

# MASTERS OF ILLUSION

*Unveiling the Mystery of Trompe L'Oeil*

Tempe Center for the Arts



May 3 - Aug. 2



Tom Eckert, wood sculpture  
*Speculative Delusion*

Patrick Bailey, Phoenix  
Larry Charles, Peoria  
Craig Cheply, Tempe  
Donald Clapper, Scottsdale  
Tom Eckert, Tempe  
Suzanne Falk, Phoenix  
David Gordinier, Mesa  
James Gucwa, Pinetop  
Billie Jo Harned, Phoenix  
Clinton T. Hobart, Tempe  
Peter Holbrook, Redway, Calif.  
Jane Jones, Arvada, Colo.  
Lorena Kloosterboer, Scottsdale  
Ellen Murray Meissinger, Tempe  
Cynthia Peterson, Phoenix  
Robert Peterson, Albuquerque, N.M.  
Ted Polomis, Marshfield Hills, Mass.  
John L. Schieffer, Avondale  
Carol Shinn, Fort Collins, Colo.  
Ellen A. Wagener, Scottsdale  
Anna Youngers, Sioux Falls, S.D.

This exhibition, about magic and illusion, takes a contemporary approach to a long tradition of ultra-realism.

The tradition of Trompe L'oeil, a French term for "fool the eye," dates back centuries and contemporary artists in numerous media are employing methods and techniques used in trompe l'oeil to create imagery that fools the

viewer into believing that it is real or as real as a photograph.

Visitors unveil some of the mystery (without discovering too many of the magicians' secrets) through hands-on elements, educational programming (such as PowerPoint examples of the artists' processes, an artist's studio diorama and hands-on samples to touch).

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**Patrick Bailey, Phoenix**



Patrick Bailey, *River Rock*

Patrick Bailey was born in Syracuse, N.Y., and spent part of his childhood moving around the country. His “coming of age” experiences are like pages from a nostalgic book. He helped out on the family farm, hopped freight trains to go fishing and worked at a diner and summer carnivals in high school. He studied illustration and painting at the Rhode Island School of Design, while juggling single-parenthood and a design business. After school, he developed a successful illustration career with clients such as Paramount Pictures, Anheuser Busch and Volvo. After several lecturing experiences at colleges and a design conference in Pakistan, Bailey recognized the need for change. In the mid 90s, he moved from the coast of New England to the Arizona desert and transformed his illustration career into a painting career. Since then his work has been shown in galleries across the Southwest.

“I have always been a reluctant to talk about art. But eventually, after asking myself over the years, ‘why are you compelled to do this,’ it begs some response. It is an expression of love. A painting is a response to the experience of being alive. To me, the difference between an abstract painting and one of known objects is similar to the difference between instrumental music and lyrical music. They are both inspired from emotions and a desire to communicate. Both succeed, or not, based on their merits. I paint anything that speaks to me. I see sensuality in the shapes of a flower or an automobile. Lately, I have been focusing on creating abstract compositions from realistic renderings of very common objects like marbles and rocks.”

[www.pbailey.com](http://www.pbailey.com)

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## Larry Charles, Peoria



Larry Charles, *A Couple of Extravagant Nature*

Larry Charles is a co-founder of the Trompe l'Oeil Society of Artists ([www.trompeloeilsociety.com](http://www.trompeloeilsociety.com)) and a charter member of the International Guild of Realism ([www.realismguild.com](http://www.realismguild.com)). Prior to becoming a full-time artist, Charles taught at the University of Southern California and was the international creative director for an agency on Madison Avenue for 14 years. He now maintains his home and studio in Arizona, frequently lectures and exhibits across the country, writes articles for international art magazines and serves on the faculty of the Scottsdale Artists' School.

“The appeal of painting trompe l’oeil artwork for me is the ‘wow factor’ that comes from creating seemingly three-dimensional objects within a two-dimensional painting space. The objects can’t be just random items that are pretty to paint; they must help tell a story or illustrate a theme so that the painting involves the viewer at many different levels. When I

started specializing in the trompe l’oeil genre, I focused on the nostalgic, but lately I’ve painted 21st Century themes and tried to introduce innovative compositions. I don’t paint to sell, I paint to create. It’s a challenge that makes every day in my studio a dream career.”

