

Biographies for Artists Featured in *Scenes of Our State* (MbM 2)

Vincent A. Hartgen

Painter
American

Born 1914 Reading, Pennsylvania
Died November 27, 2002 Bangor, Maine

Vincent Hartgen was born in Pennsylvania and later studied art at the University of Pennsylvania, earning a master's degree in fine arts. During the Second World War, he served in the U.S. Army's Camouflage Design Unit. In 1946, he was recruited by University of Maine President Arthur Hauck, to build an art department. A month after arriving, Hartgen began spreading the word that UMaine was seeking to develop an art collection. He also created the first art education program for UMaine student teachers. "When he came here in 1946, there was no art program and very little art on campus," says Michael Lewis, UMaine professor of art. "When he arrived, he taught all of the academic courses, established the curriculum and established the program. He would always go out of his way to make sure that art was shared with the widest number of people possible. The amount of energy he brought to these tasks was unbelievable."

Hartgen is also the founder of the University Art Collection, now the University of Maine Museum of Art. He built the collection through correspondence with several fellow artists. The University Museum of Art has the largest collection of any land grant university. Hartgen's unique energy and knowledge enabled him to collect with an informed vision emphasizing works on paper, something that was dear to him as an artist. The museum acquired 3,900 works of art in Hartgen's 36 years as director. The depth of the museum's collection remains a testament to his tireless pursuits. During a conversation in 1999 Vincent recalled some of the more important and memorable acquisitions. These included the 55 Giovanni Battista Piranesi eighteenth century prints acquired from various donors and 26 works on paper from the Wing Sisters (Adeline and Caroline) which included fine examples by Rockwell Kent, Andrew Wyeth, Edward Hopper, Marsden Hartley and Winslow Homer.

While director of the Art Collection in the 1950's, Hartgen established the traveling art program, which is still operating under the name Museums by Mail.

Hartgen has exhibited his work nationally in over 150 shows. He is a landscape painter; his approach to nature is individualistic and dramatic. "He is particularly successful in capturing fleeting impressions which he achieves with knowing simplification, freshness and striking limpidity of brushwork." (George Binet, 1947) Vincent's simplistic forms and striking brushwork are often confused as random splashes of paint. Ralph Fabri explains that "he splashes wet paint over the finest paper with what appears to be complete, blind abandon of the abstract-expressionists who throw or squirt paint and let it hit where it may. Yet nothing is farther from Vincent's mind and aesthetic nature than the mere automatic splattering of colors. Not one stroke in his work is accidental."

Hartgen died in 2002 at age 88. He was a prolific artist who produced an estimated 2,000 signed paintings and drawings in his long career and an equal number of sketches and demonstrations. His works are held in many Maine collections, including Colby College, Farnsworth Museum, Portland Museum of Art and the University of New England.

Crosby Hodgman

Painter
American

Born 1902 Medford, Massachusetts
Died October 19, 1999 Wiscasset, Maine

Crosby G. Hodgman was born in 1902 in Medford, Mass., but was a resident of Maine for much of his life.

Mr. Hodgman, a man of wide interests and a well-known local artist, was a retired educator and Headmaster of Beaver Country Day School who had lived since 1968 in the Old Custom House at Wiscasset with his wife of 32 years, the former Charlotte Mansfield Rust.

He was a former President of the Wiscasset Library and President of the Lincoln County Historical Society. With his wife Charlotte he founded the gift shop New Cargoes at the old Custom House, and Le Garage Restaurant.

He was a painter of note and an active participant in many local arts programs. He directed the Title III program "Treasure Hunt," 1966-70, bringing artistic experiences to local school children.

The son of the late Fred and Helen Hodgman, residents for many years in Maine, Mr. Hodgman received his B.A. from Bowdoin College in 1925 and his M.A. in History from Cornell University. After a year as instructor in English and History at Cornell he became a teacher at Melrose High School, Melrose, Mass., 1926-27, and went on to head the History Department at Chicago Latin School from 1929 through 1943. During his time in Chicago he spent five years, 1936-41, as a resident at the famed Hull House. In 1943 he was named Headmaster of Beaver Country Day School, Chestnut Hill, Mass., where he served until his retirement in 1963.

