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THE PRAIRIE SCHOOL . STORY OF MRS. PLES
LIGHTING AND DINING IN EARLY AMERICA

Wisconsin Academy Review

A JOURNAL OF WISCONSIN CULTURE



Wisconsin Academy Review

Summer 1997



Frank Lloyd Wright, Pleasantville, New York, 1950. Copyright © 1985 Pedro E. Guerrero.

Front cover: House with Sturgeon by Joyce Koskenmaki. Oil, 50 x 40 inches, 1992.

Back cover: Cat and Bird by Joyce Koskenmaki. Crayon, 18 x 18 inches, 1991.

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The Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters was chartered by the State Legislature on March 16, 1870, as a membership organization serving the people of Wisconsin. Its mission is to encourage investigation in the sciences, arts, and letters and to disseminate information and share knowledge.



Summer has become a time when many of us at the Academy direct thoughts to Frank Lloyd Wright and his world—articles may appear in the *Review*, exhibitions may be mounted in the gallery. Readers can find a list of these past Wright events in the Inside department. This July the Academy will participate in the opening of the new Wright-designed Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison; thus it seems appropriate that Wright-related features serve as bookends for this issue.

Beginning in 1904, Frank Lloyd Wright had an intermittent but artistically successful and productive business relationship with Milwaukee designer and craftsman George M. Niedecken, whose work is represented in the permanent collection of the Milwaukee Art Museum. We are fortunate to have Virginia Jones Maher, who is particularly knowledgeable about the Prairie School and the Arts and Crafts movement, as author of our feature on Niedecken and his talents, which also extended to painted murals, art glass, and metal work.

Recently discovered fragments of an important mural by George Niedecken have been purchased and restored by Michael FitzSimmons Decorative Arts in Chicago. The mural, which was created for a Des Moines home built in 1902, was thought to have been destroyed when the house was razed in the late 1970s. This Des Moines mural pre-dated by two years the mural Niedecken created for the Wright-designed Dana house in Springfield, Illinois, and these Des Moines fragments are believed to be the last remaining early examples of this form of Prairie School decoration.

In the science department, we observe the fiftieth anniversary of the discovery of an important skull fossil known to the science world as Mrs. Ples, short for Plesianthropus. Mrs. Ples was unearthed in April 1947 in South Africa, and the story is told by John T. Robinsin, a member of the discovery team.

We continue our investigation of Early American furnishings with a photo essay on eighteenth-century silver, pewter, and brass—artifacts which endure as useful items today in Wisconsin. Again, George Parker is our guide.

Paul Revere's name has become synonymous with colonial craftsmanship. It is interesting that while there was never doubt about Revere as a silversmith, early accounts of Massachusetts

history do not mention Revere as heroic messenger. It was Longfellow, of course, who memorialized Revere as midnight rider. Revere is not mentioned at all in an 1825 history of Boston. In *History and Antiquities of Boston* by S.G. Drake (1856), there are references to Revere, but not to his legendary ride. Another early text describes him as "a middle-aged goldsmith on a stout plough horse," hardly a heroic reference to either the rider or his mount. In *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In* (Houghton Mifflin, 1942), Esther Forbes writes, "Most American heroes of the Revolutionary period are by now two men, the actual man and the romantic image." Milwaukee scholar Martin Sable sheds a bit more light on this familiar patriotic tale and introduces us to a new character.

Old friends David Kherdian and Norbert Blei, who collaborate on some projects, are appearing in this issue completely independent of each other, both with summer themes in mind. Norbert tempts us to head north with his profile of Warren Nelson, director of the Lake Superior Big Top Chautauqua near Bayfield, and David directs our thoughts to the southern part of the state with an essay on Island Park in Racine, which was designed

by Jens Jensen, as well as excerpts from a collection of poems titled *Letters to My Father*.

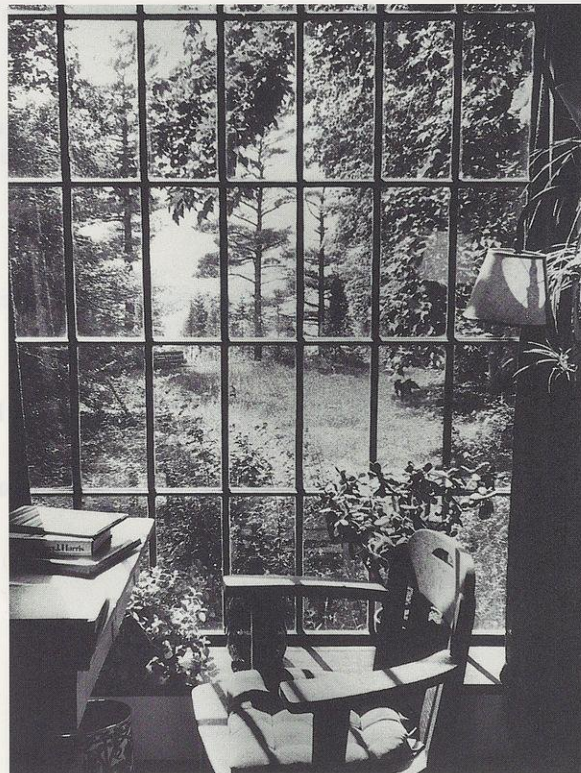
Our featured artist, Joyce Koskenmaki, lives in La Crosse, but inspiration for some of her work comes from Finland and the folk culture of that far-away northern region. The philosophy and spirituality which Koskenmaki brings to her art is interpreted for us by Beatrice Drysdale.

Poetry, reviews, and an Inside article on Monona Terrace and the exhibition of Pedro E. Guerrero photographs complete this issue.

Faith B. Miracle

Wisconsin Academy Gallery schedule

June	closed for refurbishing
July	Brett Angell, paintings
August	Deborah Hobbins, fiber



View from a window at The Clearing in Ellison Bay, designed by Jens Jensen in 1935.

CONTRIBUTORS

- ▶ Norbert Blei is an artist, teacher, publisher, and award-winning author who lives in Ellison Bay, where he operates Cross+Roads Press. He has been writer-in-residence at The Clearing for more than twenty years. His published works include sixteen books of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. His writing has appeared in such magazines as *The New Yorker*, *Kenyon Review*, and *Utne Reader* as well as major newspapers. He hosts "The Coyote Hour" radio program in Door County and is literary editor of *The Door Voice*. He recently contributed an essay to the anthology *Wisconsin's Rustic Roads*.
- ▶ Beatrice F. Drysdale is a free-lance writer for various publications, including the *La Crosse Tribune*, and staff writer for Western Wisconsin Technical College in La Crosse, where she also taught English (1989–1996). She was born in Scotland, came to the United States when she was seventeen, and received her English degree from the University of Wisconsin–La Crosse. She travels whenever possible in England, Scotland, and Ireland, where her parents now live.
- ▶ Nathalie Ketterer was born in Milwaukee, graduated from Marquette University, and studied at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. Though she now lives in Fairlawn, Ohio, she continues to use Wisconsin references in her writing. She has studied at Kent State University and taught basic writing and composition at the University of Akron. Her poems have appeared in such journals as *The Northern Reader* and *Poetry*.
- ▶ David Kherdian grew up in Racine and now lives in Spencertown, New York, where he continues to write poetry, memoirs, novels, critical studies, and children's books. His published work includes translations, and he has edited nine contemporary poetry anthologies. His numerous awards include a Newbery Honor Book, the Jane Addams Peace Award, and the Friends of American Writers Award, and he was nominated for The American Book Award. He is editor of *Forkroads: A Journal of Ethnic-American Literature*, published quarterly. His essay "Island Park" is from an unpublished memoir which will be dedicated to Jens Jensen, who designed the park in Racine; the poems are from his recently completed book *Letters to My Father*. Both books are part of his ongoing "Root River Cycle," of which ten volumes have been published to date. An hour-long documentary on his poetry was recently completed by a New York independent filmmaker.
- ▶ Joyce Koskenmaki earned her bachelor of arts degree from Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois, and her master of fine arts degree in painting from the University of Iowa. She was visiting professor of art at Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, from 1977 to 1986. Since 1987 she has been a lecturer in art and director of the art gallery at the University of Wisconsin–La Crosse. Her work has been exhibited widely throughout the United States and has been shown in Finland, China, Scotland, and Brazil.
- ▶ Virginia Jones Maher, who holds a master's degree in art history from the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, is an independent writer, lecturer, and curator. She is the author of *The Spirit of the Times: American Arts and Crafts Furniture* and numerous articles and papers on American art and architecture. She curated the 1996 exhibition *Modern Bias/Contemporary Viewpoints* at the University Art Museum, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. She is currently at work on a book about the Arts and Crafts movement in the Midwest and is an instructor in art history at Cardinal Stritch College in Milwaukee.
- ▶ David Martin's poems have recently appeared in *Sou'wester*, *Red Cedar Review*, *Seattle Review*, *Birmingham Poetry Review*, and *College English*. He lives in Wauwatosa and teaches writing and humanities courses at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design.
- ▶ George Parker is chairman and chief executive officer of the Janesville Foundation and Caxambas Associates and former chairman of the board of The Parker Pen Company and Manpower, Inc. He holds degrees from Brown University and the University of Michigan and has honorary doctor of laws degrees from Milton College and Brown University. He is a member of the Archaeological Association of America and the National Institute of Maritime Archaeology and has a special interest in Early American furnishings. He lives in Janesville and Marco Island, Florida.
- ▶ John T. Robinson is anthropology professor emeritus at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. In 1947 Robinson and a small team of colleagues in South Africa discovered a three-million-year-old fossil skull considered to be a key link in the chain of evolution. On April 18, the fiftieth anniversary of the discovery, scholars held a commemorative ceremony in Grahamstown, South Africa.
- ▶ Martin H. Sable is professor emeritus at the School of Library and Information Science at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, where he taught from 1968 to 1988. He is the author of twenty-seven reference books and fifty-five scholarly articles. In 1989 he received an international award for his work in Hispanic bibliographic research. Before coming to Wisconsin, he was on the faculty at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he created and taught a special graduate course composed of reference sources on Latin America.
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- ▶ Nadine S. St. Louis teaches English at the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire, specializing in seventeenth-century British literature and science fiction. Her poetry has previously appeared in the *Wisconsin Academy Review* as well as in *Wisconsin Poets' Calendar*, *UpRiver5*, *North Coast Review*, and other journals.

George M. Niedecken: The Search for an American Design Style

by Virginia Jones Maher

The fitness of a thing is quite as important as the design.

George Mann Niedecken, 1913

George Niedecken, Milwaukee's premier furniture designer and "interior architect" from 1903 to 1945, was committed to the search for a uniquely American design style. Perhaps best known today for his collaborative work with Frank Lloyd Wright and other prominent midwestern architects as a designer and furniture builder for Prairie School homes, Niedecken was also a leading artist and craftsman in his own right during the early years of the twentieth century.

Niedecken's philosophy of total design was based on a collaboration of the architect, interior designer, and client. To unify buildings visually and stylistically, Niedecken designed interiors featuring mural paintings, art glass, architectural woodwork, and furniture to complement the structural features and spatial plan provided by the architect.

Niedecken's designs were a synthesis of major early twentieth-century art movements. Stylistically, Niedecken was influenced by American and European sources which rejected historicism, searching instead for the new and innovative—and uniquely American—style. Through education and travel, Niedecken was exposed to the philosophy of the Arts and Crafts movement, European design styles, and the conventions of good taste. The honesty of expression in craftsmanship and materials of the Arts and Crafts movement, the simple forms, natural patterns, and organic design of the Prairie School, the



Self-portrait, George M. Niedecken, with artist's palette and brushes, ca. 1900. Courtesy Prairie Archives, Milwaukee Art Museum. Gift of Dean T. Niedecken.

softened and curvilinear lines of Art Nouveau, and the restrained and delicate geometry of the Vienna Secessionists became the underpinnings of Niedecken's overall design philosophy.



George Mann Niedecken was born August 16, 1878, in Milwaukee and showed an early interest in art. At the age of twelve he attended classes at the Wisconsin Art Institute, founded in 1888 by Milwaukee ceramic artist Susan Frackelton. There Niedecken received fundamental art training—painting and drawing from still life, models, and landscape. After the institute closed, Niedecken continued his formal training at the Milwaukee Art Students' League, which was organized in 1894 as an art school and sponsor of exhibitions and lectures.



This exhibition poster lithograph by George M. Niedecken combines Art Nouveau curves and lines with an Arts and Crafts sensibility, ca. 1900.

During 1897 and 1898 Niedecken was enrolled in the decorative design program at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago under Louis Millet. Millet was a graduate of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris and founder of the Department of Decorative Design at the Art Institute of Chicago, and head of the Chicago School of Architecture. The School of the Art Institute decorative design curriculum included courses in drawing, watercolor, oil painting, stained glass, wallpaper, rugs, book covers, and metalwork. Pure design theory emphasizing the principles of line, form, color, balance, and chiaroscuro was taught in order to avoid, as the 1897–98 *Circular of Instruction* said,

problems in specific historical or national styles . . . until the student has become acquainted with the general principles of the arrangement of design . . . the results justify the method, the designs even of the first year [students] showing much originality.

