

JANET CARSON

Artwork of a Master Teacher

Laurie Bieze Permanent Art Collection

Open to View Friday, April 9, 2021
Virtual Exhibit at pablocenter.org

Painter, traveler, teacher. Janet Carson left an impression on her community through her artwork, world view, and teaching methods. Janet Carson will long be remembered through the legacy of her artworks in the Laurie Bieze Permanent Art Collection, on display in the Laurie Bieze Gallery.

ROSE DOLAN-NEILL, CURATOR

**Visual & Literary Arts Manager
Pablo Center at the Confluence**

Janet Carson was a painter, an educator, a person of deep faith, and consummate contributor to her community. Known for her sharp wit and enthusiasm for painting out of doors, Janet frequently combined the two in the style of her watercolor paintings. Janet loved the study of dilapidated buildings. Old, worn, and rusty objects were given new life and love by her practiced hands. Also known for her plein air paintings, Janet traveled the world with her paint kit, setting down nature as she saw it. As an educator, Janet Carson was well-known for her sharp and honest critique of university student work and the work of her colleagues. Her career as a teacher spanned decades at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire where she excelled at teaching students to become art educators. Her methods and curriculum are still in practice at many elementary, middle, and high schools today. One point of pride for Janet was the naming of the gallery space at the Eau Claire Regional Arts Center & State Theatre in her honor. The Janet Carson Gallery became synonymous with high achievements in the visual arts as west-central Wisconsin's premiere gallery space. Pablo Center at the Confluence now has the care and keeping of 14 of Janet Carson's works in the Laurie Bieze Permanent Art Collection.

There is so much beauty tucked away in our art collection. We are proud to offer you a glimpse into the Laurie Bieze Art Collection.

Contributions to the Laurie Bieze Permanent Art Collection enrich the art experience for anyone who walks through the doors of Pablo Center. You can support our mission to share in the arts at the link below.

<https://www.pablocenter.org/support/donate/>

ARTIST STATEMENTS AND BIOGRAPHIES

Statements and biographies are written by the individual artists and are published with their permission. The views expressed are their own. Thank you.

Janet Carson

1926-2019

From an early age I knew my destiny was to be a writer or an artist. With the middle name of Wellington how could I do other? My drawing as a child was unremarkable. I designed dresses for my paper dolls and copied pictures from a dog book. I did not win the poster contest! However, the older I became, the more I felt that making art was my main source of comfort and joy. As an art teacher, I witnessed children discovering a reassuring sense of self through making art as well. As an aging adult looking back on those years of making and teaching art, I have experienced elation in sharing it.

1947-1965

As a student in their BFA program at the University of Illinois I discovered oil painting which enchanted me. I became determined to work toward a career as a full-time painter. In my last year I agreed, albeit reluctantly, to add education courses to my program so that if all else failed, I could always teach.

Surprise! Surprise! In 1950 I taught art in all grades at a community unit school in the Ozarks, and by 1956 I had fallen in love with teaching little children. I still managed to paint in oil at my residence, mostly at a kitchen table. By 1962 I realized that I needed more time to paint, so picked up a half time assistantship in the Art Dept. at Michigan State University. I proceeded to paint every day seven days a week. My academic advisor told me that I needed to "diversify" and suggested serigraphy as an alternative activity. I enrolled with freshman art majors in a beginning course. In 1963 almost half of the work in my MFA show were serigraphs.

That fall I was hired at Bemidji State College where I taught half time in the Campus Laboratory School and the other half in the Art Department. In 1965 I came to Eau Claire where my duties were similar, both in the Campus Laboratory School and the Art Department.

1966 – 1991

I was assigned immediately to teach serigraphy. My first chairman, Ken Campbell at the UWEC Art Department, built the first five screens for the new program. In subsequent years two more semesters of serigraphy were added. Besides my early assignment in the Campus School, I taught classes for education as well as non-art students. In 1979 and 1980, I developed and directed an elementary art program at an International School in Kobe, Japan. Two different semesters I filled in as chairperson for the department while the permanent chair traveled in England and Japan. By 1991, I had reached retirement age and reluctantly gave it all up.