[www.realismguild.com/Artists/LarryCharles/HTMLs/Website/ArtPages/LCharles.html](http://www.realismguild.com/Artists/LarryCharles/HTMLs/Website/ArtPages/LCharles.html)

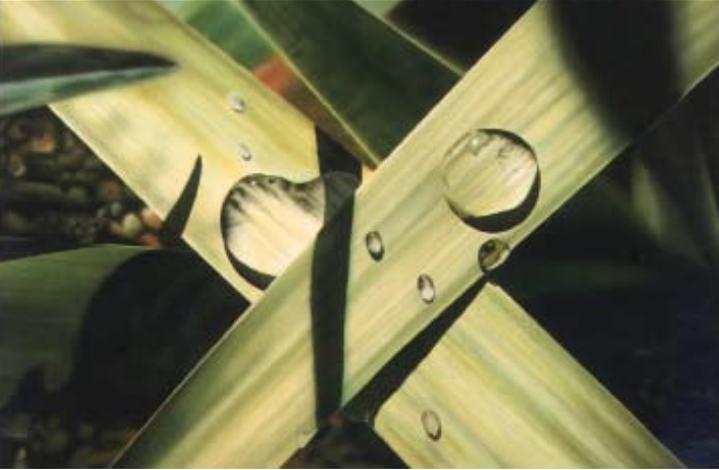
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## Craig Cheply, Tempe



Craig Cheply, *X Marks the Spot*

Craig Cheply studied at New York City's Fashion Institute of Technology and the Pratt Institute in Utica, N.Y., and received his bachelor of fine arts degree in Interior Design from Arizona State University. He is both a commercial artist and a fine artist. His photo realistic paintings are inspired by observations of the elements pertaining to light, color and texture of the southwest and numerous travels. His focus on Southwestern skies, landscapes and fauna address the political and ecological issues related to the dramatic population growth in the region. Cheply also does scenic and special effect painting for the motion picture and television industries and was one of two Arizona muralists chosen to work with the New York City-based Evergreen Painting Studios to paint the 10,000 square feet of murals at Chase Field.

“As we go about our daily rituals, we obviously look at and see many things. Some events register in our memories while others do not. When ‘things’ do register, people tend to take the visual information for granted. I have always embraced the challenge to render the variety of subjects in various media, time/lighting conditions therefore allowing both myself and the viewer a greater scope and appreciation of the art experience.”

[www.craigcheply.com](http://www.craigcheply.com)

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## Donald Clapper, Scottsdale



Donald Clapper, *War and Peace*

Donald Clapper grew up in the Northeast and graduated from the University of Colorado at Boulder with a bachelor of arts degree in 1983. In the late 80s he saw the work of well-known 19th Century trompe l'oeil artist William Harnett at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta. He was so inspired by the detail and illusionary dimension that he began to paint in the trompe l'oeil style almost exclusively. While living and working in Florida, Clapper worked a busy real estate career during the day and developed his painting techniques at night. He used that quiet time to learn and apply the old masters' methods of indirect lighting, shadowing, glazing and multi-dimensional effects to the canvas. In 1994 he relocated to Arizona and today has his home and studio in Scottsdale.

His paintings have appeared in numerous national painting competitions and publications and articles in publications such as International Artist Magazine. Clapper's work has been featured in exhibitions across the country, including the Phoenix Art Museum, the Leigh

Yawkey Woodson Art Museum in Wisconsin and the Museum of Fine Arts in Santa Fe, N.M. Clapper co-founded the Trompe l'Oeil Society of Artists and is a charter member of the International Guild of Realism.

“At the expense of rejection, I expose my passion with paint. I spotlight the vulnerable part of me; without that, my paintings would be void of feeling. Trompe l'oeil leaves no room for shyness or timidity, because it dares to defy reality. The best analogy I can express is like reading a good novel or movie. The viewer is drawn in, becomes part of the story or even becomes the character.”

[www.clapperart.com](http://www.clapperart.com)

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### Tom Eckert, Tempe



Tom Eckert came to the Valley in the early 1960s to attend Arizona State University where he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in fine arts. In 1971, Eckert became a professor of sculpture in ASU's School of Art and has lived in Tempe ever since. Eckert studied as a painter, but it was his early experiences helping an uncle who was a carpenter that influenced his wood working. He has participated in nearly 100 exhibitions and numerous lectures, workshops and jury panels across the country. His work has been featured in publications such as *American Craft*, *Phoenix Home and Garden* and *Art Talk*, and has been included in notable collections such as The American Craft Museum in New York and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Eckert's work can be found in galleries in Scottsdale, Cambridge, Mass., and Holland.

