



wva

WISCONSIN
VISUAL
ARTISTS

OCTOBER 2021



Mary Tilton **President**

Ally Wilber **Executive Director**

Sarah Legate **Graphic Designer**

Peg Haubert **Contributing**

Ally Wilber **Writers**

Mary Tilton

Jayne Reid Jackson

Gary Gresl

Roberta Condon

Jayne Reid Jackson **Contributors**

Gary Gresl **Photograph**

Roberta Condon

Andrea Waala

David Bueschel

S.V. Medaris

Denise Presnell

Tom Smith

Jean Judd

Data Contributions

Forbes, artnet News

On the cover

Roberta Condon

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Roberta Condon

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State Board Contacts

NE Chapter | Edita Birschbach
nechapter@wisconsinvisualartists.org

SE Chapter | Steven Bauer
sechapter@wisconsinvisualartists.org

SC Chapter | Jayne Reid Jackson
scchapter@wisconsinvisualartists.org

WVA President | Mary Tilton
marytilton100@gmail.com

Executive Director | Ally Wilber
director@wisconsinvisualartists.org

Tech Support | Rosie Hartmann
rosie@studiorosie.com

OUR PAST IS PRESENT IN OUR FUTURE

Written by Peg Haubert, 2000, published in Wisconsin
Art History: WP&S Centennial Exhibition

Like the cinched waists and bustled bottoms of Victorian ladies, the undulating lines of “Art Nouveau” find expression everywhere. Frank Lloyd Wright, 33, determines to straighten out those lines. Orville and Wilbur Wright give up their bicycle repair shop to experiment on a glider outside of Kitty Hawk. College football is the most popular sport in the United States. Scientists identify the hormone “adrenaline.” Mary Cassatt is believed to be painting, “The Mirror.” Degas is losing his sight. Kandinsky is graduating from the “Academy of Fine Arts,” in Munich, Germany. Picasso, 19, makes his first sale. Louise Nevelson is born in Russia. Marconi intends to prove that sound can travel across oceans. Moving pictures are in their infancy. Walt Disney is born. Wisconsin has two million residents and 6,500 miles of railroad track that has opened access to a wealth of forests. As trees fall, farming grows. In Milwaukee, governed by a Socialist Party, an industrial community prospers. Thriving on paper, dairy, and steel machine manufacturing (washed down with an increasing consumption of beer) a diverse mix of immigrants establish new lives. Among them, an artist named Louis Mayer spearheads a discussion with other artists concerning what they must do to promote themselves. It is 1900...

I don't often have time to think about the past. I am usually trying to remember what I have to do today. However, in honor of the WP&S / WAAM Centennial I thought it appropriate to take the time to reflect a bit on the events of the last 100 years - to put a few things in perspective. Doing so has given me “20th Century whiplash.”

I stand in awe, looking at the panorama of creative energy humanity has displayed over the last century: telephones, automobiles,

airplanes, movies, televisions, computers, spaceships, x-rays, lasers, satellites, medicine - and, perhaps my all time favorite - the recent discovery that the heart has a brain of its own, a 40,000 neuron bundle that we communicate with at will. The brain, when upset or suffering the ill effects of stress, (no doubt, caused by living in a world of the above mentioned items), can be consciously directed to talk to the heart and vice versa. It has been scientifically proven that thoughts of appreciation about someone or something for one minute, five times a day, can ease a troubled heart. This bit of knowledge, when applied, will reward you with better health and may actually be the key to our longevity.

I believe that the “heart's-brain” is the force that has been keeping WP&S / WAAM alive for 100 years. Those who have taken on the responsibilities of this organization have not been motivated by money - they have all been volunteers. They have not been motivated by a quest for power - there is no one to exercise authority over. They have not been motivated by a guarantee of personal success - there are no guarantees. The motivation must have come from their heart's brain - because no one in their right mind would do this.

The brain might not understand why you are driven to do so much for so little and present the argument to the heart that, “All of this organizational activity is wasting valuable time. We should be doing art. Let someone else do that stuff.”

The heart stops, just for a moment, and says, “Yeah, I hear you, but I have a strong feeling about this. I can't explain it exactly. I feel we should do this and you know we can do it if we work together. It's the ‘culturally correct’ thing to do right now.”

With a sudden upsurge of gray matter, the brain retorts, "Listen to me. I am the 'voice of reason in a sea of uncertainty.' What does a strong feeling have to do with anything?"

Fluttering its valves, the heart bellows, "Everything, simply everything! You cerebral bone head. Now, talk nice to me and I might let you live longer."

This little chat between the heart and the brain goes on every day. Eventually, the brain must give in to the pomp of the pump and agree to do what the heart wants even if it doesn't understand it fully. Such is the majesty of the heart. Once thought to be a simple, romantic saying, "Listen to your heart," is now a published scientific proclamation.

The "heart's-brain" discovery is viewed as a revelation in modern medicine and I am entertained by the notion that it has taken science thousands of years to validate a few simple words of ancient wisdom, "As a man thinketh in his heart so he is." Those early sages knew a lot more than we give them credit for. This is mysterious.

