

LeSueur County Historical Society

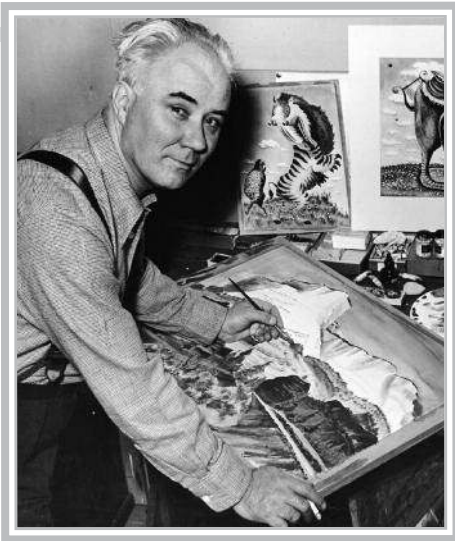
Adolf Dehn Art Collection

Email: info@lesueurcountyhistory.org
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The LeSueur County Historical Society in Elysian, MN holds one of the largest repositories of famed artist Adolf Dehn's life work. From lithograph prints, to drawings and lively watercolor paintings the collection shows the evolution of the artist's beginning work in his early days in Waterville, to New York, Europe and to the last phase of his work as an accomplished professional. The Dehn Collection tells the artistic heritage of the county and also outlines the many contributions he made to shaping and defining several categories of American art history.

In addition to a wide array of Dehn's work, the collection has grown to include works from other noteworthy southern MN artists, Albert Christ-Janer, David Maass, Lloyd Herfindahl, and Roger Preuss - all standouts in their chosen genres.

Adolf Dehn and the above four artists will all be featured in the upcoming LCHS Traveling Art Exhibit. Watch for more details about the traveling art exhibit at www.lesueurcountyhistory.org.



of the social scene, especially in Vienna and Berlin, and a light-hearted painter of park scenes and landscapes. In 1930, after his return from Europe, his work, on both European and New York subjects, was shown in New York City. In the mid-1930s, Dehn began to paint watercolor landscapes, which proved immensely popular. As a result, new commercial opportunities opened, including travels through the U.S., Mexico, and Venezuela. His fame led to offers to teach and work for the Navy during WWII.

Throughout the forties, fifties, and sixties, Dehn and his wife traveled around the world, doing commercial work and lithography. His work became less satirical and more fanciful, and he experimented with new graphic techniques. He died of a heart attack in 1968 while planning new trips, beginning a book, and organizing a retrospective exhibit.



"Autumn in Central Park" Watercolor 1950s
 Dehn was masterful at capturing the essence of landscapes, whether they were in New York's Central Park (above) or Minnesota farm scenes, below.

ADOLF DEHN (1895-1968)

Stone Lithographer Watercolorist

Dehn was a master lithographer and painter, known for his satirical images.

As a young artist, Dehn concentrated on printmaking and created over 600 lithographs before 1936; afterwards, he turned increasingly to watercolor. He authored three books on lithography and watercolor painting.

Dehn's satirical prints of European and New York scenes were the product of an unconventional Minnesota upbringing. The son of a feminist, socialist mother and an atheist, anarchist father, he was not destined for a quiet life. He studied at the Minneapolis Art Institute and the Art Students League in New York, after which he was imprisoned as a conscientious objector during World War I. On his release Dehn took odd jobs and made his way to Europe, where his work as a magazine illustrator supported him and his Russian immigrant wife in their travels.



"Ball of Fat" Lithograph
 This example of Dehn's satirical style shows a caricature for social commentary. Dehn helped shape and define Caricature and Social Realism styles by making art that aimed to draw attention to social-political conditions of the working class. In this way it critiqued the power structures that lurked behind these conditions.



"August in Minnesota" Watercolor 1938
 A typical Dehn Minnesota farm scene - American Regionalism in style, popular in the 1930s. The style was widely appreciated for its reassuring images of the American heartland during the Great Depression.



Dehn's work contributed to and help shape and define three important American art movements: American Regionalism, Social Realism, and Caricature.