In 1948 he undertook American Unitarian work for undernourished French children. In 1952 he took part in the Experiment in International Living in France, in 1956 the International Education through Art program in the Netherlands, and in 1958 the International Schools in Paris. He was a member of the American Delegation to the Atlantic Treaty Association meetings at Paris in 1956, Luxembourg in 1960, and Kiel, Germany in 1961. During a trip around the world in 1959 he visited International Schools in 21 nations; that same year he served as a member of the American Delegation and undertook projects of the World University Service, Ibadan, Nigeria.

Doris Anne Holman

Painter
American

Born 1937 Chevy Chase, Maryland

Doris Anne Holman, a professional Maine artist and author (and mother of four children), has spent nearly 40 years balancing her art with a career as an elementary, middle school, and adult teacher.

Holman was raised in Chevy Chase Maryland. She went to Goucher College for the respected "ladies" career of teaching. Holman started her profession early with figure drawing lessons in charcoal with Richard Lahey from the Corcoran Art Gallery in Washington DC. Holman took a variety of art classes at the Maryland School of Art and Design in figure drawing and portraiture.

Holman's passion for Maine landscapes started with her childhood summers in Wayne, Maine, where her family vacationed for generations. Holman was inspired by her Uncle Don, a watercolor artist, who would send watercolor cards to her family. Holman's "Maine" perspective is one of context while learning from all that is around you. She's studied continuously with various artists throughout her early career with various mediums including oils, acrylic, pastels and watercolor, but chose watercolor as the best means of expressing her inner

self and love of all God's creation. Not only a teacher of children and after school children's art programs for much of her early career, Holman was the consummate student after her move to Wayne taking classes at schools such as the Portland School of Art (now Maine College of Art) and the University of Maine. Holman also studied under the direction of Valfred Thelin, Edgar A. Whitney and the noted West coast artists Milford Zorns and Robert Wood.

Holman earned a master's degree in Reading from Loyola College in Baltimore and taught reading and primary grades for a large part of her 38 year professional teaching career. Additionally, she spent years teaching children's after school art programs, adult education, and evening programs at the University of Maine. She also taught art at the Monmouth Middle School, The University of Maine, and has led workshops in Florida, Monhegan Island and coastal Maine, Bermuda and Canada. Holman has exhibited for the last thirty five years in galleries all along the coast, Monhegan Island, and The Talent Tree gallery in Augusta Maine. Her work is in permanent collections of The University of Maine Museum of Art and Colby College. Her work is also in several private collections including Pretti, Flaherty and Beliveau, Union Bank and Trust, and the Department of Environmental Protection.

Although Published in *Draw Magazine* twice, once for an article on value sketching another on flowers, her writing has come to fruition with her children's books. Holman's art work, teaching, and love of Maine finally came to the perfect syllogism with her remarkable, charming, and beautiful children's books *Come with Me to the Sea*, *Edie the Great Egret*, and *Harry the Great Blue Heron*. *Come with Me to the Sea* was published in 1998 as a way to introduce her grandchildren to the ocean. The illustrations were painted at Reid State Park and Popham Beach, Maine. A sequel, *Come with Me to the Pond* (2004) was inspired by three Maine lakes. The pages of these delightful books are filled with washy images that warm the heart while taking all ages of travelers on a journey that soothes the soul. Holman's extensive experience in teaching (art and reading) has helped her write her children's books. Her stories aren't simply good children's fables, but draw out imaginations with beautiful landscapes, luminosity, and humor. A Maine Arts Commission juried member, Holman and her daughter Anita Charles taught a two week literature/art class on Homer's *The Odyssey* at the Long Creek Development Center, formerly known as the Maine Youth Center, South Portland.

Danny Pierce

Printmaker/Painter
American

Born 1920 Woodlake, California

Danny Pierce was raised on a California cattle ranch during the Depression but moved to Los Angeles to attend the Art Center School in 1939. He attended Chouinard Art Institute from 1940-1941, then worked as an artist for a novelty manufacturing company. Pierce was drafted in 1942 and served in the army during World War II from 1942-1945. From 1947-1948, he attended the American Art School in New York City, studying with William Gropper, Jack Levine, and Raphael Soyer. In 1948, he left school and moved to the Adirondack Mountains to paint, while living off illustrations he did for pulp magazines.