I find it equally mysterious that a handful of artists set out 100 years ago to "promote and support the visual arts and artists" of Wisconsin and by doing so each was provided the opportunity to thrive in their chosen profession. While the group has grown to an organization of 350 plus members today, there is still only a handful of artists willing to do the work it takes to uphold the mission.

WP&S / WAAM was not conceived of as an organization to serve the "individual artist," but rather to provide encouragement and to foster opportunities for all artists living in Wisconsin, an area of the country that had been and continues to be given to the interests of industry and labor. Public promotion was vital if the artists were to thrive.

This remains true today and is compounded by the idea of art being entertainment, which has thrown a bigger wrench into the effort. The choices are many - watch TV, surf the web, go out to dinner, rent some video tapes, watch a ballet, attend a play, listen to the symphony, or buy a work of art. How far can your entertainment budget take you?

We live in a time in which "visual arts" are undervalued in the minds of the general public, often ignored by the media and where distribution of government funding for the arts continues to be inequitable, (less than 10% of all money granted by the Wisconsin Arts Board goes toward the support of the visual arts).

The work being done by the WP&S / WAAM Board members and other visual arts groups around the state is extremely important. I hope the energy keeps on growing and that artists realize that there is more that they can do to help correct the current situation. Juried competitions, while viewed as "coaybtete-leranous" games, are a necessary evil intended to offer a way of allowing many artists at one time to gain public exposure. Participating in these competitions does not indicate a lack of "serious mindedness," but rather an abundance of "open-mindedness." Those artists who do not participate, whatever the excuse - are akin to apathetic yard birds.

Over the past few years, I feel we have succeeded in putting most of the essential elements in place for WP&S / WAAM to move forward as an organization. Being in a leadership position in WP&S / WAAM at this time, I get the honor and the pleasure of being the one to say thank you from all of us to the artists that have given their unmeasured time and hidden talents to WP&S / WAAM for the past century.

*Wisconsin Painters & Sculptors / Wisconsin Artists in All Media are previous names of the presently known Wisconsin Visual Artists nonprofit organization

HEART'S - BRAIN

Founded in a Milwaukee library on October 22nd, 1900 by ten men and one woman - the "Society of Milwaukee Artists."

It seems appropriate to acknowledge the history of WVA as we approach its 121st birthday on October 22nd. I've marked it down on my calendar with the intention of raising my glass and paying a few moments of gratitude to all of the artists and leaders who've taken WVA to where it is now.

This year, MOWA (my other art-heart occupation) is celebrating its 60th anniversary, as well as the creative feminine energy in Wisconsin. The founder, after all, was a woman who started a museum in the 60's. Certainly something to celebrate. Similarly, WVA (in its earliest days as the Society of Milwaukee Artists) was comprised of ten men and one woman - Miss Jessie Schley, listed first on the initial attendance of the very first meeting and aptly referred to as "the stormy petrel" of the group (trouble). Upon reading the minutes from those first WVA board meetings, it is clear that Miss Schley spoke her mind freely and fiercely; a force to be reckoned with. To this day the board, in each iteration, has been filled with a similar fiery creative energy. A flock of stormy petrels hell-bent on inciting creative and positive change. I'm honored to fly with them.

I hope that you spend a few moments thinking about the artists and leaders over WVA's 120-year existence who have dedicated their time and energy to caring for artists. Caring for you; about your mental well-being, your visibility, your voice, your pay, and no doubt battling their heart's-brain in the process. This is all our organization exists for; to lift artists up, and fill the world with beautiful, important stories. Perhaps these thoughts of selflessness, collaboration, and creation can "ease a troubled heart." While our organization continues to grow and change, there is comfort in moments of appreciation for how much we've achieved. Both as individuals and as a whole.

When I lift my glass of chardonnay on Friday October 22nd, it will be in honor of our founding artists, stormy petrels, fluttering heart valves, and the culmination of creative energy we (nowadays) call WVA.

Best,

Ally



IMAGE: *Self Portrait* by Jessie Schley



Jessie A Schley
1902

CONNECT - EDUCATE - EMPOWER

So many exciting things are happening! It's a wonderful time to be a member of WVA.

As this goes to "press", the 2022 Biennial submission process will be ending, and we will be awaiting the jury results. This wonderful show promises to demonstrate that art is alive in Wisconsin, and that it is forward looking while upholding our artistic foundations. It is always interesting and inspiring to see the art and artists chosen for this show.

Behind the scenes, the Tech Committee has been hard at work on the website, to expand the content and information available to both members and our larger audience. Most recently, some of the past WVA exhibitions, including Biennial 2020, are now available to be viewed online. If you haven't had a chance, go to the WVA website and view the videos from past exhibitions. You may share the links with your family and friends, so if they didn't get a chance to see a show in real life, this is an opportunity to see the artwork displayed.

Past magazines will also be posted on the website, located under "Publications." If you're like me, these wonderful mailings can get lost amongst too many emails, so the website could be your new source for these interesting and historical publications.

The above offerings will be available for public viewing on the website, but we will also be offering meeting minutes, both State and Chapter, as well as recent newsletters (again, a solution to the getting-lost-in-my-email problem) for logged in current members.