At the Art Institute Niedecken received first honors for a book cover design for Milton's *Paradise Lost*. His early sketches and drawings display an affinity for natural patterns and conventionalized motifs.



In Chicago, Niedecken was introduced to the philosophical ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement, as well as the Prairie School, America's Midwest manifestation of the international design reform movement. Both ideologies shared a respect for materials, the proper use of the machine, the role of the craftsman in society, and an aversion to commercialism. Simplicity, strength, durability, and practicality set the standards of good taste for the two schools of thought.

Prairie School architects—although rooted in basic simple forms, honest materials, and craftsmanship—embellished designs with ornamentation based on organic forms and botanical motifs. Their elongated horizontal buildings, meant to echo the long, low lines of the midwestern prairie, were embellished with architectural ornament—stylized leaves, vines, and flowers which were abstractions of nature rather than a reproduction of it.

European influences contributed significantly to Niedecken's stylistic development. During a Grand Tour of Europe between 1899 and 1902, Niedecken studied in Paris and traveled extensively in Germany, Austria, Italy, and England. Niedecken's diary, in the Prairie Archives at the Milwaukee Art Museum, records his 1899 travels through Austria and Germany.

In Vienna Niedecken conferred with Otto Wagner, a leading figure in the avant-garde Secessionist group of painters and architects who had seceded from the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts in protest of the academy's conservative leanings. Secessionists' simplification, delicacy, reserve, and geometric vertical motifs proved influential and are observed repeatedly in Niedecken's work.

At the end of September 1899 Niedecken arrived in Paris to study at the Académie Julian, a popular alternative to the École des Beaux-Arts. The Académie had an established professional relationship with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in the mid-1890s, exchanging students and examples of their work. Niedecken's teacher at the Académie, Alphonse Mucha, a successful graphic artist and designer best known for his decoration, elegant display, and highly sophisticated flowing lines, also taught at the Art Institute of Chicago from 1906 until 1911 and lectured to the Milwaukee Art Students' League in 1907 and 1908. Niedecken appropriated long curves, slender proportions, and sinuous lines from Mucha's Art Nouveau, the Belle Époque fashion craze in Paris in the late 1890s.

Niedecken's European tour culminated in 1901 and 1902 with travel to England, Switzerland, and Italy.



Armed with an avant-garde, turn-of-the-century aesthetic background, Niedecken returned to Milwaukee to concentrate on a career in modern design. A 1903 *Milwaukee Sentinel* article publicized Niedecken's credentials:

... going first to the Chicago Art Institute and then to Paris, where he studied under the famous Mucha. After exhibiting in the salon he came home last summer. A collection of his works, chiefly decorative designs and conventionalized nature studies in water colors, was shown at Bresler's (Art Gallery) last fall.

From 1903 to 1909 Niedecken delivered lectures on Arts and Crafts and taught decorative design courses for architects, designers, and decorators at the Milwaukee Art Students' League. Translating theory into practice, Niedecken began taking commissions initially for mural paintings and soon expanded into custom furniture and interior design services. Inspired by the art and design theories he acquired in Chicago and Europe, Niedecken rejected historical and traditional styles of past centuries because he believed "reproducing things from a different time and place with wholly different social conditions from the present ... do not fit the structure nor are they in harmony with the individuals who live there" (Niedecken, p. 42).

Utilizing thoroughly modern twentieth-century ideas, materials, and production techniques, Niedecken began working closely with Frank Lloyd Wright and other Prairie architects: William Purcell, George Elmslie, Percy D. Bentley, Spencer and Powers, Tallmudge and Watson, and William Drummond. In 1904 Niedecken painted a dining room landscape mural for Wright's Dana house in Springfield, Illinois.

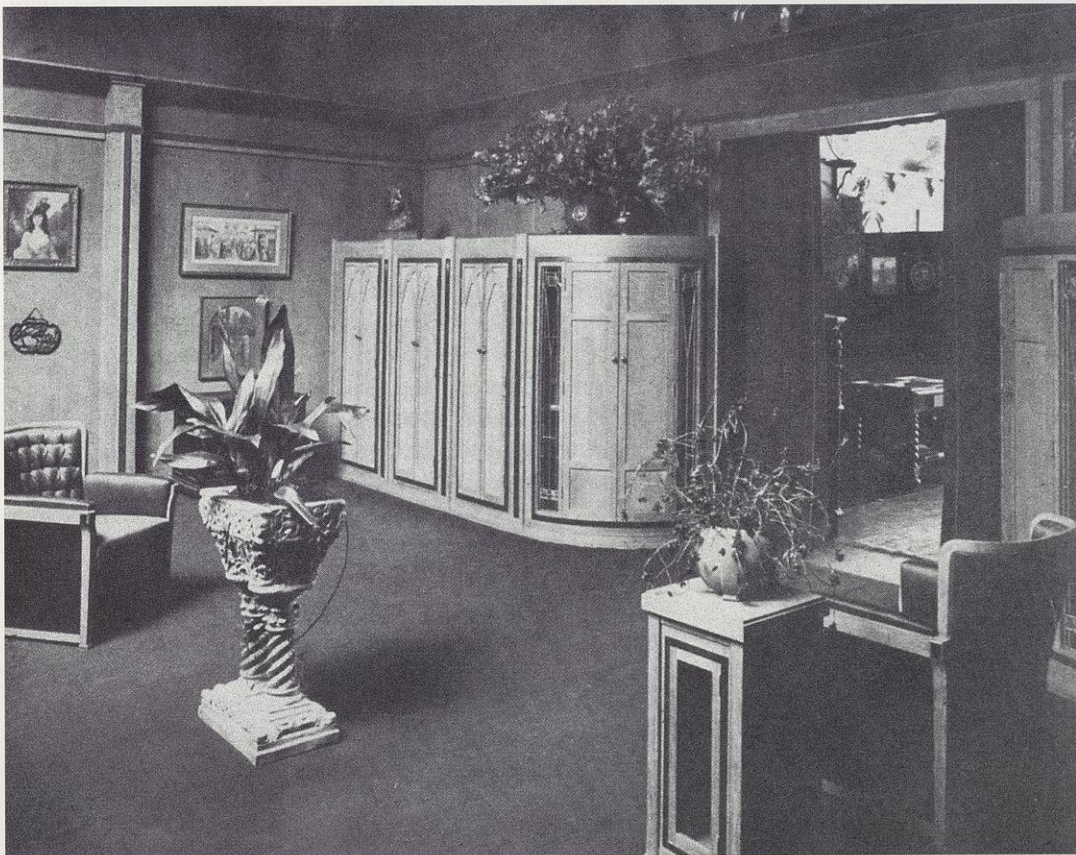
Much of the custom furniture that went into Wright's Prairie houses was made by the Niedecken-Walbridge Company of Milwaukee, a firm formed in 1907 when Niedecken incorporated with John Walbridge, his brother-in-law. The firm specialized in "furniture, decoration, fabrics, tapestries, rugs, lamps, lighting fixtures, interior and exterior finishings, and all other articles for interior and exterior decoration and ornamentation" (Articles of Organization).

The firm made working drawings from architect's designs, produced renderings for client presentations, persuaded clients on concepts and products, and supervised the manufacture and installation of furnishings. Niedecken was the firm's chief designer until his death in 1945, and Walbridge was the business manager. The firm's 1907 letterhead and later advertisements in the *Western Architect* magazine listed the firm's business as "interior architecture," reflecting Niedecken's professional philosophy of a unified environment resulting

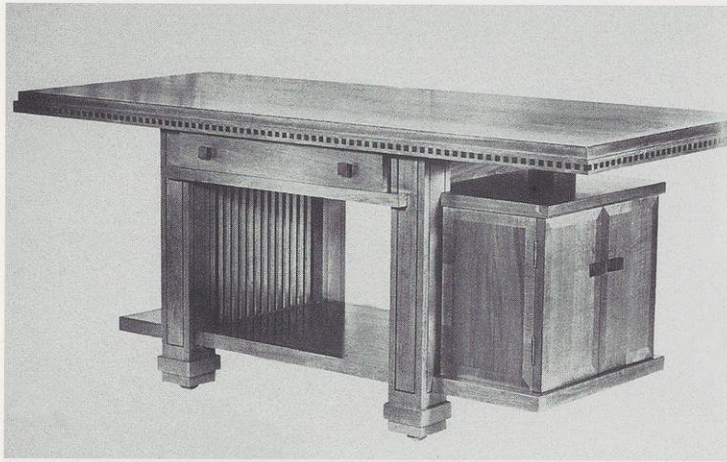
from the collaboration of architect and interior designer.

The Niedecken-Walbridge furniture factory established an in-house cabinetmaking shop in 1910 and by the year 1913, the factory employed twenty-five artisans. The company was well known throughout the Midwest for its custom art glass, draperies, furniture designs, lighting fixtures, and murals painted for Prairie-style homes.

Stylistically, Niedecken interiors exhibited his love of Art Nouveau—natural patterns and organic designs. Gently curving lines enhanced the beauty of clean finishes and natural grain patterns. Draperies were omitted and replaced with art glass. Built-in furniture and cabinetry emphasized craftsmanship and natural materials. Although



Bresler Art Gallery, Milwaukee, interior by George M. Niedecken, ca. 1904.



ABOVE: Bogk library table by George M. Niedecken is embellished with decorative squares, black string inlay, and firmly anchored squared feet, ca. 1917.



RIGHT: Horizontal Prairie School lines are interrupted and softened by the addition of vertical leaded glass doors in the Niedecken-Walbridge Company sideboard, created for the Ettenheim residence in Milwaukee, ca. 1909.

BELOW: Reception room in the Adam J. Mayer residence. Woodland mural and furnishings by George M. Niedecken, ca. 1908. Courtesy Milwaukee Art Museum. Private collection.



Niedecken's designs parallel Arts and Crafts and Prairie monumental simplified forms, solid construction, thorough craftsmanship, and elongated horizontal lines, Niedecken's designs are generally softer and more refined with exquisite decorative inlays and elegant proportions.

A sideboard built for the Ettenheim home 1909 in Milwaukee, although massive and geometric, has been tem-

pered by the addition of lovely decorative leaded glass doors which protect, and, at the same time, reveal the contents of the cabinet. The long, low horizontal Prairie School lines have been dissected visually by vertical elements in Niedecken's sideboard, resulting in a piece which does not appear weighty or anchored. The library table Niedecken designed in 1917 for Frank Lloyd Wright's Bogk House in Milwaukee is embellished with decorative squares along the edges of the table top, and black string inlay which emphasizes the verticality of the legs and squared feet.



Throughout his long and notable career, George Mann Niedecken effectively merged theory and practice. Working closely with both architects and clients, Niedecken designed interiors compatible with the building's structure and appropriate to its resident's lifestyle and needs. His clients were predominantly conservative Milwaukeeans of German ancestry. Although usually supportive of the Milwaukee arts community, they

sometimes rejected avant-garde design in favor of more traditional styles.

To Niedecken the fitness to the architectural whole was the determining factor in design. Niedecken's custom-made furniture reflected his search for a progressive and uniquely American design style. He also was capable of integrating a

wide range of styles throughout his career as artist, craftsman, furniture designer, and interior architect in order to better coordinate the design of a building and its interior furnishings into a unified harmonious environment—the essence of good taste.

The Adam J. Mayer House: A Harmony of Total Design

The Adam J. Mayer house, an English Arts and Crafts style home overlooking Lake Michigan on Milwaukee's east side, was designed by architect Henry G. Lotter in 1904 and decorated by George Niedecken in 1907. The architect's written specifications for the house establish that only the very best and highest quality materials were to be used. Constructed for Adam Mayer, owner of Mayer Shoe and Boot Company in Milwaukee, the house cost \$37,500. Mayer then spent a third of that amount to furnish it; furnishings worth more than \$13,000 were listed in the 1908 inventory.

The museum quality interior of this historic home is ornamented with elegant stained and leaded glass windows, exquisite architectural details, and some original furnishings which still can be seen today. Most of the other Niedecken-designed furnishings are in the collection of the Milwaukee Art Museum.



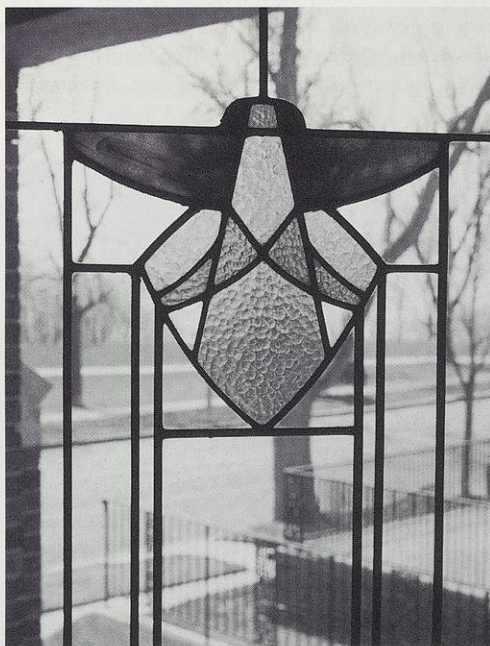
Niedecken established the design theme for the home in a light and airy first floor reception room. Niedecken painted *Woodland Birches*, a mural laying the foundation for the home's earth-toned color scheme: browns, tans, green, orange, ocher, and yellow over a tan Roman brick fireplace in the reception room. The reception room also sets the organic design motif for the home—stylized frogs, bees, and birds which are found throughout the house.