Pierce returned to New York and attended the Brooklyn Museum Art School from 1950-1953, studying with Max Beckmann, Ben Shahn, and Gabor Peterdi. He moved to Kent, Washington in 1953, where he taught at the Burnley School for Professional Art and Seattle University's Art Department. In 1959 Pierce was named Artist-in-Residence under a Carnegie grant to establish the art department at the University of Alaska. He returned briefly to Kent, Washington in 1963 before moving to Milwaukee in 1966 to an appointment of Assistant Professor in the Art Department at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Pierce retired as Professor Emeritus at UWM and returned to Kent, Washington in 1985.

Pierce founded the Red Door Studio in Kent, Washington in 1959 with his book *Little No Name*. The press moved to Shorewood, Wisconsin when Pierce began work at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and returned to Kent, Washington in 1985 when he left his position in Milwaukee. Danny Pierce's book themes focus on rural labor and the relationships between humans and the animals they work with, especially horses. The Red Door Studio has published many titles including *The Bear That Woke Too Soon* (1964), *Birds* (1977),

Cattle Drive '76 (1976), *Sea Wrack* (1981), and *Amish Days* (1994). With the companionship and editorial assistance of his wife, Julia, Pierce conducts careful and exhaustive research for each book. Unlike many book artists who work with assistants or in staffed workshops, Pierce produces editions entirely on his own. He writes the text, handsets the type, cuts the blocks for black and white prints, two-tones, and color separations, hand prints editions of 25 to 100 copies on a Gordon Platen Press, and constructs specially designed boxes for each volume, creating works with a deep, personal quality.

Danny Pierce has been exhibiting his artwork both in the United States and internationally since 1946. He has won awards in painting and printmaking in juried exhibitions, which include the Connecticut Academy for Fine Arts' Green Memorial Award for best oil landscape and the first prize in oil painting given by the Southern Illinois Art Association. Pierce has also participated in a variety of open art competitions, such as the 6th Annual Print Exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum in New York, the Northwest Printmakers International Annual at the Seattle Art Museum, the University of Southern California Print Annual in Los Angeles, and the American Color Print Society in Philadelphia. He has had a number of one-man shows at galleries and museums, such as the Creative Gallery and the Contemporaries Gallery in New York, the Tacoma Art Museum in Tacoma, Washington, the Bradley Galleries in Milwaukee, the Universities of Maine and Alaska, and the Kohler Gallery in Seattle. Pierce's work can be found in the permanent collections museums and libraries internationally, which include the Brooklyn Museum of Art in Brooklyn, NY, the New York Public Library, the National Museum of Sweden in Stockholm, the Bibliophil National in Paris, Princeton University, and the Library of Congress, as well as many private collections.

Edmund G. Schildknecht

Painter

American

Born: 1899 Chicago, Illinois
Died: 1985 Eastport, Maine

Edmund Schildknecht moved a few years after his birth with his family from Chicago to Milwaukee. There he began painting at age four when an aunt, an art teacher, gave him a box of paints. She encouraged him and so did a grandfather and uncle who also painted. He repaid this encouragement later by teaching art for thirty-two years at the Arsenal Technical Schools in Indianapolis, beginning 1924. His life and art were a matter of lessons learned and lessons taught.

Edmund Schildknecht's early goal was to be a portrait painter. After attending the Wisconsin School of Art in Milwaukee from 1917 to 1920, he spent the next year at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts receiving academic training in precise and self-effacing representation. There as he later reported, "I was using ochres and blacks... and one instructor ordered, "Fade these colors out." In 1923-24 he went to Paris with the family of one of his instructors, and there he saw the art that was to stimulate his later development, the art introduced to the United States by the Armory Show. He began painting in watercolors, as well as oils, and studied briefly at the Academe Julian and the Academie de la Grande Chaumiere. As he later recollected, "I worked a great deal on my own. Paris then was the city of Degas and Cézanne... of Picasso."

By 1929 he was teaching art in Indianapolis, showing successfully in the mid-West, and demonstrating in his oils and in an increasing number of watercolor landscapes the lessons he had learned abroad. He first summered in Eastport, Maine, in 1934, and settled there after retiring from teaching in 1957, where he remained until his death in 1985. The painting was acquired by the Art Collection in 1985, bequeathed by the artist along with twenty-three other paintings, and hundreds of prints and drawings. These follow a gift by Edmund Schildknecht of over one hundred of his paintings and almost four hundred of his watercolors.