While in Europe Dehn was a critical observer

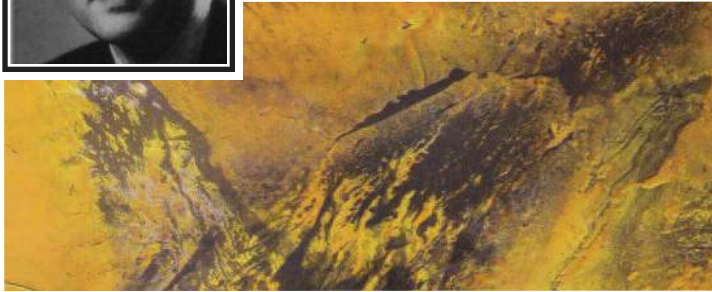
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ALBERT CHRIST-JANER
(1910-1973)
Painter, Graphic Artist, Printmaker



"Scandia Crest"

The earth, sky and the sea were sources of information and inspiration for Christ-Janer's art.

Painter, graphic artist, writer, and teacher Albert William Christ-Janer was born in Appleton, Minnesota.

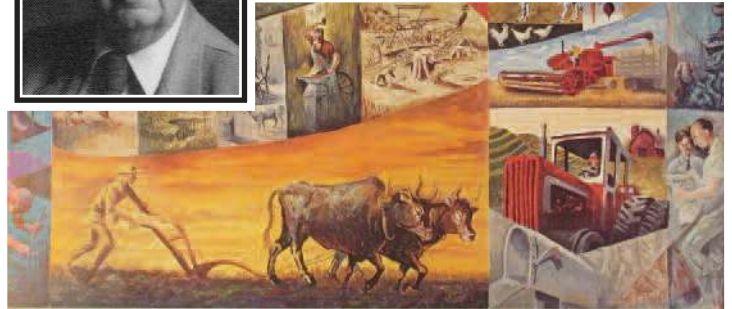
He studied at the Art Institute of Chicago, Yale University, and Harvard University. Christ-Janer wrote about American artists Boardman Robinson and John Caleb Bingham, and taught at a variety of institutions, including Stephens College, Cranbrook Academy, Pratt Institute Art School, and the University of Georgia. He was also an artist-in-residence at Tamarind Lithography Workshop in 1972.

An avid printmaker, Christ-Janer developed personal working methods that often involved a good deal of risk and uncertainty. Through his experimentations he created a range of tones and textures that deepen and enliven his abstract forms. Nature was always his starting point, and he once stated, **"The earth, sky, and the sea are my sources of information; art is my inspiration."**

Source: *National Gallery of Art*



LLOYD HERFINDAHL
(1922-1996) Oil Painter



"Homage to Agriculture"

Herfindahl was a student of Adolf Dehn and became one of the state's most famous artists.

Herfindahl was born in Emmons, MN on June 15, 1922 to Albert and Betsy Herfindahl. He attended the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and was a student of Adolf Dehn. He was the 1982 Minnesotan of the Year. Herfindahl is widely recognized as one of Minnesota's most famous artists, and the only to ever hold a one-man show at the Minnesota State Capitol in St. Paul. He has also held major exhibitions at the World's Fair, Museum of Modern Art in Paris, Kotler Gallery, Montbard, and the Brussels Museum among others. He founded the Albert Lea, MN Art Center.



ROGER PREUSS
(1922-2007)
Wildlife Artist & Writer



"The Walleye"

Preuss is known for his love of nature as expressed through painting, writings, and through conservation.

Preuss was a renowned wildlife painter, born January 29, 1922 in Waterville, MN. Among his accolades, in 1947 his depiction of Goldeneye waterfowl on Leech Lake was selected for the first Federal Duck stamp. Roger, 27 at the time, was the youngest to be so honored. Throughout his career Roger donated much of his original work to various museums including the Center for Western Studies at Augustana College in Sioux Falls, SD. He served as the chair of the National Wildlife Week for Minnesota and was active in many wildlife habitat organizations receiving many honors including being named to the Water, Woods and Wildlife Hall of Fame in 1978. Along with numerous original works, Roger also bequeathed to the MN Historical Society assets now placed in the Roger Preuss Fund for the Arts.



DAVID MAASS (Born 1929)
Wildlife Artist



"Quail Research Stamp"

This painting is an example of Maass' knowledge of conservation and wildlife art.

David Maass' career and experience as a wildlife artist spans over fifty years.

Considered to be some of the finest in the wildlife and nature artwork genre, David's diligent study and dedication to his work set his artwork apart, earning rich accolades from his peers and admiring public.

A seasoned hunter once said of David Maass' work, "That's exactly how it is and if it isn't, it should be." His inspiring images of waterfowl and game birds capture the thrill of the hunter's quest and the pure admiration for his quarry.