Curly-birch furniture and woodwork are accented by green-glazed Teco art pottery and an area rug bordered with orange, brown, and green concentric circles, squares, and wing-like arcs. Light-toned baseboards, chair rails, and ceiling moldings outline the golden brown and green walls.

The room is lighted naturally by a bay of windows which are ornamented with stained-glass circles and rectangles representing frogs on the lower sash and flying bees on the upper portion. There are also windows on either side of the fireplace and ten yellow and green back-lighted leaded glass skylights which are enriched with graceful Art Nouveau curvilinear patterns and carry out the sash windows' bee motif.



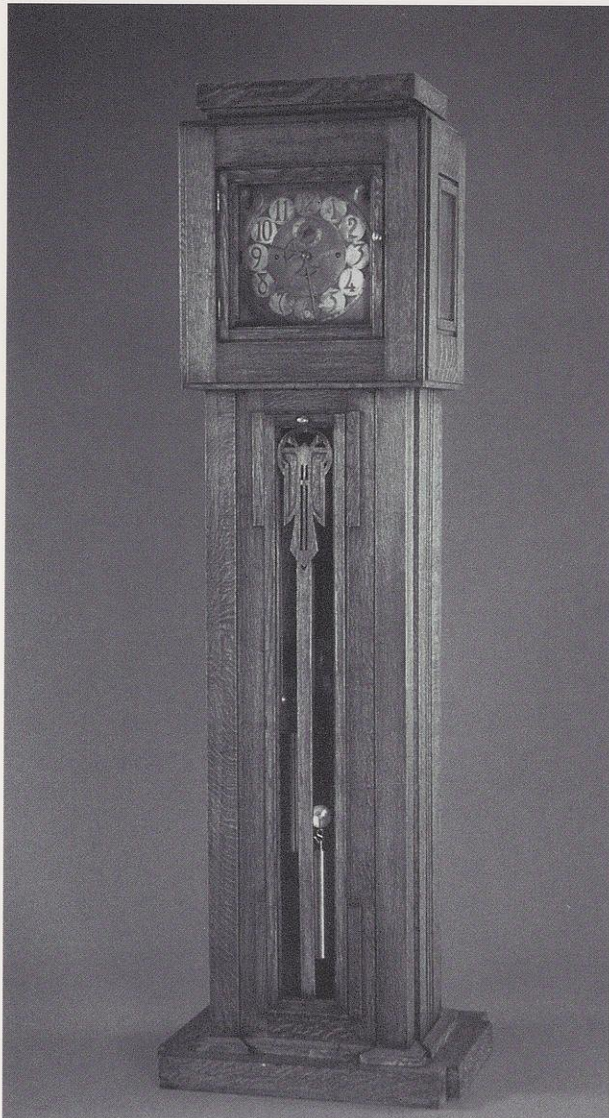
ABOVE : Dining table and chairs designed for the Adam J. Mayer residence highlights the natural beauty of the oak grains and rich colors of the wood, ca. 1907. Courtesy Milwaukee Art Museum.



LEFT: Niedecken's stylized flying bee, stained glass window, Adam J. Mayer residence, ca. 1907.

Originally the reception room had a "male" chair with six flat spindled sides, a "female" chair with three spindles, and Niedecken's custom-designed, geometric, and highly angular birch curio cabinet. The reception room, designed to be a room in which the Mayer family received visitors, was also a show-place for Niedecken to display his total design philosophy.

The wood in the remainder of the first floor is dark, ammonia-fumed oak. The library is lined with built-in bookshelves and has a beamed ceiling. Windows in the library repeat the frog and bee motif found in the reception room. The hall staircase displays Niedecken's distinctive tapered flat spindles and beveled moldings.



Six-foot-high ammonia-fumed oak wainscoting, a plate rail, and beamed ceiling transform the dining room into a warm, and intimate space which is softly lit by the glow of fourteen narrow back-lighted, amber-colored art glass panels in the ceiling. A bay of leaded glass windows decorated with stylized stained glass birds and a frog-patterned rug carry out the nature theme. Niedecken designed a dining table, chairs, and built-in china cabinet for the room. The solid broad surface of the dining table highlights the natural beauty of the wood. In keeping with the Arts and Crafts natural use of materials, Niedecken's wood furniture was seldom stained, painted, or varnished. It was usually waxed to protect the wood and retain its tactile beauty.

Niedecken applied raised decorative moldings vertically and horizontally to the table legs in order to create visual patterns and texture. Like the Vienna Secessionists, Niedecken used horizontal bars to connect the table legs for a stable and firm footing. The Mayer dining chairs have cut-out rectangular chair backs, gently curved crest rails, and trapezoid-shaped seats. Rather than strict right-angle rectilinearity, the back of the dining chairs meet the seats at a more comfortable angle so that the proportions of the chairs closely match those of the users. Both seats and backs were upholstered for added comfort.

The strong vertical lines in the tall clock case Niedecken designed for the Mayer House hall create a visual pattern contrasting with the clock's square face. Curvilinear pierced work on the door softens and counterbalances the otherwise simplified and reductive design of Niedecken's clock. ❧

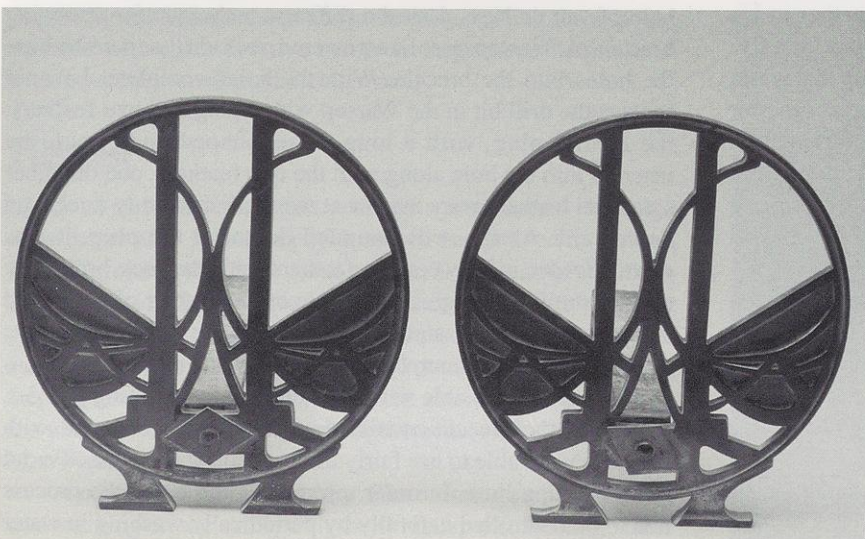
Photos courtesy the author.

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4. Articles of Organization, September 12, 1907. The Niedecken-Walbridge Company. Madison: Department of State, state of Wisconsin, filed September 13, 1907.



ABOVE: Strong vertical lines in Niedecken's tall case clock, designed in 1907 for the Mayer residence hall, create a visual contrast with the clock's square face. The restrained and delicate Vienna Secessionist-influenced geometry is balanced by a curvilinear pierced design on the door. Courtesy Milwaukee Art Museum.

BELOW: Cast brass andirons for reception room, Adam J. Mayer residence, designed by Niedecken, ca. 1910.



Discovery of the “Mrs. Ples” Skull Specimen

by John T. Robinson

*I*t was on a warm, sunny mid-day when the simple act of turning over a block of bone-bearing rock gave us the first sight of the underside of a skull cap and some of the lower piece of the skull in the breccia, the lime-solidified mass of former cave earth below. The discovery involved an almost complete and essentially undistorted skull of an australopithecine, an extinct southern African hominid with near-human arrangement of teeth and a rather small brain, known as Plesianthropus. We identified the specimen as Skull 5; it came to be known as Mrs. Ples. It was a dramatic moment.

The Discovery

Three sites important to anthropologists lie in an approximately straight line along the very shallow upper end of a valley near Krugersdorp, about an hour by car from Pretoria in South Africa. They are known as Swartkrans (black cliff), Sterkfontein (strong fountain), and Kromdraai (crooked curve).

The portions of skull known as Mrs. Ples came from Sterkfontein and were discovered on April 18, 1947, by a team of five. Four members of the team were from the Transvaal Museum of Pretoria: Robert Broom, then eighty years old; myself, then twenty-six years old; and two African men from the paleontology department of the museum, Daniel Maseko and Absolom Lebelo. A fifth member of the party was a local ex-mining man named Jan van de Ness, who was in charge of the quarrying to remove the solid breccia.

When the skull cap became visible, we all crouched around Broom as he pored over the specimen, excitedly giving us his first impressions. Broom was dressed as usual, whether in his office or in the field, in a gray suit and a white shirt with a fly-away collar, except that he had taken off his jacket on that warm day. He immediately began making plans to get a press reporter and photographer on the scene as soon as possible. I drove him to the nearest farm house, where he telephoned one of the Johannesburg newspapers—*The Rand Daily Mail*, if I remember correctly. Meantime, we left the breccia blocks as they had been.

Johannesburg is approximately forty kilometers from Sterkfontein, and the press were soon on the scene. Broom gave them a graphic account of the find, and the photographer shot everything in sight. It is fair to say that it was an exciting day, and much later than usual I drove the elderly Broom back to the museum.

I used to take Broom to the site every Monday and Friday, and we brought breccia pieces showing specimens back with us

to the museum. During the rest of the week I was kept busy preparing specimens we had found, especially Mrs. Ples. I used hammer and chisels of various sorts for the task, and it took a long time and careful work to get Mrs. Ples free. The inside surface of the skull cap had a layer of fine calcite crystals covering it, but the rest of the area that had held the brain was free of breccia. The outside of the skull, however, was firmly encased in limestone breccia, and it was this which required a great deal of time to remove.

The Process

The removal of specimens from the discovery site was accomplished by drilling holes into the limestone using heavy hammers and long-handled chisels. Van de Ness would then insert charges of blasting powder sufficient to break out large pieces of breccia without great fragmentation.

Some years later, after the death of Broom and without the help of van de Ness, I used a different technique for removing breccia. A Warsop gasoline-powered rock drill served to bore the holes into the breccia. With the holes complete, I would replace the drill bit in the Warsop with a plug and two feathers; the central plug, with a long chisel-shaped end, would be inserted into the hole along with the two feathers, one on either side. The feathers were narrow at the top but steadily thickened downward. As the drill pounded down on the plug, it was driven deeper in between the feathers until the rock broke. By driving the plug progressively deeper in a series of holes and shifting the drill repeatedly from one hole to another, sections of breccia could be removed more rapidly and much more accurately than was possible with hand drilling and blasting powder.

Since the breccia consisted of cave earth cemented with lime, we were able to use fairly dilute acetic acid to dissolve out the cementing lime. In order to preserve the bone, the process had to be controlled carefully by periodically washing in water



ABOVE: John T. Robinson (left) and Scottish paleontologist Robert Broom in April 1947, when the fossil which came to be known as "Mrs. Ples" was discovered.

RIGHT: Mrs. Ples still attached to some of the breccia.

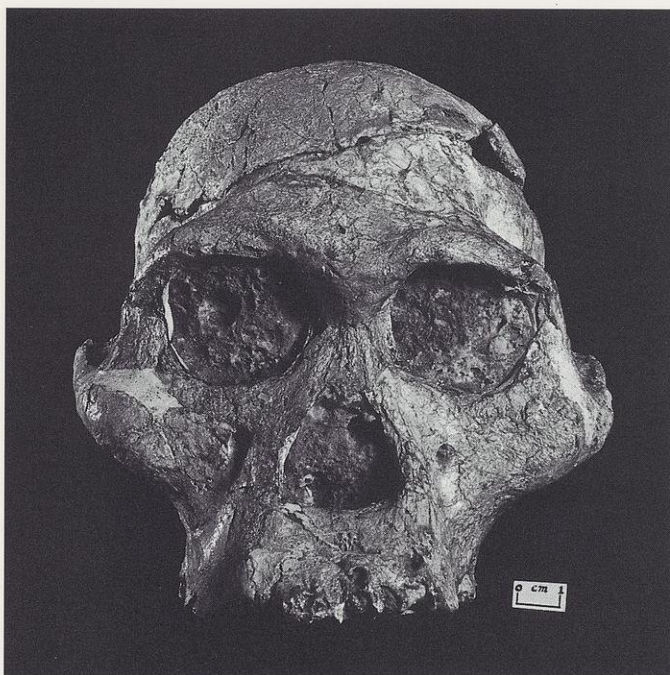
the specimens being treated and, when dry, coating the exposed portions with a preservative before re-immersing them in acid to remove the remaining breccia matrix.

The Cast

Molds of Mrs. Ples were first made by a man named Heuritsch a few years after Broom died. Heuritsch had arrived in Pretoria from Germany and had come to the Transvaal Museum in search of a job. He had worked in a museum in Europe doing graphics and making casts; and the museum director, Vivian FitzSimons, sent him to me, as I was then head of the Department of Paleontology. He was given the responsibility for making some casts of some specimens, including Skull 5, Mrs. Ples.