We hope that this behind-the-scenes work will improve our ability to CONNECT with all of you. Future additions will include content designed to EDUCATE members, whether it's how to update profiles, create artists' statements, price work, use social media – the possibilities are endless. Finally, all of this is done with the goal to EMPOWER artists to show their work, spread their perspective and celebrate their wins. If you have content, would like to create content, would like to request that a topic be covered, or just enjoy making PowerPoints, reach out and let us know. It's a great opportunity to try something new in a supportive environment.

Thank you for being part of WVA!

Mary Tilton, WVA President



MEETINGS

Northeast Chapter

Next meeting is Monday, October 18th via Zoom.

Jane Hostetler will compile a slideshow of our work. The theme is Hope.

Contact Edita Birschbach with questions:
nechapter@wisconsinvisualartists.org

South Central Chapter

Next meeting Tuesday, October 19th via Zoom.

Angela Johnson, an artist, creativity coach and educator will present a program that combines mindfulness and goal setting. More information will follow. angelajohnsonartist.com

Contact Jayne Reid Jackson with questions: scchapter@wisconsinvisualartists.org

Southeast Chapter

Next meeting Wednesday, October 6 at 6:30 PM via Zoom.

We will have a guest speaker, Harold Hansen at our October Monthly Meeting. Harold Hansen is an internationally acclaimed artist who works in watercolor and stone lithography.

Contact Steven Bauer with questions:
sechapter@wisconsinvisualartists.org





Mezzotint; An Artist's Definition

BY Jayne Reid Jackson, Director,
International Mezzotint Society and
Chair, South Central Chapter of
Wisconsin Visual Artists

A stranger walks into a room and is immediately surrounded by friends....

This was my experience on attending my first mezzotint event, the Fifth International Mezzotint Festival in Yekaterinburg, Russia, and meeting other mezzotint artists. After years of working in the mezzotint technique, being self-taught from books and the internet connections I could find, I found myself in a room of like practitioners. Here were all the artists I had conversed with over the internet or admired from afar. Artists from all over the world and artists I knew from around the United States were meeting for the first time in this far-away place. Putting faces to names and recognizing each other from our Facebook and website pages, the room was full of smiles and greetings like long-lost friends.

Like most self-trained mezzotinters, I had only met others who practiced the technique, through the online group, International Mezzotint Society (IMS) and with email conversations I had with other mezzotinters that I found via the internet. With only about 500 mezzotint artists practicing in the world, we are few and far between. The IMS itself has a membership of around 100, but these include collectors as well as artists. Meeting another mezzotint artist in person is rare, let alone seeing a collection of mezzotint prints without the use of a book or computer screen. As the current Director of the IMS and the coordinator of its annual exchange, I have a collection of small mezzotints from our members over the years and from various other exchanges I've been a part of. But here were the masters of the mezzotint world and a vast collection of mezzotints of all sizes on view in person, taking three museums to display them.

The festival in Russia is the largest and oldest to celebrate mezzotint. It is a biennial that has existed for the past 10 years. But it is not the only exhibition to celebrate mezzotint as other major exhibitions have been held in India and China in the last few years



to introduce the technique to the greater world. Members of the IMS and other masters of mezzotint have been instrumental in supporting these efforts and have helped to spread the knowledge of the technique by lending and donating their works and traveling to conduct workshops and artist talks. This is one of the few ways that mezzotint artists have to interact with each other, events dedicated to the technique being so few.

Printmakers seem to be a unique group. Unlike painters, who rarely talk about what brushes or tools are used to create their work, printmakers are first to ask about method and tools of the trade. We always want to know “how did you do that?” We think nothing about sharing our “secrets”. When mezzotint printmakers get together, the talk soon turns to technique and processes, comparing notes on rocking... how many times and what directions and what rockers are used, burnishing vs. scraping, and so on.

One of the biggest concerns in the mezzotint world is education, as the public in general seldom has no awareness of how mezzotints (let alone other fine art print techniques) are created. In any showing of mezzotint, it is almost expected that the artists talk not only about their images but also explain how the work is made. Therefore most of the big exhibitions tend to include artist talks and workshops by selected artists to educate the viewers. If there is a printing press in the room or a studio full of equipment available, we mezzotinters are first to share and demonstrate our knowledge of what tools we favor, what techniques work best for us, what papers and inks we have found. There doesn't seem to be the hesitation in sharing as most of us will use the knowledge we gain to produce quite different images if we apply what we learn to our own work.



PREVIOUS PAGE: *Prize Worth Noting*

LEFT: *Convergence*

OPPOSITE PAGE: *Tangled Web II*

So what exactly is a mezzotint? The term comes from the Italian “mezza tinta” or “halftone” and is sometimes called *Maniere Noire* or “black manner” because of its rich velvety blacks. The technique was developed in the mid-1600s in Europe and flourished as a way to mainly reproduce paintings due to its ability to render subtle gradations, replicate brushstrokes and its capacity for color. After the invention of photography and lithography in the early 1800s, it became increasingly obsolete for reproductions and fell out of favor with most printmakers. Today there is renewed interest in mezzotint partly as a result of a growing interest in non-toxic and less-toxic techniques. There is a growing number of printmakers who have started working again in this demanding technique that requires no acid or chemicals, just perseverance and patience.