Eckert's sculptures are a bit of an anomaly in the exhibition. His work isn't traditional trompe l'oeil because it is not two-dimensional. It is not Photo Realism because, as a three-dimensional form, it does not look like a photograph either. Eckert's work is trompe l'oeil because it fits so many of the criteria, such as the distance test, absence of people, still life subject matter and life-size rendering.

"A lot of my concepts are 'painterly' ones that I'm translating in a three-dimensional way. I never really out-lived my interest in painting, and now it's all kind of coming together. My main reason for doing these objects is a matter of self-expression; I do them for myself. Then I realize it's an extension of self, that I'm not going to live forever and that when my moment comes to leave I want to know that I have things out there. That means a lot to me," Eckert as quoted by Tara Blanc in *ASU Research* (Spring/Summer 1996).

[www.public.asu.edu/~eckert33](http://www.public.asu.edu/~eckert33)

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**Suzanne Falk, Phoenix**



Suzanne Falk, *As Happy As We Can Expect is Real*

Suzanne Falk is a self-taught artist who says that she “doesn’t know how to paint,” but who acknowledges heavy artistic influences in her life, including her mother, well-known landscape artist Joni Falk, and other realism painters, such as Chuck Close.

The alternate universe that this Valley native creates is a play on conflicting themes from the innocence of childhood to the biting reality of adulthood. She uses vintage items such as toys, storybooks and containers to create seemingly sweet and nostalgic still life scenes that are reminiscent of a knick knock shelf in a pre-teen’s room. Closer examination reveals an edge: nails, scissors and matches sometimes make an appearance to create a little unexpected tension. This tension isn’t unlike that awkward and limbo-like stage in the life of young girls. Falk, who is in her mid 30s, is like many women of her generation and was influenced by Judy Blume, famous for relating the trials and tribulations of growing up through fiction. Falk’s stories and coping strategies are perhaps a little like Blume, just conveyed in a different medium with a few more sharp objects.

Falk’s work has been exhibited locally at the Burton Barr Library, Phoenix; g2, Scottsdale; and at galleries in Sante Fe, N.M., Los Angeles and New York City. Her work is also in collections in Phoenix, Chicago and Germany. In 2007 she was featured as one of Phoenix Home and Garden’s annual “emerging artists.”

[www.perihelionarts.com](http://www.perihelionarts.com)

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## David Gordinier, Mesa



David Gordinier, *Untitled*

David Gordinier and his wife live with their two dogs in Mesa. Gordinier is becoming known as a southwestern painter, but it may be more accurate to describe him as a realist and plein-air expressionist. Many of Gordinier's landscapes capture the subject in the late afternoon or at sundown, when shadows are harsh, objects well-defined and colors heightened. He has associated nature and the outdoors with the best moments of life ever since his boyhood days when his grandfather had taken him hunting and fishing.

Gordinier is a man making up for lost time. He looks back on his early adult years as time squandered, when his dream of painting full-time seemed elusive. Like so many "transplants" he came to Arizona with a dream. He left Cedar Rapids, Iowa, after selling his business to finally pursue his passion for art. He acknowledges that the Southwest is a force to be reckoned with: "I was going to bring my own vision of the Southwest down here, but it's had more of an effect on me than I've had on it."

Today he keeps a careful watch over the Superstition Mountains and surrounding desert terrain. He is ready to jump into his old Jeep when nature's drama is just too hard to resist. For him, each moment like this is a cherished opportunity. He paints every day, often late into the night and even in the extreme heat.

"If I live to be 120, I still won't have time to paint all the things I want to paint." The artist describes his process as "finding opulent things in the mundane." He says, "If I see something I like I'll still paint it, whether it is something that will sell or not."

<http://davidgordinierfineart.com>

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## James “Kingneon” Gucwa, Pinetop



James Gucwa, *Blue Fox*

James “Kingneon” Gucwa was born in Jersey City, N.J., in the time of the baby boom. He received his bachelor of fine arts degree from Memphis College of Arts and later studied at Arizona State University with artists Ralph Goings and Eric Fischl.