A number of years later, Mrs. Ples suffered some damage. I was working on the skull, with the skull cap off, at a large table





Mrs. Ples, front view and side view.

next to my desk. One day when I returned to my office after being gone for a short while, I noticed that something unfortunate had happened. My drawing board T-square, which had been standing upright on its short side on top of some bookshelves against the wall behind the table, had fallen forward off the shelving right onto the brow region of the skull. While the brow region itself was not injured, the narrow section of thin bone on the skull's right side was broken into very small pieces so that it could not be glued back together. I was, of course, very distressed.

I recalled the mold Heuritsch had made a few years previously; and with the help of the technician who was then doing the casting for the museum, we put the mold on the skull and cast in plaster the missing piece, making an exact replica of what had been destroyed. To indicate that the original had been there, I painted the plaster piece to match the rest of the skull. The preservative fluids that had been used on the skull had turned the bone a pinkish color, and there were small random dark spots. I was able to reproduce all of this so that the appearance of the missing piece of bone looked very much as it originally had, and the skull now resembled what it had been prior to the accident.

The specimen was in this condition some years later when the Wenner-Gren Foundation of New York began their program to prepare casts of a large number of significant fossil specimens in various parts of the world, and among those they wished to use from the ones in my care was Skull 5, Mrs. Ples. When I received an example of the cast of the specimen, the small piece that had been repaired appeared in white on the

cast revealing the replaced piece as being plaster, not part of the original specimen. This whole matter is unfortunate, since the small section which was damaged was in fact present when the skull was found. It does not, however, diminish the magnificence of the specimen or alter the excitement of our team of five on that memorable day of discovery. Photos appearing in *Transvaal Museum Memoir No. 4* published in 1950 show this part of the specimen intact, as it was when originally found.



In later years, with a much larger collection of australopithecines known, *Plesianthropus transvaalensis* was sunk into *Australopithecus africanus*, which represents the more slender form of australopithecine. The other type known at the time was a taller and more robust form with a proportionately smaller skull. The larger muscles of this robust form, with no forehead, resulted in substantial crests somewhat like those seen in gorillas.

Both the slender and robust forms occurred over quite a large section of northeastern South Africa, extending farther north into Kenya and a little farther northeast into Somalia. Substantial collections of specimens of both forms have come from the three South African sites in the shallow valley near Pretoria. But the skull of Mrs. Ples is the most complete and undistorted specimen known. ■

Photos courtesy Department of Zoology, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Lighting and Dining in the Eighteenth Century: Silver, Pewter, Brass, and Bronze

by George Parker

This is the second of three articles on eighteenth-century American decorative arts in Wisconsin collections. The first article dealt with furniture, and the third will cover portrait painting of that period. This essay concentrates on items made of silver, pewter, and copper-based alloys such as brass that were used in households and public buildings two hundred years ago, mainly for lighting fixtures, dinner services, and fireplace tools.

During the colonial period virtually all of the finished products made of silver, pewter, and brass were imported into the New World from the Old. Copper was mined in America during this period, but British business interests mandated that the raw metal be shipped to England to be manufactured into finished products, which were then exported back to the colonies. For this reason, copper-based and pewter products made in the colonies before the Revolutionary War were scarce and often difficult to identify.

Silver is a different story due to the rigid hallmark system that existed then and still exists in England today. The bulk of silver products used in the colonies came from England. There were local silversmiths in places like Boston, New York, Newport, and Philadelphia, and they were invariably people of importance in their respective communities. This was, in part, because of their ability to convert silver household items into bullion and vice versa, and also because the owners of these valuable items trusted them to do so. There was a chronic shortage of coinage in America throughout the eighteenth century, and silver bullion was important in facilitating financial transactions.

Silver was the choice of wealthy families for household use. Not only were the items made from silver useful, but they also represented a store of value for the owner in the case of need. The British system of hallmarking, which not only identified the maker of the piece, the place where it was made, and the date when it was made, most importantly denoted the amount of pure silver contained in the item. Most items were 92.5 percent silver except, for Britannia Standard, which was made from 1697 to 1720 and had a higher silver count—usually 97 percent parts fine.

American hallmarking during this period was usually confined to the maker's name, and the amount of silver content var-



A London silversmith shop, 1707.

ied greatly from item to item. This may account for much of the popularity of British silver here. British hallmarking warranted then, as it does now, a known, proven percentage of bullion contained in each piece. It is no accident that the weight of the piece is usually hand-marked on the base of each item and is termed "scratchweight."

What has survived of colonial silver was virtually all manufactured north of Chesapeake Bay. Southern silver from this period is almost nonexistent because of the meltdown that occurred during

the Civil War. The accompanying photographs show items that were made in England, and colonial silversmiths followed English patterns. Boston was the first center, but the craft slowly spread to the other major northern urban centers. In 1652 John Hull established a mint where the first locally made coinage, the Pine Tree Shilling, was produced.

The most famous name in early colonial silversmithing was Revere—both father and son. Originally French Huguenots—Paul Revere is the anglicized version of Apollos Rivoire—Paul Revere, Sr., emigrated to this country as a child, entering Massachusetts Bay either late in 1715 or early in 1716. Paul Revere, the younger, is best known for his ride warning locals of the coming of British soldiers, but he is also indisputably the preeminent name in colonial silversmithing. John Singleton



ABOVE: Commonwealth silver beaker with arabesque engraving. This was the most common form of precious-metal drinking cup throughout the colonial period. 1658.

BELOW: Charles II silver tankard used for beer, or occasionally wine. If the lid is absent, then a tankard becomes a cann. Marked "E.L" and made in 1680.



Copley's portrait of him, exhibited last year the Milwaukee Art Museum, is considered one of that artist's greatest masterpieces.



Pewter is often referred to as the poor man's silver and is an alloy of tin and lead. Pewter items closely followed silver designs and were highly polished to resemble silver. The characteristic dull grey color we associate with pewter today would be considered sloppy housekeeping two hundred years ago. But even pewter was too expensive for the average household which had, at most, only a few pieces, mostly tankards, goblets, and serving plates. It is safe to say that whatever was made in silver was duplicated in pewter, although the designs were generally simplified. Woodenware and inexpensive, but sturdy, pottery were the materials of choice for the tables of the average household.

Finished products made of brass, an alloy of copper and zinc, and bronze, an alloy of copper and tin, were used extensively in the early colonies. Buttons, bells, gun barrels, furniture, buckles, hinges, door knockers, weights and balances, drawer pulls, andirons, and other fireplace tools all were made from copper-alloyed metals. Items illustrated here were for household use, primarily lighting fixtures and fireplace tools. Brass is softer than bronze and is more easily worked. Bronze lends itself better to casting and found a major use in bells and other items where precision casting was required. Wherever metal was needed, brass and, secondarily, bronze were the materials of choice. If greater strength and durability were required, then iron-based products were employed.

These items combine both beauty and utility. Unless otherwise indicated, the silver pieces shown here were made in London and, as was customary with English silver, the dates are precise. Late eighteenth-century pewter and brass articles are difficult to date, so less information is given on these items and dates are estimated. All the pieces illustrated here exist in Wisconsin collections and are in use today.



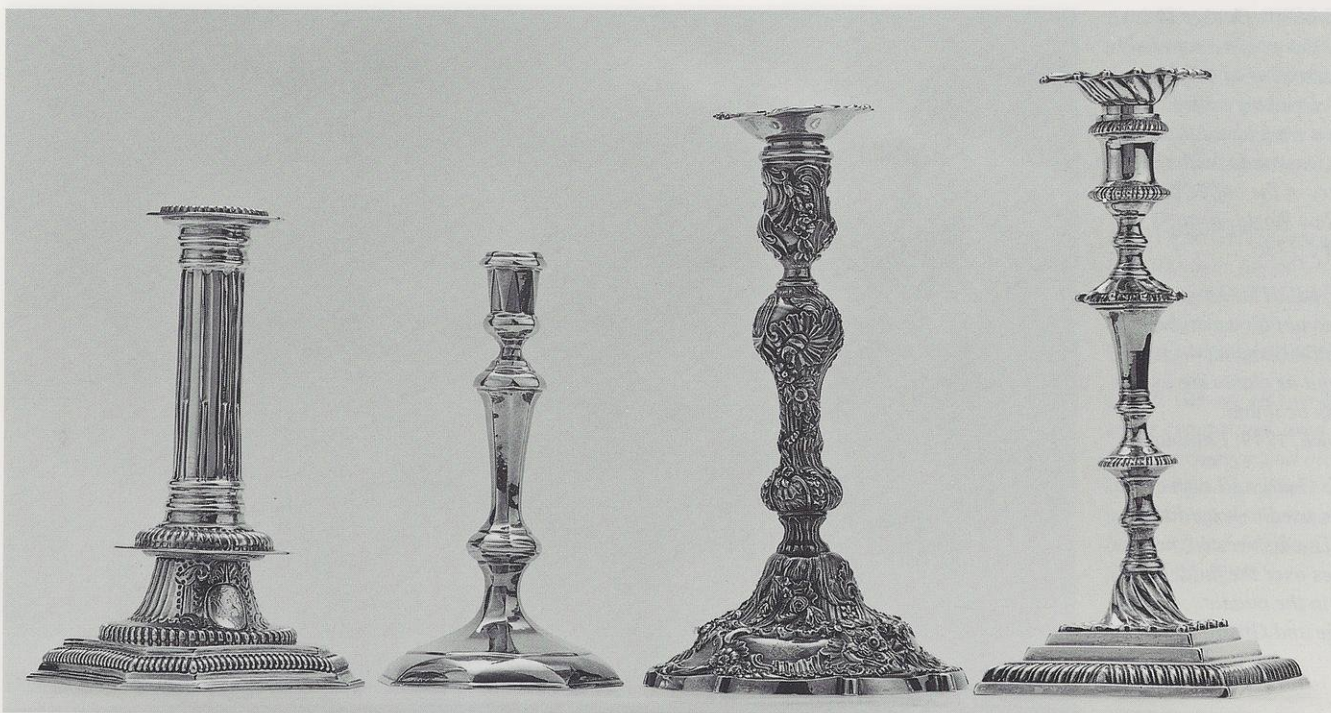
Charles II silver cup and cover engraved with leaf motifs with a pineapple knob (knob) or handle, signifying hospitality. Made by John Sutton in 1682 or 1683.



William III silver tankard. This represents the tankard in its most elaborate form. It is engraved with repoussé on both the body and the lid. Francis Singleton, 1697.



Octagonal George I sugar and spice silver castors. Sugar and spices were expensive during this period, hence the special dispensers. Glover Johnson, 1718.



Four silver candlesticks, each from a set of two or more. Left to right: William and Mary style by William Denny, 1703; Queen Anne style by Mettayer, 1714; George II period by Peter Archambo, 1744; George III period by Ebenezer Coker, 1764.