Mezzotint is a term that refers to both the technique and the print created from the plate. The technique of mezzotint is a tonal method of engraving a metal plate with fine burrs and then working back from dark to light, knocking back those burrs and creating an image from tone or value. The traditional method of creating those burrs is with a rocker.

The process begins with a flat sheet of copper (traditionally, but other metals have been used) that is

rocked with a tool called a rocker, a large and serrated curved blade, that leaves a tiny line of burrs or pits when pressed into the plate. Just as it sounds, the artist literally rocks the rocker back and forth across the plate methodically, multiple times, and in various directions until the plate is completely and uniformly covered in pits, which means that the surface is no longer shiny and attains a velvety look and touch that prints completely black when inked. Artists can take much pain in developing a regiment of angles in which to rock and the number of times the rocker passes over the plate, all with the aim of creating the perfect base for their image. This process can take many hours, days, or weeks depending on the size of the plate being rocked.

The curved blade of the rocker that creates the burrs has a number of teeth per inch (the gauge of the rocker) and will vary from 45 teeth per inch to 65, 85 and 100 as the most common gauges. The rockers also vary in size of blade from small 2 inch rockers to the largest 6 inch rocker. The larger width rockers are desired to cover more of the plate in less time. Each artist has a favorite or uses a variety depending on the image. The higher gauge produces a finer grain which can be great for detail but sometimes the smaller number of teeth is desired for a strong, rougher looking dot pattern. The rockers can be used by holding the attached upright handle or they can be

attached to a rocking pole that makes the rocking easier as it is less uncomfortable for the wrist.

The artist then takes scrapers and burnishers to scrape or polish down those pits to create values, the grays and whites that produce the image. The shinier the area, the less ink it will hold and the whiter it will print. Purists insist that the scraper is the tool of choice, others prefer burnishers. The scraper cuts the tops of the burrs off and is said to create a purer white, while the burnisher smashes them down for a more gradual build up of whites. Both are used in a back and forth, drawing-like manner similar to using a pencil, but drawing the whites. Both will produce the different values needed to create the image and there are discussions among the artists as to which is better. Working from black to white, the image literally comes out of the dark.

There have also been many debates among the artists on acceptable ways to create a mezzotint and still be able to call it mezzotint. With technical and mechanical advances there are alternative ways to get a plate to print a solid black. Besides rockers, there are roulettes and rotating dental tools that create a burr in a similar manner to a rocker and can be traditionally used to cure any errors in creation. The more controversial alternatives are the use of aquatint, sandblasting, and etching a texture into the copper. As with other media, there are always those who “push the envelope” and experiment with methods. But the texture that is revealed is very different from the traditional dot pattern that comes forward when scraping or burnishing back the black of a traditionally rocked plate.

To some, it is a type of “heresy” to consider anything but the traditional method of rocking to be a mezzotint. Mezzotint is a time-consuming and laborious process when done the traditional way. It can be upsetting to those who follow tradition to find that others are passing their work off as mezzotint when other methods are used. How far can you push the media before it is no longer considered a mezzotint? Are these alternative ways acceptable? These are the questions that the artist struggles with as the museums that sponsor shows of mezzotint look for larger and more unconventional work.

As the technique and the look of the mezzotint has become more popular, artists can be seeking easier methods of achieving the wide range of values that the mezzotint is prized for. As with all things art, most will accept that alternative methods can be used as long as they are revealed and the artist is transparent about how the image was achieved... with the caveat that it should not be called “mezzotint” but described as “mezzotint with aquatint” or other combination, or rather to refer to the work as intaglio, aquatint, drypoint, or whichever specific technique or combination was used.

If you are honest about how you create your work, most have no problem as long as the artist is not trying to pass off their work as a traditional mezzotint if it is created using another manner. To most viewers, it is the image that attracts the attention with the technical aspects of how that was achieved a secondary thought.

To the collectors of mezzotints or any type of fine art print, it is important to ask questions about the work you are looking at. Especially if you have the privilege of meeting the artist. Educating yourself about the work you love is the best way to build a collection in a purposeful way. Most artists love to talk about their work and how it was created. We have put in considerable time and effort into creating our images and have had lots of time while working our images to think about what we are creating, why we create the images we do, and why and how we use the methods and techniques that we use. And we enjoy hearing from you, our viewers and collectors, and your reactions to our work. That makes us strangers no more.

Jayne Reid Jackson (Director, IMS) lives in Madison, Wisconsin and is internationally known for her mezzotints. She can be reached through her website www.jaynereidjackson.com or can be emailed directly at jreidjackson@yahoo.com.