Since the 80s, the American Roadside has been the focus of Gucwa’s life. While traveling the backroads, he has collected thousands of images of the classic neon sign, the roadside motel (his longtime favorite subject), theater marquees of year past, the traditional diner and other relics from the roadside. His intention is to recreate an authentic scene from the past that is full of character. Over the years, he has created hundreds of these images and has been coined “The King of Neon,” hence, his nickname: “Kingneon.”

During the 1990’s Gucwa was made an “Officially Licensed” fine artist for Harley-Davidson, Chevrolet/Corvette and Mattel Toys/Hot Wheels Division. He also wrote his first novel called “The Coming.”

“I see the world as though my eye were the lens of a camera, everything I view becomes a framed isolated image...a painting. In the studio I prefer to use the photograph only as a basis to start the piece, allowing the inventive and intuitive process to pass beyond what the lens captures. It is that adventure of discovery that stimulates me to paint.”

[www.cruisingoods.com/webpages/gucwa.htm](http://www.cruisingoods.com/webpages/gucwa.htm)

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**Billie Jo Harned, Phoenix**



Billie Jo Harned, *Untitled*

Billie Jo Harned wears many hats. She works for a prominent law firm, volunteers for local arts organizations like the Arizona State University Art Museum Ceramics Research Center, creates fine art ceramics and enjoys life as a wife, mother and grandmother. She was raised in Wyoming but moved to the Arizona in the 1980's and now resides in an historic home in Phoenix. She describes herself as a tactile person, which is probably why clay is like a second nature to her. Clay is full of complexity. It is wet and malleable at first and then after firing, it embodies a delicate permanence.

“At times, objects in the present can evoke memories from the past. A combination of emotions and magic create an illusion that waits to be honored. I create a likeness of an object, molding and carving the clay, then glazing and firing it until an image from my memory sits before me. When you see or touch what I've created, a story is passed between us; new memories continue, change and renew the magic and the illusion is preserved.”

[www.billiejoharned.com](http://www.billiejoharned.com)

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## Clinton T. Hobart, Tempe



Clinton Hobart, *Eggplant*

Clinton T. Hobart was born in Philadelphia, Pa., grew up in New Jersey and studied Fine Arts and figure drawing at the School of Visual Arts in New York City. While in New York he attended classes at the famed Art Students League. After receiving his bachelor of fine arts degree he moved to Arizona and has been teaching still life and figure at the Scottsdale Artists' School. It was there that he met acclaimed portrait artist Daniel Greene, with whom he spent five summers studying and working in his studio in North Salem, N.Y.

Hobart's studio is a small converted guest house in the heart of a Tempe neighborhood that is not unlike the painting studios of artists long ago. It is filled with model stands, drapery, antique furniture and still life props, a giant oak easel and numerous works in progress, such as a new series with Venetian carnival masks for an exhibition and lecture series at Harvard University.

"Painting is a language in which an intellectually stimulating idea must be spoken with precision. Such precision must come from excellent drawing skills and observation; objects must be painted from life."

Hobart's work is featured in several private national and international collections and currently is represented by several galleries including Blue Diamond Gallery in North Carolina, Gate House Gallery in New Jersey and Illuminaria Fine Art and Atmosphere Gallery in Massachusetts.

[www.clintonhobart.com](http://www.clintonhobart.com)

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**Peter Holbrook, Redway, Calif.**



Peter Holbrook, *Morning at the Osiris Temple*

Peter Holbrook received his bachelor of arts degree from Dartmouth College in 1961. His early paintings focused on figurative nudes, but in 1970, after moving from Chicago to Northern California, he was inspired by an “exotic” new environment. He was surrounded by the Sierra mountains in one direction, the desert in another and the ocean in still another. Then, when his parents moved to Arizona, they encouraged him to visit the Grand Canyon. In 1977 he did and it was love at first sight.

“I had been around the world but never looked down on anything so vast and spectacular. I immediately splurged, taking a flight over it (an extraordinary extravagance considering my budget in the those days), so most of my initial shots were aerial photos. That sense of flying over the landscape has embedded itself in most of my subsequent work. After that, one canyon led to another.”

Holbrook paints from his own photographs. The work to find the perfect location and shot can be as tedious as the painting process. He strives to find tightly organized pieces of nature with a pathway to lead the eye around the potential painting. His paintings are a translation of three dimensional forms into two dimensions twice, once in a photograph and then again to the canvas. The photographic illusion the paintings have is a kind of magic he describes as “tension.”