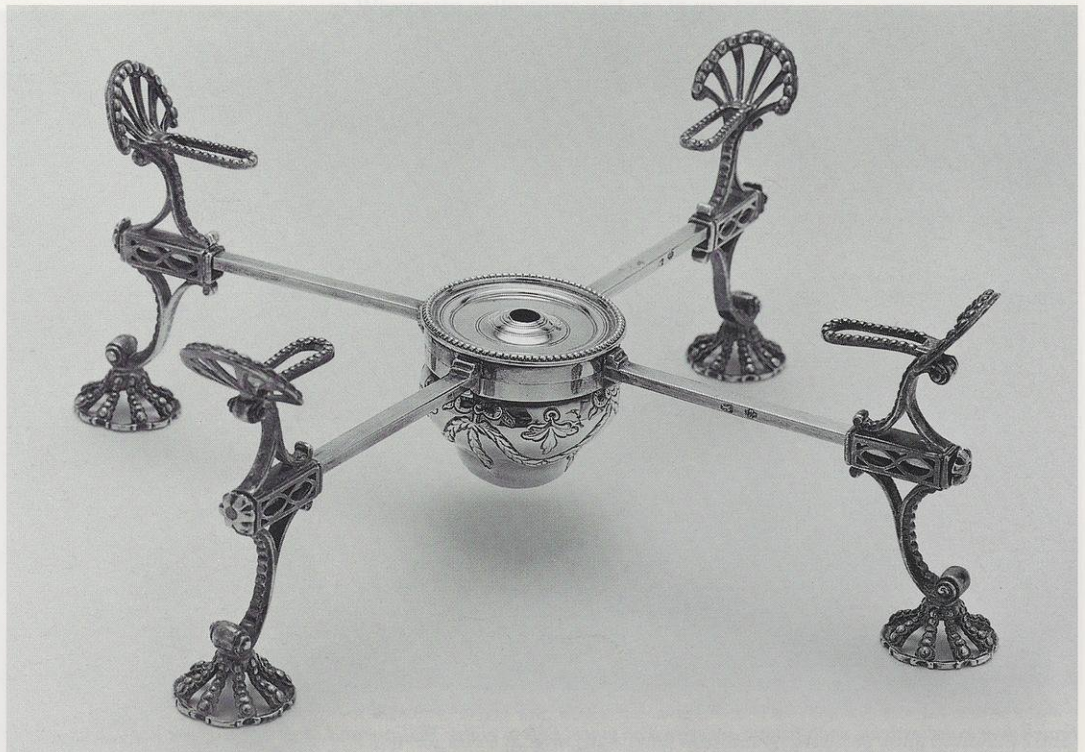


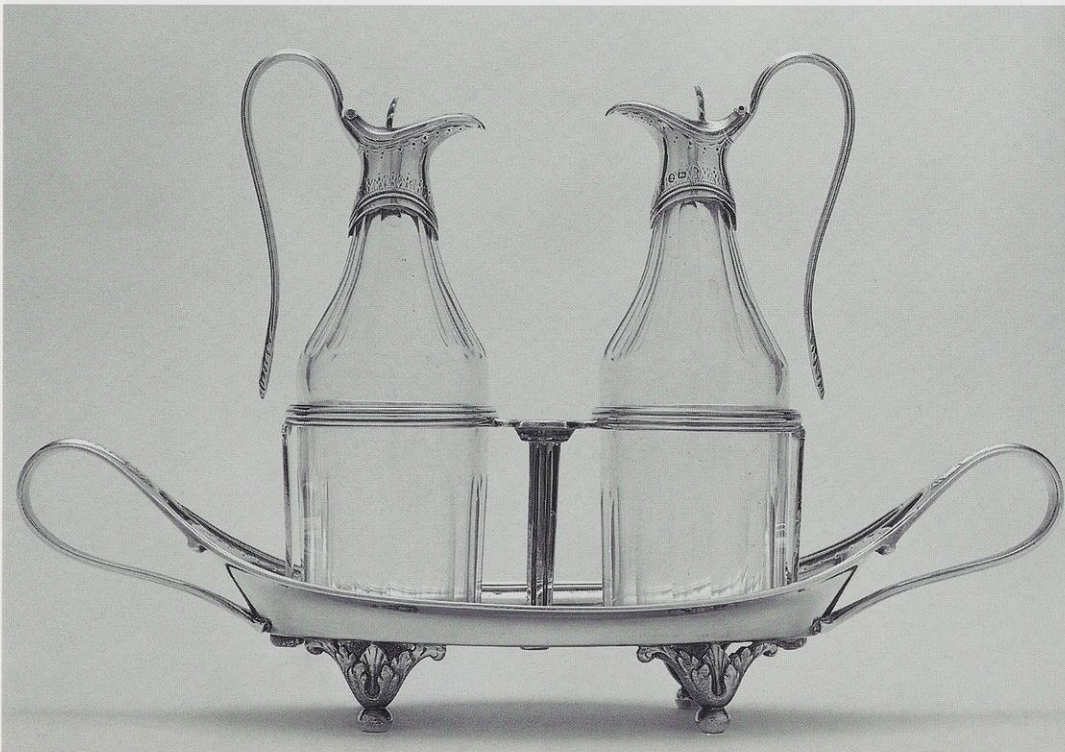
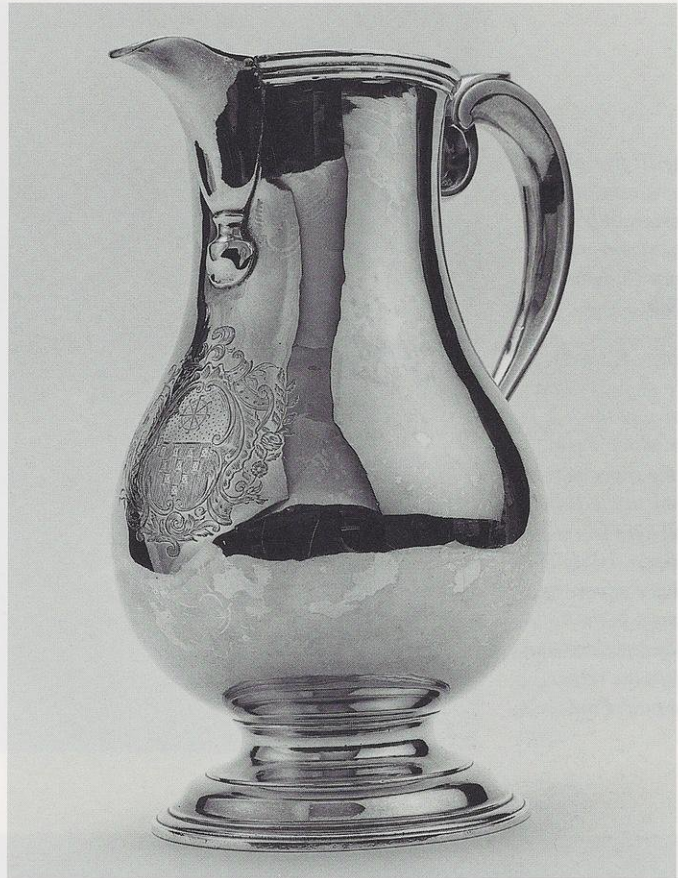
ABOVE LEFT: George II silver coffee pot in a tapered form referred to as "lighthouse." Drinking coffee became a rage about the time this pot was made, with the discovery of the coffee bean in the New World. Francis Spilsbury, 1736.



ABOVE RIGHT: George II silver tea pot on a stand and lamp, heavily rococo in style and about as elaborate as this form can be found. W. Aytown, 1749. Edinburgh.

RIGHT: George III dish cross of silver, used to keep dishes warm. The dish rested on the branches over the fluid burner in the middle. Aldridge and Green, 1772.





ABOVE LEFT: A George II silver taperstick in harlequin form. These were in the shape of miniature candlesticks and were used to melt the wax used in sealing letters. John Cafe, 1752.

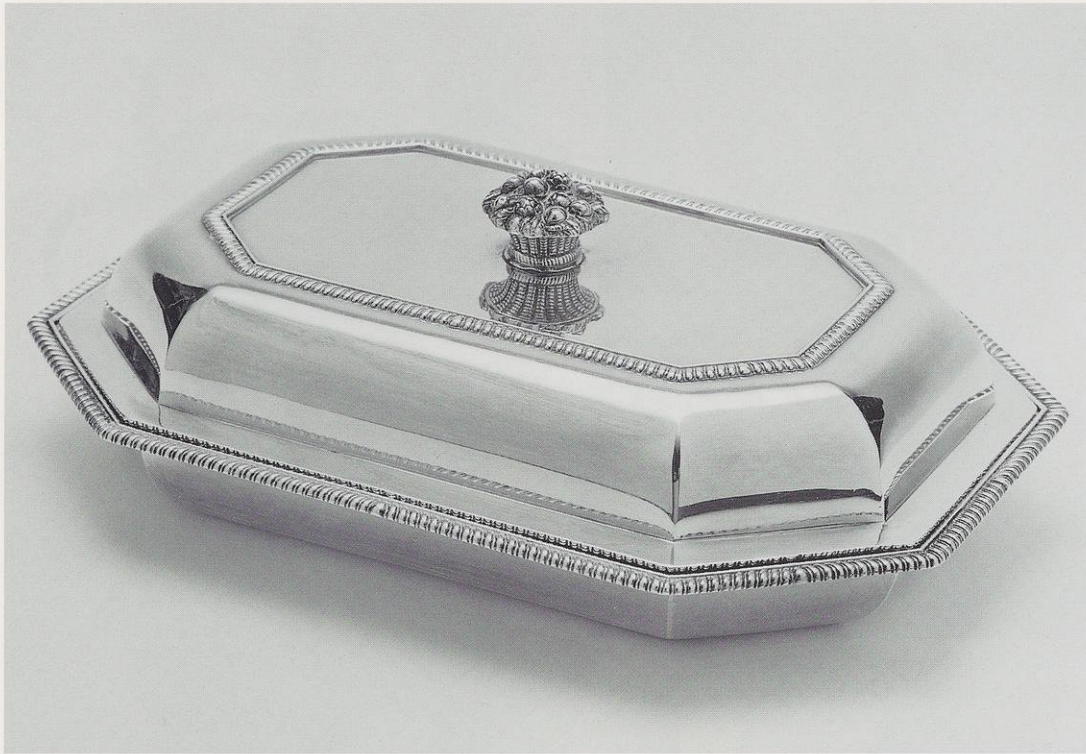
ABOVE RIGHT: George II baluster beer jug of silver. These are usually plain, with only armorials as decoration. Thomas Whipham, 1750.

LEFT: George III two-bottle silver cruet stand, used for holding vinegar and oil for salad dressings. These were popular before the advent of bottled salad dressings. John Schofield, 1788.

TOP: George III five-piece silver tea service and tray. This one consists of a tea pot, sugarer, creamer, and slop jar. Henry Chawner, 1788 and 1789.

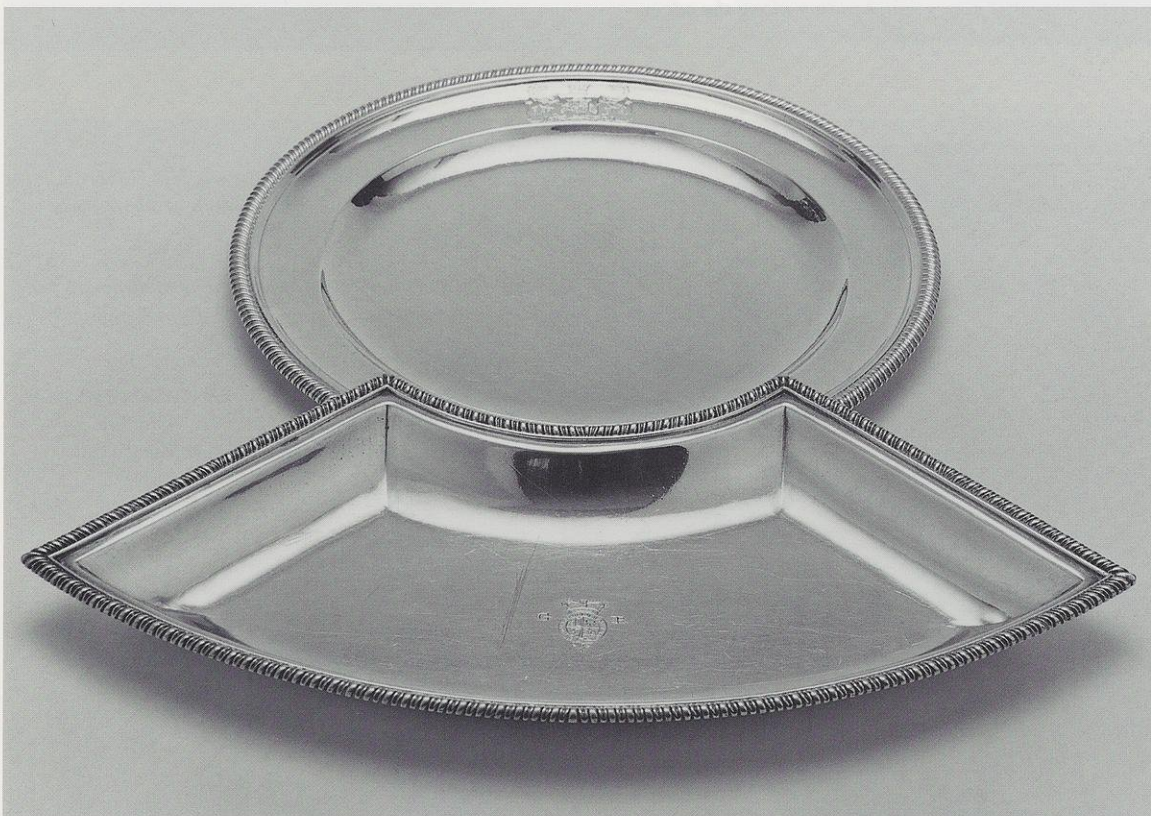
BELOW George II shell-shaped sauce or gravy boat of silver, shown at the left, is one of a pair which were made when the rococo style was at its peak in the United Kingdom and here in America. Pilleau, 1751. The later forms have covers and handles, as seen in the George III sauce tureen and cover shown at the right, also one of a pair. Paul Storr, 1796.





LEFT: One from a pair of George III silver entrée dishes, usually used for vegetables and other side dishes. Paul Storr, 1800.

BELOW: George III silver service plate, from a set of twelve, with accompanying salad plate, also of silver, made to nest with the plate to prevent spillage. A good idea not seen today. The plate was crafted by Paul Storr, 1801; the salad plate by Heming, 1780.