1992 – present

After retirement, printmaking was difficult because the University equipment was not readily available to me, and I was not willing to invest the dollars nor give up the space needed for a platemaker in my home, so I searched for another outlet. Watercolor had been an old love. Painting on location stateside and in more exotic climes across the

seas became a passion. I taught "In and Out" watercolor workshops in the summer through the University. I have exhibited for several years in competitions and invitational shows. Many private collectors as well as health care facilities own my paintings and Belleza Gallery in Bisbee, AZ has shown my work.

Janet Carson drew and painted from an early age. She watched her father sketch hundreds of his inventions on a napkin, or on whatever paper that was handy. He also did watercolors out of doors, using a simple paint box with a few colors and small painting blocks. Janet began painting outdoors in her teens. Her parents would take her in the family car to a location where she wanted to paint and pick her up in an hour or so. One time as they approached in the car after time was up, they saw a group of cows who had moved to watch her from the fence nearby. Janet never knew she had an audience!

Her father built her a drawing table using orange crates to support the 2 x 4 foot masonite table top when she was quite young. He also built her an easel. At the University of Illinois, she painted in oils, following that up with painting and printmaking at Michigan State University twelve years later.

Carson taught in the Art Department at Bemidji State College for two years before coming to Eau Claire in 1965 where her studio classes were in serigraphy (silk screen). In retirement she returned to her old love, watercolor, primarily so she could travel and pursue painting "on location" that she had enjoyed so many years ago.

All works on display are on loan from the Laurie Bieze Permanent Art Collection.

Artwork Ledger, 1969-2019

Donated by the family of Janet Carson

Janet Carson kept a thorough accounting of her artwork. Information included in this ledger is the title, medium, and location of the creation of each work of art. Also included is a detailed accounting of why the artwork was created, exhibitions the artwork was included in, if the artwork was accepted or rejected in juried art exhibits, and the price of the artwork and who it was sold or gifted to. Images included in this exhibit are of the cover of the ledger, the first page of the ledger, and the last page of the ledger.

Gear Hobber, 1998

Mixed media, watercolor, 37" x 25"

Donated by William & Amy Benson

The words surrounding the cut-out image read:

gear hobber gear \ -- mechanism that performs a specific function in a complete machine; a toothed wheel hobber \ 'haba(r) \ n-s -- a machine used for hobbing: hobbing consisting of a flared steel worm that is used in a (illegible) the teeth of (illegible) used for hobbing the teeth of a

The Keller Machine Shop in Eau Claire was located near the bottom of Plank Hill at Jefferson Street. The owner, Ken Christopherson, held an auction of his machines in the summer of 1998. Mike, his son, was a fellow faculty member with me in the Art Department at UWEC. When I heard about the auction, I was intrigued by what I thought might be interesting shapes for a watercolor painting, so went over there with my camera to look them over. The machine that seemed the most interesting to me that I chose for my painting was a "gear hobber." Its function remains a mystery,

but I was delighted with interlocking facets, sprockets, wheels, etc. I brightened up its dull brown color with a colorful palette. The background that I added didn't really "work", so I cut it out and mounted on the color you see here.

Rancho De Taos, 1994

Watercolor, 17.25 x20.25"

Donated by the artist

Upon a recent cleaning and refurbishing of this work of art, another work of art was discovered on the back of this painting. It was decided to include an image of this work.

Hands, 1947-1991

Serigraph print, 19"x24"

Donated by Mel and Sally Sundby

Untitled, 1947-1991

Serigraph print, 19"x24"

Donated by the family of Janet Carson

Secretary, 1980-1990

Lithograph print, 12"x18"

Donated by John & Sandy Uphall

Untitled, 1992 – 2019

Watercolor, 19"x24"

Donated by Mel & Sally Sundby

Tottori View on the Japan Sea, 1979-1991

Serigraph, 19"x24"

Donated by the artist

Waterford, 1992 – 2019

Watercolor, 24.25"x19.25"

Donated by the artist

Untitled, 1947-1991

Serigraph print, 10"x24"

Donated by the family of Janet Carson

Whirligig, 1947-1991

Serigraph print, 19"x24"

Donated by the family of Janet Carson

Untitled, 1947-1991

Serigraph print, 19"x24"

Donated by the family of Janet Carson