IMS can be reached at our IMS email:
DCROWN@BELLSOUTH.NET

More information on The International Mezzotint Society can be found online at: <https://people.clas.ufl.edu/glover/mezzotint-2/> and on our Facebook page

Inktober[®] 2021

OFFICIAL 2021 PROMPT LIST

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. CRYSTAL | 11. SOUR | 21. FUZZY |
| 2. SUIT | 12. STUCK | 22. OPEN |
| 3. VESSEL | 13. ROOF | 23. LEAK |
| 4. KNOT | 14. TICK | 24. EXTINCT |
| 5. RAVEN | 15. HELMET | 25. SPLAT |
| 6. SPIRIT | 16. COMPASS | 26. CONNECT |
| 7. FAN | 17. COLLIDE | 27. SPARK |
| 8. WATCH | 18. MOON | 28. CRISPY |
| 9. PRESSURE | 19. LOOP | 29. PATCH |
| 10. PICK | 20. SPROUT | 30. SLITHER |
| | | 31. RISK |

@INKTOBER #INKTOBER #INKTOBER2021

<https://inktober.com/>

"Post it on any social media account you want or just post it on your refrigerator. The point is to share your art with someone."

Jake Parker created the Inktober challenge in 2009 to improve his skills and develop positive drawing habits. Each year it has grown, with thousands of artists stepping up to the challenge and drawing every day.

The beauty of this challenge is its simplicity. You aren't being asked to create a masterpiece - simply an ink drawing inspired by the daily theme. A minimum of 10 minutes of creativity, each day.

Tag #inktober and @wisconsinvisualartists to be featured on our social media accounts, and perhaps Inktober's account as well!



Photo taken by Andrea Waala

WVA AWARDS

The Wisconsin Visual Art Achievement Awards are held biennially to honor those individuals and organizations that have contributed to the wealth of artistic creativity in our state. The three founding organizations, the Museum of Wisconsin Art, the Wisconsin Visual Artists, and the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters bring recognition to educators, writers, visual artists, exhibitions, and advocates in our creative communities.



2020 Award Categories and the Honorees:

Legacy Anne Kingsbury, Milwaukee Artist

Educator (K-12) Patricia Frederick, Pius XI High School, Milwaukee

Educator (University) Kim Cosier, Peck School of the Arts, UW-Milwaukee

Exhibition Racine Art Museum for 2019 RAM Artist Fellowship Exhibition

Community Arts Advocate Polly Morris for the Mary L. Nohl Artists Fellowships Program

Arts Writing Shane McAdams for art criticism in the Shepherd Express

Emerging Artist Ariana Vaeth, Milwaukee Artist, recent MIAD graduate

The 2022 nomination committee consists of: Laurie Winters, Jody Clowes, Ally Wilber, Rafael Salas, Jody Alexander, Fred Stonehouse, Christine Style, Della Wells, and Elizabeth Meissner-Gigstead.

Nominations are closed January 9th, 2022.

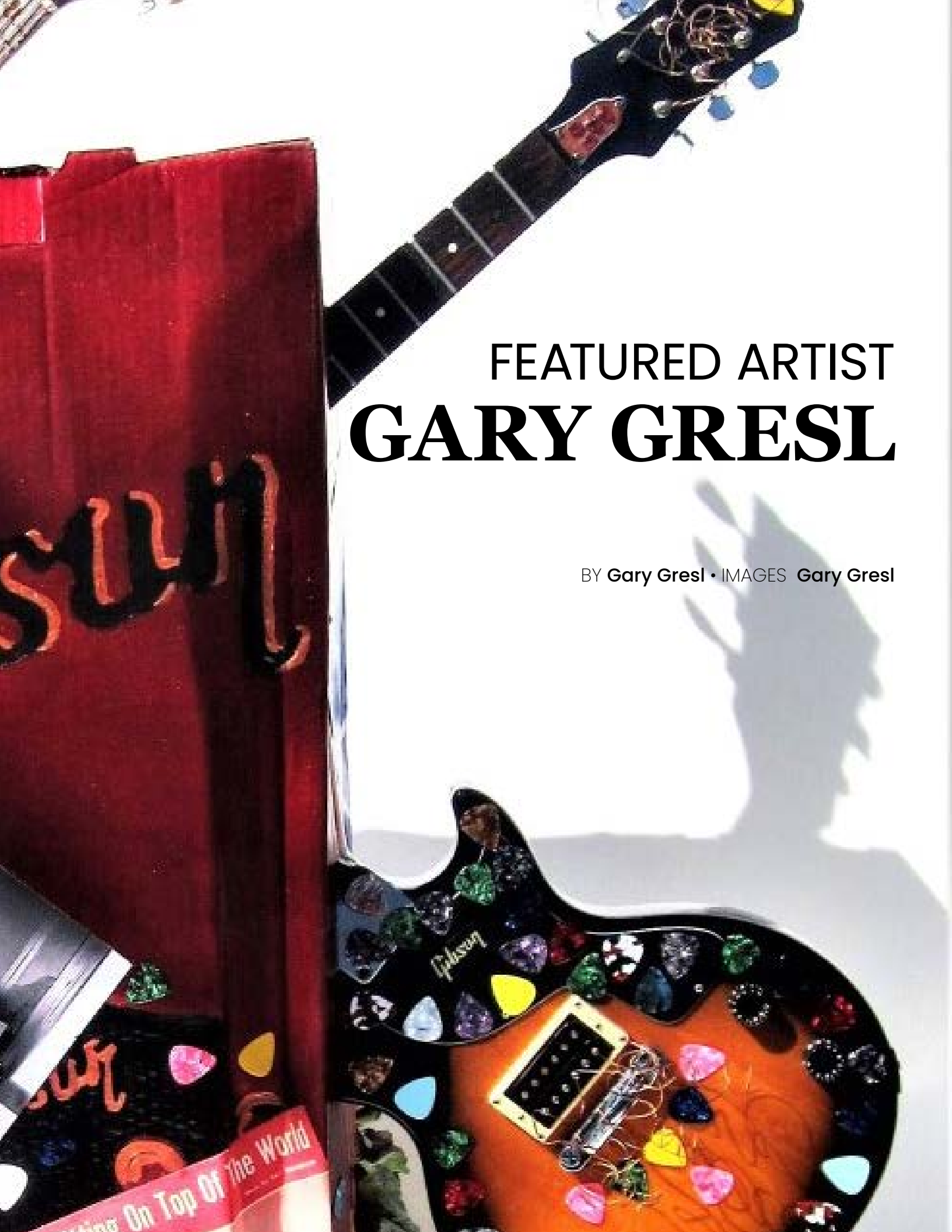
Award Ceremony will be Saturday April 23rd, 1pm