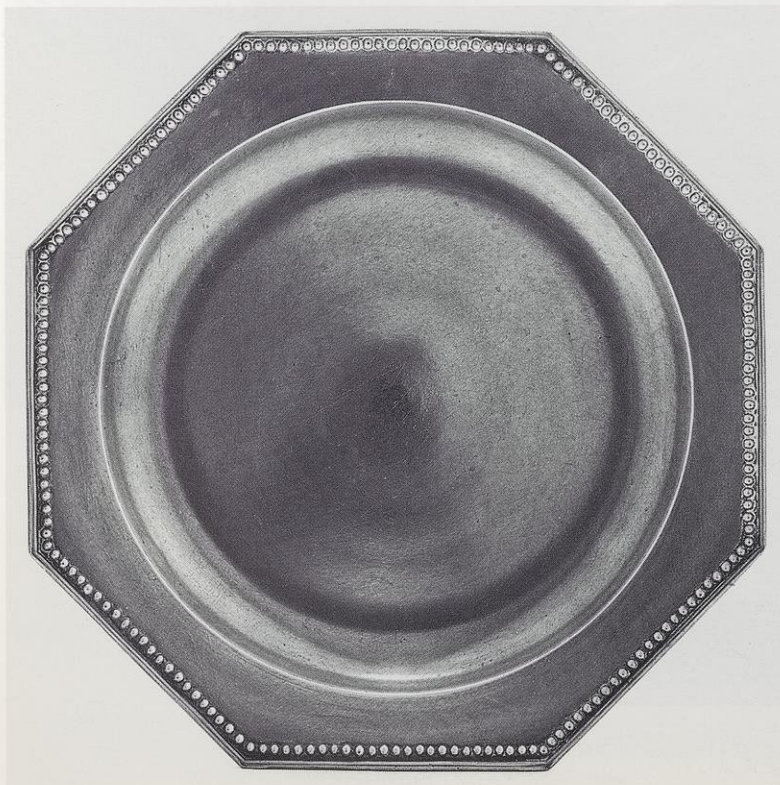




ABOVE: George III silver cake basket. These were used for serving bread, rolls, and desert cakes. They also were used as decorative table centerpieces and held flowers or fruit. Paul Storr, 1803.

RIGHT: Scottish tappet hen of pewter. These appear in varying sizes and were bar fixtures used for dispensing beer or ale. Eighteenth century.

BELOW: One from a set of eight octagonal plates with beading along the edges, representing the most high-style form of pewter work.

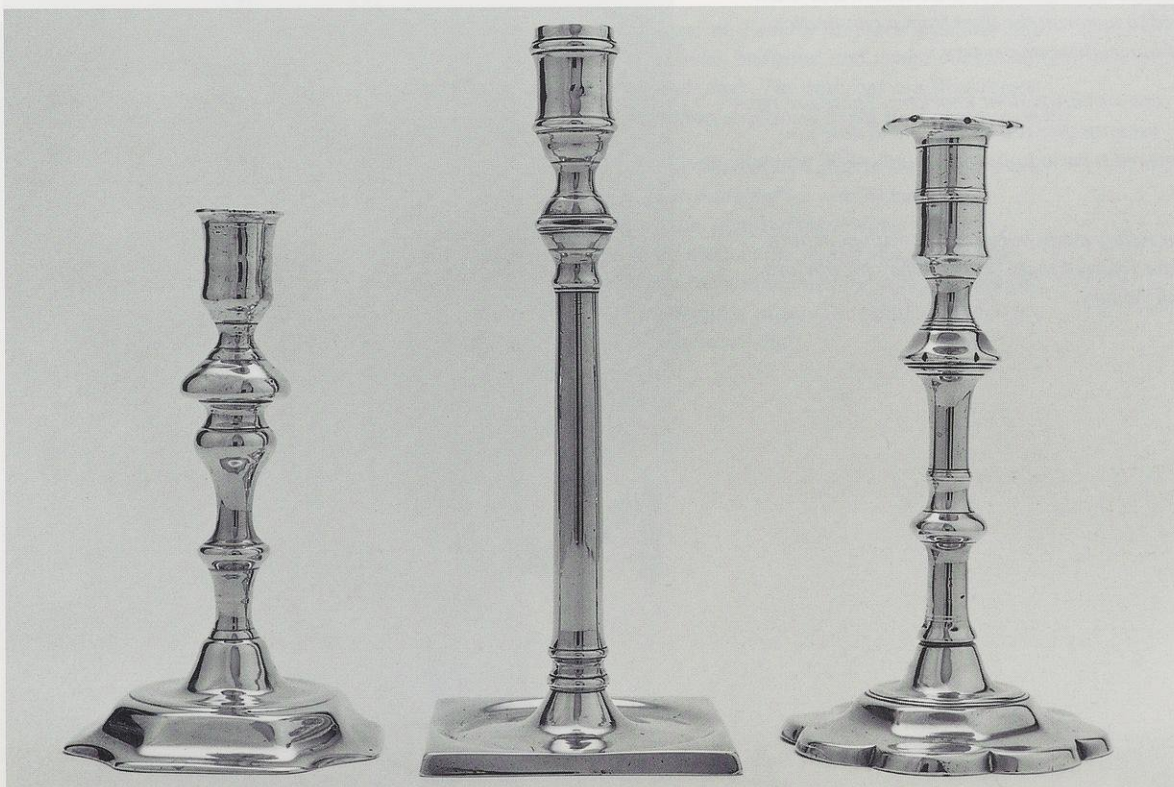
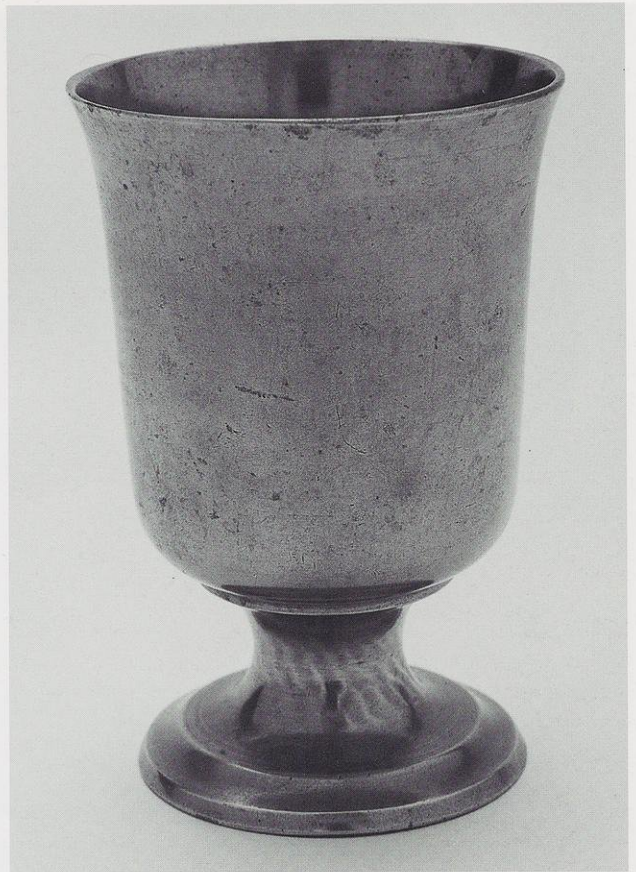
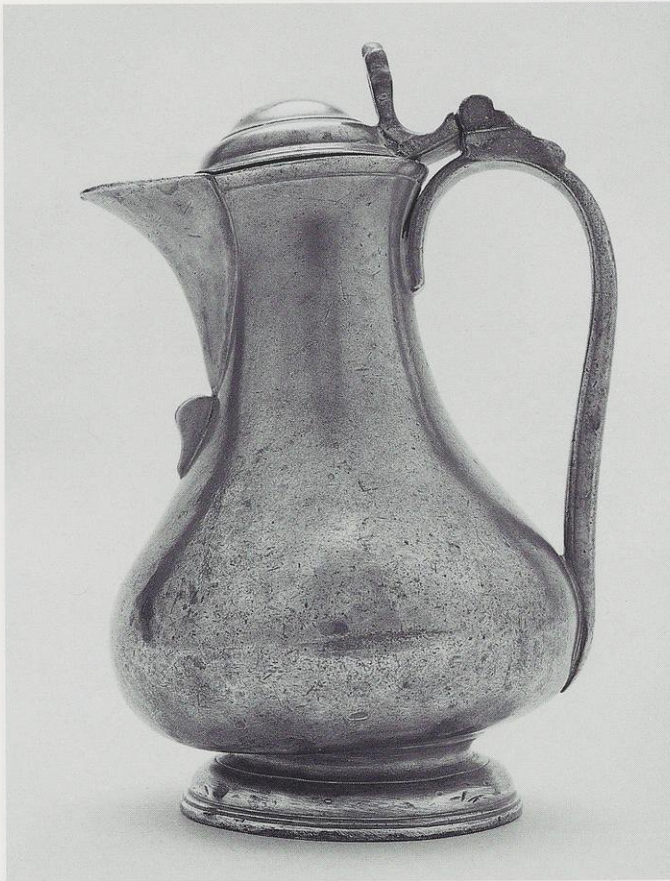


OPPOSITE PAGE

TOP LEFT: Pewter coffee jug. A simple, less elaborate form of the same kind done in silver. Late eighteenth or early nineteenth century.

TOP RIGHT: One from a set of four goblets, these are perhaps the most commonly found pewter form. Eighteenth century.

BOTTOM: Three brass candlesticks representing three pairs. Each of these forms also appears in silver in a more elaborate and intricate style. Mid-eighteenth century.





ABOVE: One from a pair of brass reflectors. Uncommon, and when highly polished were used to augment the light from a candlestick placed next to it. Mid-to-late eighteenth century.



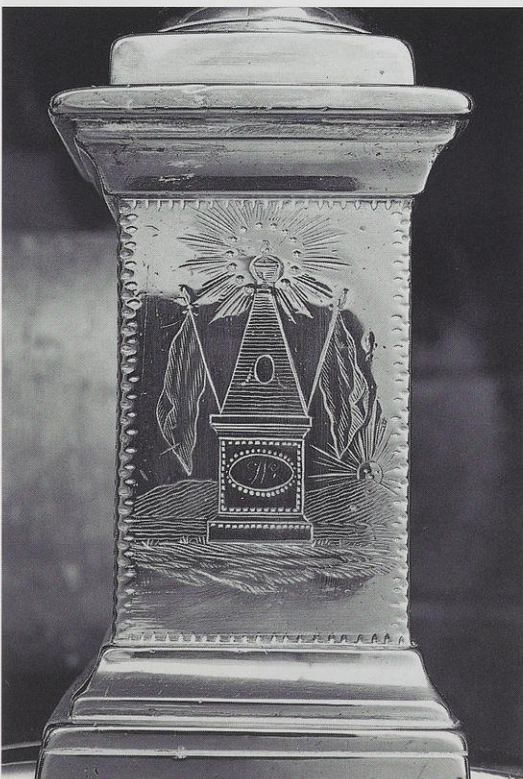
TOP RIGHT: One from a pair of brass door knockers. These are typically called "Georgian" because they are impossible to date precisely. Georgian style covered a period of approximately 100 years, from the 1720s to 1820s.

RIGHT: Fireplace set, probably made in New York, with matching tongs and shovel. They are referred to as "acorn tops" for obvious reasons. Early nineteenth century.





ABOVE: American Federal fireplace grouping consisting of a fender, andirons, and jamb hooks holding the shovel and tongs. The andirons are Washington commemoratives, explained in the next photo caption.



LEFT: George Washington died in December 1799 and the country declared a year of mourning. Depicted on the plinth of the andirons is Washington's tomb in the setting sun, flanked by crossed flags and surmounted by stars representing the thirteen original states. The plinth itself has the letter "W" engraved on it.



Joyce Koskenmaki, Finnish-American Artist

by Beatrice F. Drysdale

I'm looking at a huge bull moose. It has cocked its head to one side to get a better look and is gazing at me levelly, the full sweep of its antlers hovering above its alert head. We are caught, surveying each other; and I can't tell who started the looking, the moose or I, and I can't break away from its gaze. The more I look, the more I feel that there is something familiar about this moose—he acts like he knows me, or is it that I know him? For one absurd moment, I feel an urge to shake my head from side to side—but gently, for now there are antlers weighing down my own head, also.

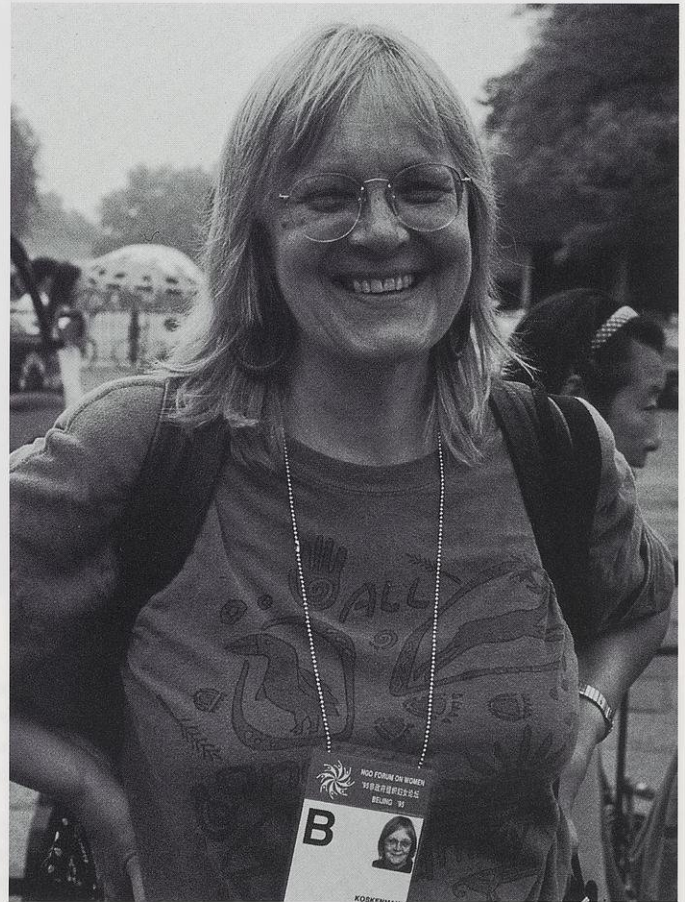
Joyce Koskenmaki, the painter of *The Moose*, is delighted when I relate this story to her. "That's what I want. I want people to feel that they are inside the animal . . . that we are spiritually connected. Everyone is," she says, simply.

