coming of Age of Visual Arts: 1965-1980
- The Last Decades of the 20th Century: 1980-2000

Seven chapters, including vivid art images, will tell the story of art placed in context with Wisconsin's general history which helped shape Wisconsin art. Your generous gift will help bring this book to life!

YOU can be among those who support the deeper understanding of Wisconsin's rich visual art legacy through the publication of this book. Through the support of the Cedarburg Art Museum, organizations and individual donors, the book is well on its way to becoming reality!

PLEASE consider making a donation to support this important project - the first in Wisconsin!

[CLICK HERE to go to the Cedarburg Art Museum website:](#) Learn more about the book, become a Sponsor, or make a donation to this important project!



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