Nominations for the 2022 WVAAA Awards may be submitted [here](#).



SKIN' BIRD HILL
MADE BY FADON BOSTON





FEATURED ARTIST
GARY GRESL

BY Gary Gresl • IMAGES Gary Gresl

A LITTLE PHILOSOPHY

There will be people who consider the assemblages I make to be junk, just arrangements of objects having little value. I am also lucky that there are others who sense that there is something more significant happening, that the choice of materials has meaning, the associations of objects within the assemblages have significance, relationships, and importance in my life.

I respond to shapes. There is appreciation for the surfaces of materials, patinas, that have evolved due to Nature's elements and forces. Objects have been either:

- (1) designed by humans, or
- (2) made manifest by a myriad of "natural" processes which have formed them, manipulated them, forced them to change and appear as they do.

On one hand the artist is a human being motivated to create, mold, build, express, and on the other hand Natural Forces have done the creating, molding, building, expressing. Humankind, which has been given life and evolved over eons by Nature, is therefore an expression of energy and an organization of matter.

We extend the Life Force by procreation, and by use of our minds, senses, feelings and hands. It is an extension of natural processes for us humans to create and "make things". We don't need art classes to create artful objects. Aboriginal people around the Earth have been "naturally" motivated to enhance common goods with decoration, to use what is available to embellish, adorn, and express feelings, thoughts and ideas. It happens that in "advanced" human cultures art-making has become an intellectual, and often specialized activity with requirements, habits, histories, categories, dogma and expectations. Art has been departmentalized within, and too often excluded without.

GROW WHERE YOU ARE PLANTED, BUT LOOK BEYOND

My absorption of art from childhood to elder, has come from the visuals, examples, theories, the seriousness and follies of schools, the plans and structures that were to be expected. It was my individual responses, gut reactions and empathy, that have seemed as much or more important. My art-making is due to the little piece of sparkling red granite picked up on a gravel driveway; the clarity and shape of

rock crystal quartz; the form and color of Luna Moth wings; the yellow striped bodies of perch and the camouflage patterns of Northern Pike; the hay bales lying in a field; the streamlined shapes of 1950's rocket space ships; the odd and amateurish Henkelmann's Museum in Woodruff, WI.; the comics and Pop Culture of my youth.

Around me as examples and motivations that "gave permission" for me to choose my materials and subjects were fellow artists like Rauschenburg, Joseph Beuys, Gunther von Hagen and his Body Worlds, assemblers like Cornell and those more adventurous, plus artists working around me in Wisconsin, like John Balsley, Bob Curtis and Estherly Allen.

I have found enjoyment as a collector and dealer in antiques and collectibles, BUT it should be understood that my interest in assemblage began long before I became an antique collector and dealer. I attended UW Stevens Point in the 60's where I got a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education, a music minor, and a concentration of Art and Art History. In my 3D Sculpture class about 1964, I drove out to an old country farm site where I found weathered cast offs in a midden heap. The shapes and aged materials had allure, so I made my first large assemblage using a house window frame, burlap, and cast-iron oddments. My memories of being on farms, in rural and rustic places, as well as fishing and hunting, were replayed in strong feelings and memories.

In the 70's I returned to school at UW Madison, the School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences, in their Related Art program. There I took more classes in Art History, the History of Interiors (Interior Design), history of

textiles and clothing, Museum Training and Connoisseurship, and wrote my short Master's Thesis about Harvey Littleton, the "Father of Studio Glassblowing".

In the early 1980's, after an enduring sense of having a hole in my life...missing something intangible, I began working with acrylic painting. My recall of art history's early geometric abstraction, as well as Mid-Century Abstract Expressionism, played out for a couple years... until one day, I looked at an old unused wood door, an antique folk art wall hanging cabinet, some other miscellaneous items, and I created 3 separate wall-hung assemblages, one about 78 "L, combined with neon that was included in a Madison Biennial at MOCA. I was satisfied.

EVOLUTION AND MOTIVATIONS CONTINUE

Objects themselves often spark an idea (maybe a feeling.) After an undefined period of thinking, searching, and gathering of more materials goes on.