“I notice that some viewers come up close and the discomfort of all those squiggly swatches of color pushes them back away from the canvas to a point at which the illusion resembles itself. Personally, I like the tension in my work and especially in the work of Impressionists like Monet, Pissaro and Sisley.”

<http://peterholbrook.com>

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### Jane Jones, Arvada, Colo.



Jane Jones is a Denver, Colo., native who discovered early in life that she loved color. By age seven she began to separate her crayons into cool colors and warm colors and wrote and illustrated stories. Now she says that she lives for color and light: “that’s the reason that I get out of bed in the morning,” she said.

Jones looks at the world through the eyes of a scientist and an artist. She earned a bachelor of science degree in biology and chemistry in 1976 and an art degree in 1989. It was an opportunity for her to look and study in-depth the lives of cells, plants and animals. It gave her a great respect for the awesome power of living things. Today, her paintings also reflect an investigative quality that comes from both disciplines.

She gets profound satisfaction from finding seeds and bulbs and nurturing them to full flower. Many of the roses, lilies, irises and tulips she paints come from her garden. She has a great relationship with a florist, but confesses commercial flowers are often too uniform, so whenever she can, Jones prefers garden-grown flowers.

“One of the toughest things that I have to do is cutting the flowers from the plant. But once I get just the right light on them and the glass vase - well, I’m beside myself with excitement. My paintings come

from my deep reverence for the natural world and are a celebration of the beauty of nature.

“In our quick-paced culture, we are hyper-stimulated with visual media which has caused our sense of vision to become blind to the extraordinary beauty of ordinary things. These are the things that artists remind us about; they point the way... and remind us to pay attention to the moment. In our busy and overwhelming world I want my paintings to be a moment of serenity and peace.”

[www.janejonesartist.com](http://www.janejonesartist.com)

Jane Jones, *Bella*

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**Lorena Kloosterboer, Scottsdale**



Lorena Kloosterboer, *Abuela's Silver*

Lorena Kloosterboer was born in 1962 and grew up in the Netherlands. She was raised in a multicultural family and recalls early on being an imaginative and intensely curious child. Eventually her creativity, artmaking and day-dreaming led to a formal education in the classical arts. Today she spends a large part of the year in the southwest, including Scottsdale, but presently lives and works in Antwerp, Belgium.

Kloosterboer describes her love for realism as an irresistible attraction. She views it as an intriguing challenge to paint with great precision. It is both a struggle and seduction as it forces her to continually conquer new boundaries and master new skills. She works in both trompe l'oeil and photo realism, each having the reputation as some of the most meticulous and challenging artwork to create.

“My compositions reveal my desire to capture the fascinating interactions between colors, light, shadows, textures and reflections. It’s astonishing to think our visible world merely consists of surfaces reflecting light particles. I seek to capture those fleeting moments in my artwork, when light is just perfect, when colors and shadows and textures unite in visual poetry.

Kloosterboer is a charter member in the International Guild of Realism, a signature member of the International Society of Acrylic Painters and a member of the Asociación de Pintores Realistas de España. Her work has been published in international magazines including *Southwest Art*, *International Artist* and *American Art Collector*. In her 25-year art career, her artwork has been exhibited in Argentina, Belgium, Canada, France, Japan, the Netherlands and the United States.

[www.art-lorena.com](http://www.art-lorena.com)

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## Ellen Murray Meissinger, Tempe



Ellen Murray Meissinger, *Going Green*

Ellen Murray Meissinger is an artist, educator and curator. She is professor of painting and drawing at Arizona State University, where she supervises the largest water-media program in the country. Her water-media works have been exhibited in more than 100 national exhibitions and have won numerous awards.

She has organized national conferences at the Knoxville (Tenn.) Museum of Art; Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, Gatlinburg, Tenn.; and the Salt Lake Art Center, Utah. She is a charter member, past-president and current board member of the Watercolor USA Honor Society and a signature member of the National Watercolor Society. She also serves as National Society of Arts and Letters Art Chair for the Greater Arizona Region.

Since 1996 the interdependence of water, cities, time, space and sense of place has been important concerns for the artist. In the work, "Going Green," she explores the contemporary concerns and media focus on eco issues.