Koskenmaki's new work—simple, iconographic images of animals, trees, rocks, water, reflections—has resulted from a process of following what appear at the outset to be quite disparate leads—the lure of her Finnish heritage; an interest in quilting and feminist concerns; an interest in petroglyphs, the rock carvings of Native American peoples. This long, slow process of "listening to what is inside" has led her to accept the belief that "there is a deep spirit connecting everything." It is this belief which she now expresses in her art.



Koskenmaki was born in northern Michigan to second-generation Finnish-American parents. Her grandparents on both sides had arrived in Michigan directly from Finland. She is sensitive to how patterns of settlement in the United States have shaped culture. This became clearer to her when she worked in Gambier, Ohio, while attending Kenyon College. The college was originally founded as a seminary for men, and the area was settled by English lords. Scandinavian culture, on the other hand, has profoundly anti-elitist values.

In 1989 while researching her grandmother's diaries, she was particularly moved by one of the stories she found there:



Joyce Koskenmaki

Her grandmother and some school friends had organized a party, and they invited servants to attend. "These were kids from rich farms, but they were concerned about social equality. They talked about it all the time," she said.

While the eight years Koskenmaki spent teaching in Ohio were stimulating and enriching, she missed northern Michigan. After a divorce in 1985, she was able to move closer to a Scandinavian-settled area.



When Koskenmaki arrived in La Crosse, she was working on a series of paintings which featured houses and large animals done in folk-art style. She had become interested in folk art when her roles as a wife and mother in Ohio had found her

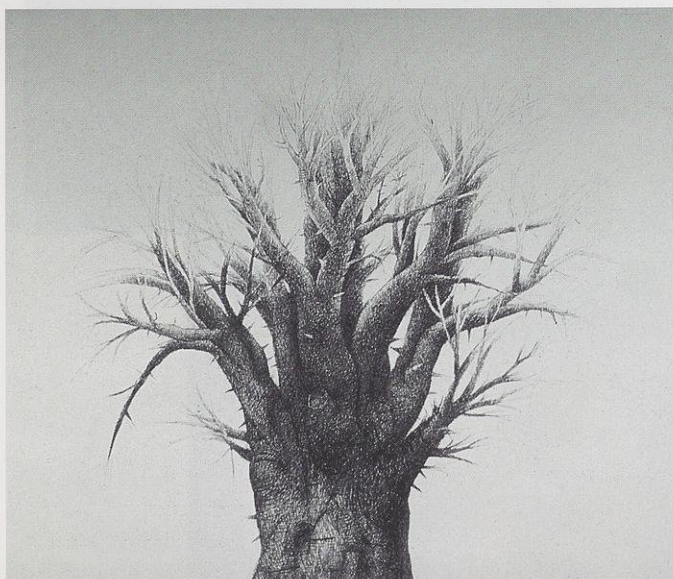
increasingly at odds with the “art world.” In 1979, she had stated in a paper given at a women’s studies conference:

I no longer care about inserting myself into the art world. Now, what I care about more deeply than I can express in words, is speaking . . . to people who may never have taken an art course, read an art magazine, or even set foot in a museum, but who have an inner yearning to see something beautiful in relation to their own lives.

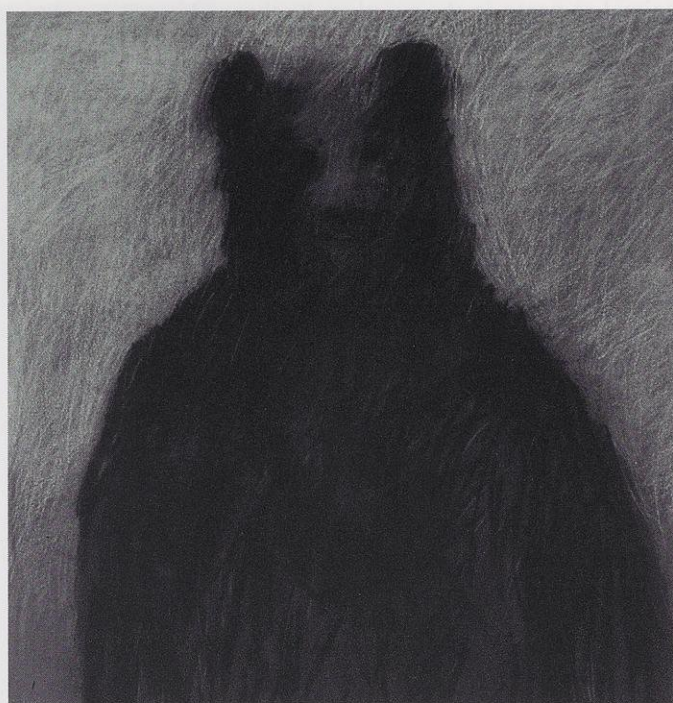
Koskenmaki’s folk-art paintings relate to her own life. In *The Singer*, a huge yellow bird perches over a stylized house, as if the house were its tiny egg. The bird sings ecstatically into the stinging rain, while rising flood waters swirl and brilliant lightning bolts flash. *The Singer* and other works like it were metaphors for Koskenmaki’s anxiety about living alone; the animals in the paintings were protective.

In 1992 Koskenmaki was given a grant to study Native American petroglyphs—symbols carved into rock faces. She felt a strong affinity with the carvings and traveled across the United States to view them, with the intention of copying them into her paintings. After returning from the trip, she began to question those intentions, struggling with what she felt were moral issues about the appropriation of Native American culture. In the end, she couldn’t do it. She only completed one painting and one drawing featuring the petroglyphs.

At the same time, Koskenmaki had stopped painting houses. Struggling for direction, she simply sat down to draw abstract images, waiting to see what would emerge. What she produced were single images, like *The Protector*, in which a bear looms forward, like an ancient, mute portent, as if encountered suddenly on a misty night. “Those were the images that came, and I felt they were gifts,” she said.



Ancient Tree. Pen and ink, 16 x 16 inches, 1994.



The Protector. Charcoal, 20 x 20 inches, 1993.

She eventually was able to articulate her attraction to the petroglyphs, too:

What was compelling about the petroglyphs, I understood later, was that they were drawn for the sake of protection from the terrifying unknown, the world of the spirits. I slowly realized that what I was interested in was their function, not their appearance.

I like thinking of a drawing as being a container for a spiritual power, because I really think they are. If they are done with that kind of attention to the inner voice, then spiritual power enters them.

Those early drawings were indeed portents for a change in the direction of Koskenmaki’s work. In 1994 she went to Lapland, investigating the pre-Christian religion of the indigenous Sami people, many of whom still practice their traditions in Finland. She had already established ties with Finland, creating a registry of Finnish-American artists in 1991 and writing regularly for the *Finnish-American Reporter*. On this trip to Lapland, she visited as many sacred sites as she could—simple big rocks, or old trees—areas the indigenous Sami people felt were imbued with spiritual power as a result of the rites and ceremonies which had been performed there.

When she returned to La Crosse, Koskenmaki completed what she considers to be two of the best paintings she has ever done—*The Bear* and *The Listener*. These two oil paintings of animals are not just simple illustrations—they are gentle encounters, profound in silence and stillness. More images of animals have followed, including paintings of animals not native to this continent or to Europe—such paintings as *Rhinoceros*, an

animal at peace in the painting, Koskenmaki explains, because it knows nothing can hurt it. Koskenmaki painted other exotic animals simply because she considered them to be decorative.

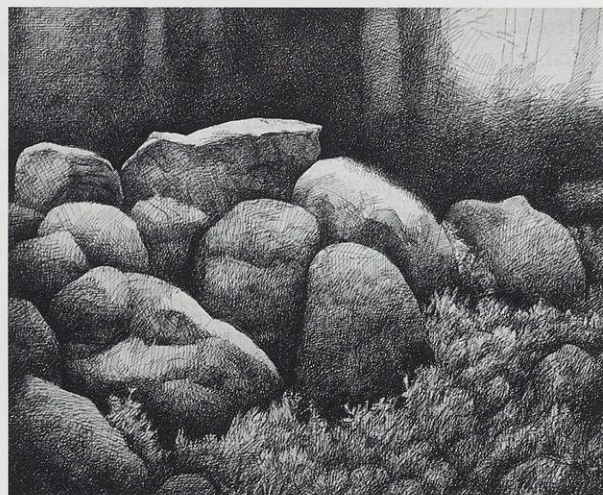
In the meantime, Koskenmaki has continued to quilt, a woman's art form which she found particularly satisfying to work with during her married life and one which she has studied carefully. Unlike her paintings, in the smaller fabric pieces Koskenmaki's animals inhabit an environment. The animal is a center of energy created by myriad stitches, energy which flows out of the animal into a magical landscape of color and cloth. Images of trees, which are important in Sami tradition, are also the subjects of Koskenmaki's quilts, as are other aspects of Finnish folklore.

Koskenmaki continues to integrate disparate sources of inspiration into her work. Her friendship with a Native American woman taught her the Lakota word to end prayer, a word which means "all my relations . . . It signifies that we're all related, the animals, the birds, everything," she explains. She also is interested in the Chinese Taoist approach to landscape painting—the need to sit and meditate in front of a landscape before trying to paint it. She concludes:

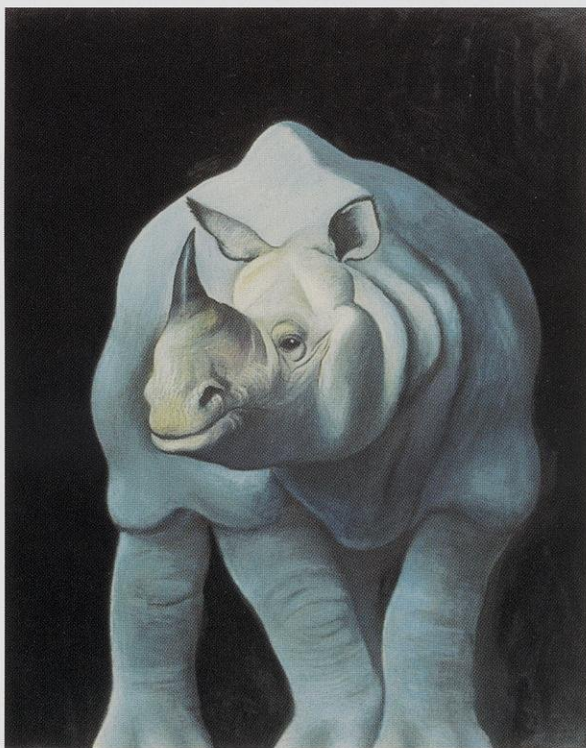
I think this is what Finish people believe also: that sense of reverence for nature, the oneness of everything, the equality of people, and the mysticism—the relation also to what's hidden. That's what I want to be able to say in my work, whether I keep painting animals or not. Right now I still want to continue painting animals, and I think I will want to for a long time.



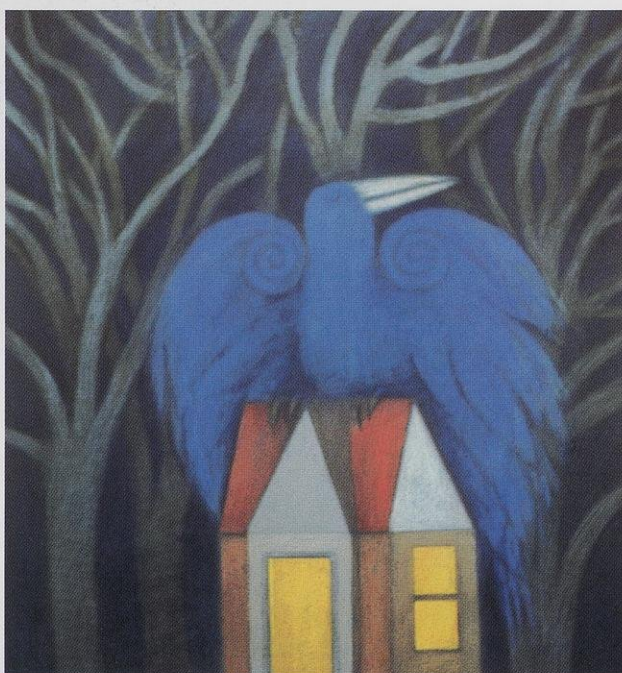
The Singer. Oil, 42 x 45 inches, 1987.



Old Finnish Stones. Pen and ink, 10 x 14 inches, 1995.



Rhinoceros. Oil on canvas, 1996.