I learned that what I create is not commercially viable because of the size, weight and unwieldy nature of most items I create. I had to accept that if I wanted satisfaction in the process of creating, that I would have to forgo hopes of selling these things. Eventually I accepted that what I created was "ephemeral" - lasting from a few hours to a few weeks. After a while, more and more temporary assemblages were built, with photographs being taken to document their brief lives. I started a series of photo portfolios called "Document Ephemera", many of which were exhibited successfully.

After nearly 40 years evolving to this point, as an old man, I am taking my time, being more careful, producing fewer works. Recently I was one of the Lynden Sculpture Garden's Artists in Residence, and over the course of 3 years I created 15 temporary/ephemeral site-specific works, all of which were dismantled in the end. Among these pieces was a 3-part project I titled "The Lynden Body Farm", in which I created 3 separate 15"x15" outdoor spaces. The theme was to create large assemblages using objects, human and Nature made, and allow

Mother Nature to alter them over time. This meant giving up control and allowing them to deteriorate, to change, to become things that I myself did not initially imagine...to photograph them as they dissolved and broke down. There is beauty in decay.

Right now, I have no definite plans afoot. I am keeping my eyes open to find a not-for-profit space in which I can build another large assemblage, and/or combine several for a viewing. If that does not happen, I will continue slowly shaping objects into larger assemblages that fulfill personal ideas, provide the satisfaction of completion, and which are documented in the form of photos.

A quote of mine remains applicable today:

"We have the Life Force burning within us. We extend the natural process through thought and artistic expression. Let us each speak to issues we find significant. We grow and explore at the tip of life's evolution, and we bear responsibility for notifying others of what we have considered". ■

(From a composition titled: Synthesis; Mind, Culture, Art, Gaia", written in 1989, published in Art in Wisconsin.)

Check out the book, "Palimpsests and Middens, A Midwest Assembler", authored by Gary.

www.gresl.com [Youtube](#)







FEATURED ARTIST
ROBERTA CONDON

BY ROBERTA CONDON •

IMAGES ROBERTA CONDON



Where can we see your work?

October 12–November 20, 2021
Kavanaugh Gallery, Fine Line
Creative Arts Center

January 10–March 4, 2022 (Basketry
Only)
New Visions Gallery, Marshfield
Clinic

April 4, 2022 through April 24, 2022
Owatanna Arts Center

May–June 2022
Maquoketa Art Experience

July 2022
University of Wisconsin Platteville

August 22–November 22, 2022
River Arts Center, Prairie Du Sac
January–February 2023
New Visions Gallery, Marshfield
Clinic

March 2023
New York Mills Cultural Center

May 1 through May 31, 2023
Pyle Center, UW-Madison

Mid September, 2023 through Early
January, 2024
Dubuque Museum of Art

PREVIOUS PAGE: American Pastel 12

ABOVE: American Pastel 13

How long have You been making art?
All my life. I am prolific, and 64 years old

Do you have any formal art training, or are you self taught?

I spent most of my career as a professional engineer working in the Heating and Cooling industry until 2008, when 50% of us in the industry lost our jobs. I was in that number. I had always wanted to be an artist, but parents wouldn't pay for art school. I painted my whole life, had a studio in my home, and when I lost my job, I opened the gallery/studio space and devoted myself to art. I wish I had done it long before.

What motivates your work?

I have just painted for the sake of painting for the longest time. Art simply for art's sake, but now, I feel compelled to add a political element to the work, and am painting in series. I just completed a series of 26 paintings that alphabetically tell the story of the failing of the small family farm in the Midwest, and this is touring in a four state region through 2023. The current series I am working on talks about the fatigue that people my age feel fighting the same social issues (i.e. abortion, women's rights, civil rights, school shootings, etc.) I'm attaching two files that have the statements about my work, and the images. You can select the series you'd like to feature.

My basketry is a hobby, and something I use to relax.

What influences your work?

Mostly the work comes from within, but in the farm series Wolf Kahn was a huge influence, mostly in just allowing me to be me.

I usually work from one or several photos I have taken, draw on a large piece of sanded paper, and paint.

For the current series about birds, I hired a model to pose for me, select images I have rights to, and design the paintings on the

computer first. Then I draw the image I've designed, and paint from that. I am a pastel artist, and work on a large piece of sanded paper on a board. I paint so much and paint so large (32 x 40 format) that I buy the paper directly from the sandpaper company in large rolls 57 inch by 9 meters. I went through three of these rolls during the year of Covid shutdown when I painted the series on farms. I will attach a link to a file with process photos.

What do you hope to accomplish with your work (for yourself, others, etc?)

I want to change someone. When I gave my artist talk at Rahr West about the loss of family farms, and the work related to it, there were people there, actual farmers who had never been to an artist talk. One farmer was in his seventies, and he contributed to the conversation, came up to me and mentioned that some of the items I mentioned had happened to him, and he wanted to purchase my book. I gave him a copy of course at no charge, and felt that we formed a bridge across the political platforms we each had. It was a meeting of the minds.