Her works on paper especially bring attention to the fragile

balance between art and nature and the crucial role people play in assuring that our living environments, natural resources and artistic accomplishments are recognized and protected.

In 2006, Meissinger directed a project created by Arizona Global Arts, a team of faculty and students from ASU commemorating the 40th anniversary of the 1966 flood of the Arno River in Florence that severely damaged important art treasures. As part of the project, her work, "Deluge," was displayed in the historic Santa Croce Church in Florence, Italy. She is currently working on another Italian project about the Venice canals that will be displayed there later this year.

[www.ellenmurray.com](http://www.ellenmurray.com)

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## Cynthia Peterson, Phoenix



Cynthia Peterson, *Untitled*

Cynthia Peterson received a bachelor of fine arts degree from Northern Arizona University and a master of fine arts degree in drawing and painting from Arizona State University. While at ASU she studied watercolor with Ellen Murray Meissinger. Peterson always has been drawn to realism and representational art. As a child she enjoyed looking at books and reproductions of Renaissance masterpieces, especially the still life work of early Flemish painters. She says that she was “fascinated with the way the painters carefully rendered the effects of light upon reflective surfaces. In my own work, I feel compelled to explore light and color in combination with these surfaces.”

Peterson admits that her years of graphic design experience have definitely influenced her. She tends to approach images with a formalist process that focuses on visual structure: shape, pattern, value and color. Her most recent work consists of still-life constructions built around an ongoing interest in light, reflective and refractive surfaces and color. She says, “Light and color appeal to me for their dramatic and psychological potential.” She uses metallic, glass and other intriguing surfaces because they are unique for the way they reflect and distort shapes; the resulting images are both realistic and abstract. She uses watercolor as a medium because it allows her to achieve greater color luminosity in the illusion of transparent or reflective surfaces.

For the past 12 years, Peterson has been making art full time and teaching art at the college and professional level at Mesa Community College, Shemer Art Center and Museum and Scottsdale Artists’ School. She teaches numerous topics, including design, color, drawing, life drawing, painting and watercolor.

[www.cynthiapetersonfineart.com/Cynthia\\_Peterson\\_Fine\\_Art/Home.html](http://www.cynthiapetersonfineart.com/Cynthia_Peterson_Fine_Art/Home.html)

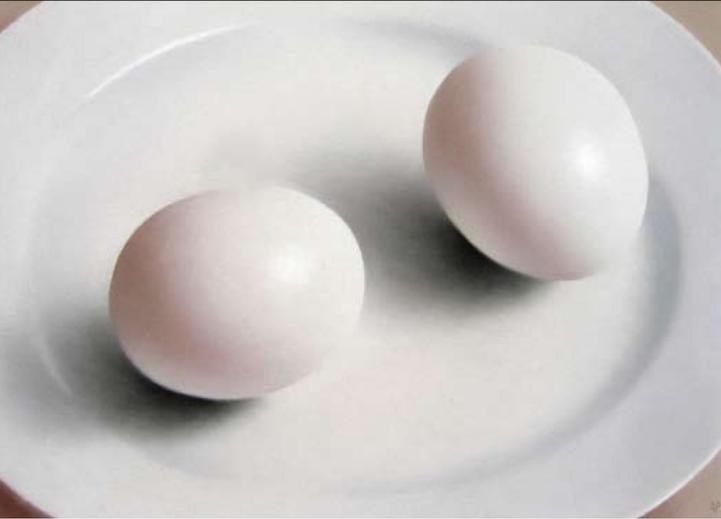
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### **Robert Peterson, Albuquerque, N.M.**



Robert Peterson, *Two Eggs on a White Plate*

Robert Peterson was born in Illinois in 1943. As a child he was struck with rheumatic fever and confined to a hospital bed. During that time, drawing became a friend and a passion. At age eight, his family moved to Albuquerque, N.M. His hearing had started to diminish and his parents enrolled him in the New Mexico School for the Deaf in Santa Fe which provided free programs for state residents for the past 122 years. He later attended Gallaudet College in Washington, D.C., then returned to Albuquerque where he resides with his wife.

Peterson is a pastel artist, accomplished at revealing a soft and innovative style to representing ordinary objects like eggs or fruit and bowls, plates and bags on a reflective surface. His choice of palette, value control and light help him to achieve striking realism with a sometimes tough to control medium like pastel. His work is meticulously detailed, yet minimalist in form and subject matter. His strong interest in Eastern cultures has influenced him to convey a sense of serenity and balance in his compositions. Before starting a painting, Peterson studies the subject with an intense, meditative focus. Often he stares for hours before beginning the drawing. “I want to render forms that create space so that the space defines form.”

