



MEET THE ARTIST

ANTHONY DINICOLA
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Interview by Teresa Nguyen

Encouragement

While growing up on the east side of Milwaukee, I lived downstairs from a well-known professional artist, Joanna Poehlmann. She often critiqued my work and gave me a sense of direction. In her own art, she focuses on varied aspects of nature using silverpoint, graphite, etchings, lithographs, watercolor, mixed media sculptures, and artist books. Several years ago, after many years apart, I caught up with her at the Museum of Wisconsin Art where she gave a talk and showcased her work. It was great to see her again. Another mentor was my college instructor, Samuel Gansheroff. He took a personal interest in my work and was a special inspiration to me as well.

Painting Years

I have been drawing and painting for more than five decades. I remember drawing cartoon figures at the kitchen table with a relative when I was seven or eight years old. My mom always had paper and a pencil available for me.

Art Education

I attended a trade and technical high school in Milwaukee where I chose commercial and fine art as my 'major'. I received a great education that helped prepare me for the next step. After graduation, I was chosen as part of a group to attend a fine art summer program at UW-Stout. Working together with students from other schools we shared our interests and ideas. It was time well spent and a worthwhile experience. Afterward, I studied graphic and fine arts at MATC in Milwaukee. They covered many aspects of the industry including typography, commercial illustration, figure drawing, printing and photography. The idea was to help place students with prospective employers.

First Sale & Commissions

It was likely some wildlife or landscape piece, though. It's what I enjoyed doing most back then and I still do. I've done dozens of commissions over the decades as well. I have to admit they're not as rewarding as creating something that strikes my own interest but I still do them.

Role Models

I'd have to say aforementioned Samuel Gansheroff. He took me under his wing and worked one on one with me at times. He was an amazing artist and well known in Wisconsin and abroad. Some of his works hung at the Art Institute of Mexico and abroad. I was deeply saddened at his death from cancer at too early an age. His wife gifted me all his supplies, cabinets, books, etc. afterward. He told her he wanted me to have them and after all these years I still use his materials. The cabinets are a big part of my studio.

Mediums

I prefer oils and heavy body acrylics but I still change it up at times and work with other mediums. Watercolor, pastel, charcoal and graphite are mediums I like to work with.

Advice for New Artists

A high school art teacher once told us that the recipe for being successful as a growing artist is 10% talent and 90% work. He also believed that painting is 90% observation and 10% actual painting. There's a lot of truth to that. Work hard and learn from your mistakes because we all make them. I never considered painting a hobby. It's stressful, frustrating and always a challenge. But I couldn't imagine a life without all forms of art. Whatever your interest is, keep at it and strive to learn from each piece you do. The next one will be better than the last.

Exhibits

I've exhibited at various establishments in the Milwaukee area in years past. I was part of a group of twenty local artists who displayed their work at Raven's Wish a number of years ago. I've also done a handful of the WRAA exhibits including JPAC and the Beloit Art Center. In 2014 I was honored by winning First in State in the wildlife division at the Pyle Center in Madison. I've shown works at Hedberg Public Library twice and at the Jones Gallery in Fort Atkinson last September.

Hedberg Public Library Exhibit

For this exhibit wanted to select a variety of works that include varied subject matter and approaches. I hope I chose wisely. I want to thank the Hedberg Public Library and its staff for coordinating these events, and for allowing artists to showcase their work each month. I learn a lot from viewing other artists' work.

PAINTING DESCRIPTIONS



Flow Blue Still Life

Medium: Oil

I painted this depiction of the two pieces of pottery that were handed down to my wife from her mother. They mean a lot to her and I felt compelled to include them in this still life painting.



Jim's Gem

Medium: Acrylic

My neighbor meticulously restored this 1940s tractor with his son a number of years ago. They would take it to tractor shows throughout the Midwest, including the Rock River Thresheree each year and give kids rides on it. He tragically lost his son during the pandemic and so I wanted to paint this in memory of his son. I gifted him a Giclee print for his home. He was so happy to get it. That made it all worth the effort.



Tired and Retired

Medium: Acrylic

I'm always attracted to old, worn-out objects and buildings with lots of character. An artist friend of mine created his own version of this old Chevrolet truck that sits along the old Route 66. I loved the subject and textures of this weather-beaten relic so I decided to do my own version. I added the cat as a last thought, hence the title.