I also love a beautiful painting. I think it's possible to paint beauty, and still approach subjects that are "un-beautiful" in the process.

What is currently most of interest to you as it relates to your art making?

The current series is "A Hollow Boned Muse" and features birds, and figures, and as I said above discusses political fatigue. I want to keep growing as an artist, and keep stretching my wings. I push myself hard in these compositions and their complexity, and working in series has made me a better artist. I have to paint a simpler painting between each bird piece to give me a creative respite. I would like to continue to grow. ■

WISCONSIN VISUAL ARTISTS: MEMBER NEWS

David Bueschel

Juried in to this event. Runs Sept. 25 through Nov.8, 2021. Photograph entitled Lily of the Umbra showing us beauty emerging out of the gloom.

*N81W16417 Robinhood Dr.
Menomonee Falls, WI 53051*

S.V. MEDARIS

Birds in Art annual international juried exhibition Sept 11 through Nov 28, 2021:

<https://www.lywam.org/exhibition/birds-in-art-2021/>

*Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum
Wausau, WI*

Denise Presnell

I was recently invited to join 3 Square Art – a commercial art gallery in Fort Collins, CO. My artwork will be both physically in the gallery and on their online platform at: <https://3saart.com/>.

*UW Parkside Galleries, Rita Tallent Center
900 Wood Rd.
Kenosha, WI 53144*



DAVID BUESCHEL



S.V. MEDARIS



DENISE PRESNELL

Tom Smith

I am honored that my oil painting "Big Boy" was purchased by the Grohmann Museum for their permanent collection. The Grohmann is home to the world's most comprehensive art collection dedicated to the evolution of human work. The collection contains over 1400 European and American paintings, sculptures and works on paper that depict various forms of work. Captured on canvas and paper or cast in bronze, the works reflect a variety of artistic styles and subjects that document

the evolution of organized work, from manpower and horsepower to water, steam and electric power. The collection's artwork spans over 400 years of history (17-21st centuries). My painting is now among them!

*Grohmann Museum
1000 N Broadway
Milwaukee, WI 53202*

Jean Judd

The Art Design Consultants (A|D|C) has selected textile artist Jean M. Judd of Cushing, Wisconsin for inclusion in the Art Comes Alive 2021 Exhibit at their gallery in Cincinnati, Ohio. Artwork selected for inclusion in the exhibit includes: Fractured 'Gello #1. This exhibit in their 13,000 square foot A|D|C Gallery West highlights the best emerging and professional artists in the United States and Internationally. Juried by a diverse panel of jurors from across the United States. A wide range of mediums of fine art will be featured in the exhibit. The exhibition opens on November 6, 2021 and is

open through January 7, 2022. The reception and awards ceremony at the gallery, is November 6, 2021 beginning at 5pm. Over \$350,000 in awards will be announced at the reception.

*(A|D|C) West
1013 York Street
Cincinnati, OH 45214*

Visit the A|D|C web site at <https://adcfineart.com/> more information about the exhibition and Art Design Consultants services or call 513-723-1222 to speak to Cassandra Pennington, Gallery Manager. guide you.



TOM SMITH



JEAN JUDD

OPPORTUNITIES

CALL FOR ART "ROOTS - TRANSPLANTED"

[Link](#)

Museum of Wisconsin Art

Part time member services job opening. The Member Services Associate provides excellent customer service and is the first point of contact for all visitors, members, and guests to MOWA in West Bend.

[Link](#)

Annual Winter Juried Show

Anderson Arts Center in Kenosha, WI announces a call to artists for a juried art exhibition, November 21, 2021 - January 9, 2022. \$200 for first place; \$150 for second place; \$100 for third place; five artists will also be awarded solo shows.

[Link](#)

Call for Proposals: Northeast Wisconsin Technical College

"Artists who live in the Northeast Wisconsin Technical College District can now send proposals year-round for art costing less than \$1000 each. In general, the College is looking for large-format statement pieces that are in 'ready to hang/install' condition."

<https://www.nwtc.edu/about-nwtc/places/call-for-artwork>



Support us at <https://www.wisconsinvisualartists.org/>.

WE'RE HIRING! KENOSHA MUSEUMS

MUSEUM STORE & VISITOR SERVICES

Greet and provide excellent customer service to Museum guests. Assist with a variety of duties pertaining to the Museum Stores and Visitor Services, such as registering guests for workshops, handling gift shop sales, and providing information on Museum exhibits and programs. All Visitor Services staff are trained and available to work at the Kenosha Public Museum, Civil War Museum and the Dinosaur Discover Museum

20-24 hours per week, including weekends

Rate: \$12.78 hourly

<http://bit.ly/KenoshaMuseumJobs>

WE'RE HIRING! KENOSHA MUSEUMS

EDUCATION ASSISTANT

The Education Assistant supports school and group tours, public programs and events. They enhance the Museum interpretive experience, increase audience engagement and interact frequently with Museum guests and program participants.

28 hours per week, Tuesday-Saturday

Rate: \$12.78 hourly

<http://bit.ly/KenoshaMuseumJobs>

Click below for more information on our partners!



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[Wisconsin Visual Artists](https://www.youtube.com/WisconsinVisualArtists)