Peterson was honored recently with inclusion in an Albuquerque exhibition called, “Silent Things, Secret Things: Still Life from Rembrandt to the Millennium.” His work and other contemporaries were placed next to such masters as Rembrandt, Chagall and Warhol. His work has appeared in nearly 50 exhibitions since 1969 and is part of numerous collections around the world including the Museum of Fine Arts in Santa Fe, N.M.; Microsoft Corporation in Redmond, Wash.; and American embassies in Peru and Spain.

[www.leslielevy.com/orig\\_art\\_view.php?id=rpete](http://www.leslielevy.com/orig_art_view.php?id=rpete)

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**Ted Polomis, Marshfield Hills, Mass.**



Ted Polomis, *Bus Stops, Big Tops*

Ted Polomis was born in southeastern Massachusetts and has been painting and drawing since he was a young boy. In 1985, he received a bachelor of fine arts degree from the Rhode Island School of Design. In his junior year he attended the European Honors Program in Rome and studied the works of the great Italian and European masters. These early experiences seem to have had a life-long effect. He used to work with large abstract landscapes but returned his attention to still life painting about five years ago. It was then that he started to practice the techniques of the old masters and proceeded to work only from life. He says, “The results have been rewarding and measurable.”

Polomis juxtaposes the naivety and innocence of childhood with the wisdom and nostalgia of old age in his paintings. Often, he features toys manufactured in the 1920s and the 1930s to give the work not only whimsy and playfulness but also “permanence” as he calls it. By using antique toys, such as pressed metal cars, trucks and boats, he tells a story about the contrast between those old yet durable objects and the plastic and disposable nature of objects purchased today. Polomis strives to create “harmonic little spaces.”

“I try to do simple, strong setups using objects that have an enduring appeal. My hope is that through my paintings, the viewer may pause and appreciate the intricacies of everyday things. I want my work to be like a breath of fresh air, a calm moment, a little peace away from an otherwise hectic lifestyle.”

[www.polomis.com](http://www.polomis.com)

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**John Schieffer, Avondale**



John L. Schieffer, *Meeting Place*

John L. Schieffer, a new resident to Arizona, graduated in 1995 from Paier College of Art in Hamden, Conn., with a bachelor of fine arts degree. Early in his career he worked as a children's book illustrator at Mercer Mayer Productions. He also worked in graphic design at Leslie Roy Designs and, until recently, worked as an art conservator for Yost Conservation, working primarily on 19th Century American Art. He helped restore works that had damage from tears, punctures, flaking and aging. His numerous experiences in different art worlds helped him to develop a wide variety of skills and techniques. As an illustrator he learned to view the world like a child with fascination and bright colors. As a graphic designer he practiced formal aesthetic structure, his work is clean and well organized. As an art restorer he observed up close the techniques of well known painters in realism, impressionism, surrealism and abstraction.

Schieffer's work explores and continues to challenge all of his artistic skills in order to achieve believable texture, space and color. His current works are contemporary still life pieces but still have an old world/nostalgic quality. He takes under-appreciated objects like marbles, jacks and other odd little trinkets and toys and gives them a take new life and unexpected persona. Much like a photograph, he keeps the focus is on a central object and lets the backgrounds remain subdued, shadowed and blurred which creates an illusion of depth.

Schieffer has been recognized by numerous organizations, such as the Women's Caucus for Art, the Starr Foundation, the National Society of Illustrators and the Discovery Museum in Bridgeport, Conn. He also has a written and illustrated a children's book that is awaiting a publisher.

[www.bonnerdavid.com](http://www.bonnerdavid.com)

# MASTERS OF ILLUSION

*Unveiling the Mystery of Trompe L'Oeil*

Tempe Center for the Arts



**Carol Shinn, Fort Collins, Colo.**



Until recently, Carol Shinn and her husband made their home in Tempe. But after her husband retired, they headed to the mountains of Colorado, where she attended undergraduate school. While in Arizona, Shinn made an impact on the local arts scene; she received her master of fine arts degree in fibers from ASU in 1988 and exhibited her work locally at Tempe Arts Center, Scottsdale Center for the Arts and Joanne Rapp Gallery. Before fine-tuning her work embroidery, Shinn was already an accomplished tapestry artist. But it was her willingness to experiment that led to a breakthrough. She could realize her images in a grander scale with a machine than she could with a tapestry loom or hand stitching. Shinn's innovative use of embroidery and machine stitching techniques gained her wide acclaim. She teaches workshops across the United States, and her work has appeared in national magazines such as *American Craft* and *Fiberarts*. She just finished writing a new book on fiber arts due out next year.

Carol Shinn, *Achile's Downfall*

From a distance Shinn's work appears to have a flat graphic boldness like a photographic collage that contrasts both color and form. But up close, the work takes on a different character. It isn't flat at all; it has surface texture and tiny color variations that only make sense again when viewed from afar. Her subject matter is approachable and familiar, like pages from a scrap book. She focuses on landscapes touched by humans such as highway scenes, old rusted vehicles and hints of architecture and plant life. She achieves her realism by taking her own photo snapshots, scanning them and heat transferring them to canvas. It's the digitized photo that gives her a map to follow. She says that embroidery has a "preciousness" into which people are drawn.

[www.carolshinn.com](http://www.carolshinn.com)

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**Ellen A. Wagener, Scottsdale**



Ellen A. Wagener, *Tree*

Ellen A. Wagener lives and works in the valley but is really an Iowa girl at heart. She studied at the University of Iowa and then received her bachelor of fine arts degree from the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, D.C. Growing up, she was an avid observer of the seasons, crop rotations and atmospheric conditions. But it wasn't until she came back from school that she realized the vast beauty of the Midwest.

Even though she has lived in Scottsdale for the past several years, her work, even when about local landscapes, has a "wide open spaces" feel. Her work has been described as snapshots from a car window passing through the endless mid-western prairies. But her works are not photographs, they are indeed pastel drawings. It isn't a medium that has a reputation for sharp detail, but somehow, Wagener makes it work for her.

In much of her work, the sky is just as important as the land. Her signature pastels present landscapes often taken for granted: cultivated farmland, flower gardens, summer monsoons, unusual sunsets and cloud formations. It is not uncommon to find Wagener during the early hours of the day, exploring the outskirts of the city

such as rural cotton fields bathed in the soft light of dawn. "I stop in nowhere places," she said. "I can find interest in anything."

She also does not base her work on photographic images. "It's not that I'm sitting in front of it and I want to faithfully copy every detail that I think I've seen in front of me. Never happens that way," she elaborates. "Instead, it's a composite of the memories and feelings that you had in the experience."

[www.lucidplanet.com/iwa/ArtistPages/wagenere.htm](http://www.lucidplanet.com/iwa/ArtistPages/wagenere.htm)

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**Anna Youngers, Sioux Falls, S.D.**



Anna Youngers may be the youngest artist in the exhibition (early 20s), but she is by no means inexperienced. She has already worked as an apprentice in the Pantura Studios Atelier program in South Dakota, learning painting and drawing methods used by artists of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. She also is the recipient of several scholarships including the South Dakota Emerging Artist Grant, the Scottsdale Artist's School Tuition Scholarship and the Swedish Academy of Realist Art Tuition Scholarship. The Atelier Stockholm is devoted to preserving and promoting traditional humanistic values, technical skills and craftsmanship for artists working in realism. Students can trace their training in a direct and unbroken line of descent from their instructors as far back as Da Vinci, Botticelli, David, Ingres and Gerome.

Youngers continues to study and paint in the realistic style and with a variety of subjects including still life and portraiture. Her new work created for the exhibition shows a little bit of everything from traditional trompe l'oeil to realism. Her subjects always reveal her rever-

ence for tradition by capturing familiar images from art history such as the bird, scraps of notes and string pegged to a board and the simple still life of bread and cheese. But the work isn't old fashion or stale, Youngers makes the work her own; it is lively, beautiful and contemporary.

"I see my art as a pilgrimage of sorts, where I will learn to develop my own vision in relationship to the world around me. I'd like my work to capture the beauty of the reality that we experience day to day – whether that is the beauty in the simple objects in my still life, the elegant bone structure or elusive expression of a person, or the light, color and feeling of a landscape."

[www.annayoungers.com](http://www.annayoungers.com)