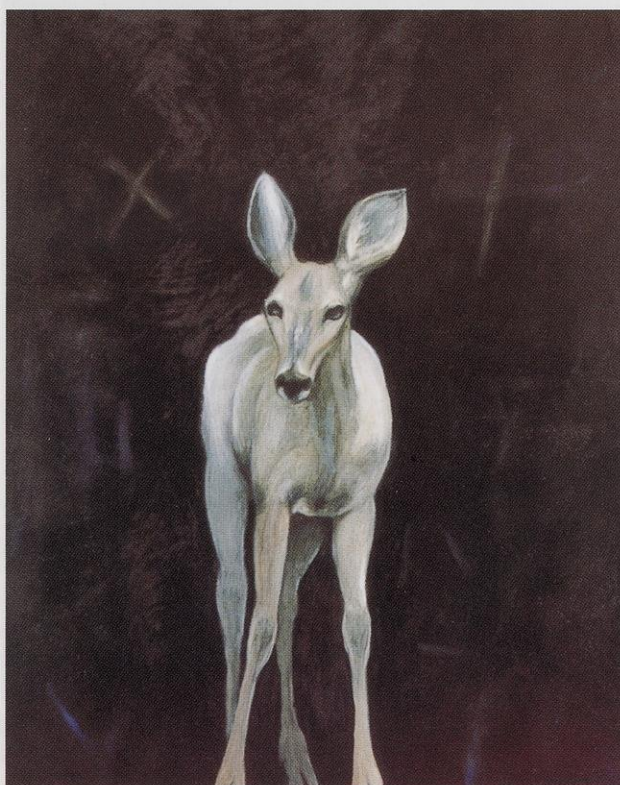
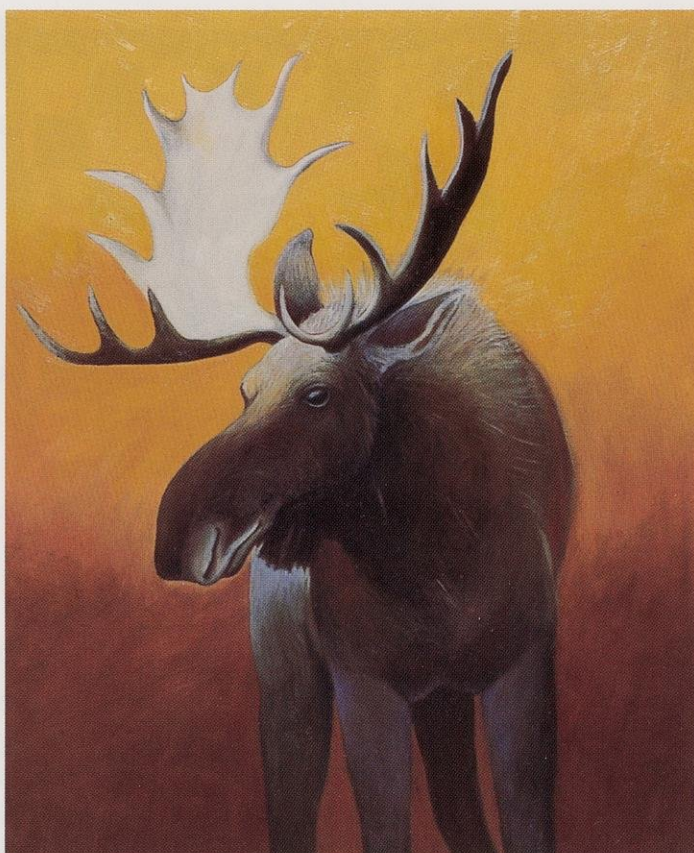
ABOVE: House with Deer Spirit. Oil, 40 x 50 inches, 1991.

LEFT: House and Bluebird. Crayon, 18 x 18 inches, 1990.

RIGHT: The Deer. Embroidery and fabric paint, 20 x 20 inches, 1993.

BELOW: The Bear. Oil on canvas, 42 x 48 inches, 1994.





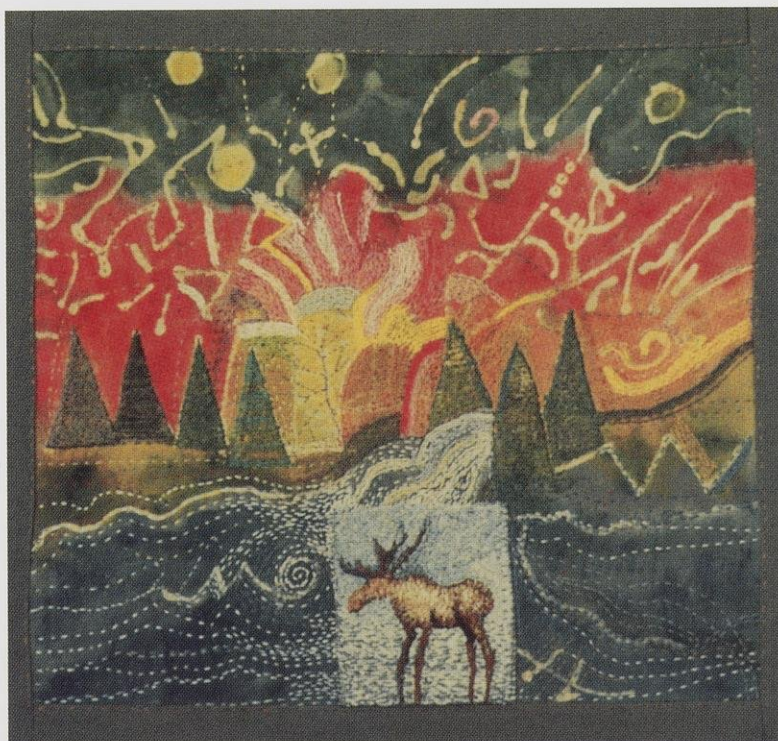
ABOVE: *The Moose*. Oil on canvas, 42 x 54 inches, 1996.

LEFT: *The Listener*. Oil on canvas, 50 x 40 inches, 1994.



ABOVE: Reindeer. Embroidery and quilting, 14 x 14 inches, 1995.

RIGHT: The Moose. Embroidery on dyed fabric, 14 x 14 inches, 1995.



Paul Revere and Young William Baker: Heros of History

by Martin H. Sable

We learned in school that Paul Revere rode to Lexington and Concord, warning farmers and townsfolk that the British troops would soon pass their way. He especially informed those Revolutionary defenders, the Minute-Men, to gather in groups in hopes of delaying the arrival of British redcoats in Concord.

Revere's ride was a natural outcome of his experience, between 1770 and 1773, as a mounted rider for the Whig patriots in Boston. In fact, the autumn of 1773 found him riding to warn the Revolutionary Committees of Correspondence, groups of patriots located along the Atlantic Coast in Massachusetts and nearby states, about the forthcoming arrival of British ships loaded with tea. His message was: "Prevent those ships from landing." After the British tea-laden ships succeeded in landing, the local committees formed the now-famous Boston Tea Party plan of dressing as Indians and heaving the tea overboard from each ship. Paul Revere participated in the "party."



Son of a Huguenot refugee from France who had come to Boston to escape religious persecution, Paul Revere was born January 1, 1735, and learned silversmithing in his father's shop. After hostile feelings between England and the American colonies became obvious, Revere, a Mason, became a friend of Joseph Warren, who was later to become General Joseph Warren and destined to die at the Battle of Bunker Hill. Revere joined the Sons of Liberty and other anti-British groups.

When the silversmithing trade became depressed, to earn a livelihood for his wife and eight children, Revere turned to copper engraving, drew political cartoons, worked as a draftsman, and took up the craft of tooth mechanics. A well-known and



Paul Revere by John Singleton Copley, 1768. Gift of Joseph W. Revere, William B. Revere, and Edward H.R. Revere. Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. This portrait was painted when Revere was thirty-three. Revere and Copley (who was two years younger) were friends, and Revere's accounts ledger for the period 1765 through 1767 shows debts against Copley for silver frames and gold cases, apparently made for Copley's painted miniatures. It is possible Copley painted the portrait of Revere at this time in payment of his debt; however, by 1767 Copley could write that he was making "as much money as if I were Raphael or Corregio."

active political leader, Revere published engravings depicting the arrival of British troops and tax officials in Boston. After the British killed Boston citizens in the affair known as the Boston Massacre in 1770, Revere depicted the scene in a drawing

which galvanized local hostility against the British occupation troops.

But what initiated his now world-famous ride? In his diary, Revere writes about rebel observation of British troops, stating that in the days just before April 18, 1775:

The grenadiers and light infantry were taken off duty. From these movements we expected something serious was to be transacted. On Tuesday evening, the 18th, it was observed that a number of soldiers were marching toward the bottom of the Common.

Revere apparently did not know exactly what the British were planning; thus, he could not have warned the Patriots based solely on the observations he recorded in his diary, though he was aware troops were headed toward Boston Common, the large park the British used for encampment.

Revere continues the story, stating that about 10 p.m. General Joseph Warren asked him to ride immediately to Lexington to warn John Hancock and John Adams that the British were on their way to arrest them. He was also to warn the Patriots in Concord to hide all armaments and munitions. Before leaving he instructed others to display from the steeple of the Old North Church two lanterns should the British embark on their attack by water; if they should march overland, then one lantern was to be displayed. To be certain that the warning would be received, General Warren dispatched William Dawes and Dr. Samuel Prescott to ride in a different direction from Revere's.

Revere arrived in Lexington thirty minutes before Dawes and notified Hancock and Adams, who escaped to the nearby town of Woburn. But after Revere, Prescott, and Dawes all three headed on to Concord, a British unit arrested Dawes and Revere, leaving Prescott to arrive in Concord and notify the Patriots. Not long after his capture, Revere was released, and he went to Lexington to aid in saving Hancock's important papers and effects.

By way of confirmation of these events and cementing them in the nation's memory, the Harvard professor and poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere." It is through this poem that many people have learned their history; but Longfellow's tale was not complete.

A significant aspect of this story is the delivery of intelligence to General Warren concerning the British intention to leave Boston for Lexington and Concord, for without that information there would have been no ride by Paul Revere or Prescott or Dawes, and there probably would have been a British victory, thus delaying America's independence.

There is evidence that the plans of the British commander, General Gage, to surprise the good people of Lexington and Concord were frustrated by one William Baker. Baker, of Haverhill, Massachusetts, was twenty years old and employed in Hall's distillery in Gile's Court, now Portland Street in Boston, when he played his important role. The record reveals:

One mid-April day there came into this place a woman who was quartered with one of the British regiments. Being partially intoxicated, she unwittingly disclosed the designs of the British

to march that night to Concord. Recognizing the importance of this disclosure, Baker immediately carried the information to General Warren's headquarters, passing the sentries and guards without a suspicion, because he was known to be an employe of the distillery. Immediately, plans were formed for arousing the minutemen, and in those plans the duty was assigned to Baker of having a horse ready for Paul Revere on the Charlestown shore.

Baker returned to Haverhill, enlisted for the war, won by his ability in military service the rank of captain, and died a half century later in Providence, Rhode Island.

The Municipal History of Essex County in Massachusetts,
Tercentenary edition, Volume 2, New York, 1922, p. 460

According to the *History of Haverhill, Massachusetts* by George W. Chase (Haverhill Historical Society, 1861; reprinted 1983, p. 396), William Baker enlisted in the Revolutionary War as a drummer and served in Captain Moses McFarland's company. The November 24, 1827, edition of the *Essex Gazette* summarizes Baker's story and adds that he was "aided by a pension toward the end of his life." *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War* (Boston, Writer & Potter Printing Co., 1895, p. 507) reveals the regiments and companies in which Baker served and his record of promotion.



It would appear from these various sources that William Baker of Haverhill, Massachusetts, is "the founder of the feast," inasmuch as he supplied the intelligence to General Warren; and without that information, the chain of events might have significantly altered American history.

That being so, William Baker has for 222 years been an unsung hero. In reflecting on Baker's loyalty and service, it seems only just that the historical record acknowledge young Baker's role in the event; and perhaps "poetic justice" should require a late twentieth-century poet to retell "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere," this time including young William Baker in the adventure. ■

.....
William Baker
has for 222 years
been an unsung hero.
.....

Warren Nelson: All-American Poet with a Common Touch

by Norbert Blei

He's a young man sometimes dressed in old man's clothing. "Geezer fashions" he calls his fondness for a down-home attire, be it suit-vests, gray workpants, galluses, or even a derby he may don, performing under the Big Top Chautauqua tent near Bayfield, Wisconsin, on a summer night. Geezer Fashions. Just one of his homespun "pet rock" ideas he wouldn't mind making a fast buck on. That and his new fishing lure.

Warren Nelson: young, geezer-man of his time, but of another time as well. A past (local Americana) that he continually pays homage to in story, song, original musical productions—"Big, dang deals," as he calls them. He and his multi-talented, right-hand lady, Betty Ferris; his executive director, Carolyn Sneed; his extraordinary crew of musicians, the Ballyhoo Blue Canvas Orchestra—including Bruce Bowers, Bruce Burnside, Jack Gunderson, Don Pavel, Tom Mitchell—and a fine group of singers.

At this stage in Nelson's life and career, it's almost impossible to separate who the man is from what he does. The history, the stories, the songs he writes. Hell, he even *looks* like the ghost of an old lighthouse keeper (*Keeper of the Light*); a Great Lakes sailor (*Riding the Wind*); a railroad engineer (*On the Velvet*); a pioneer (*A Martin County Hornpipe*); a local character one might stumble upon at Maggie's bar and restaurant ("Real Food/Fake Flamingos") in Bayfield, or Patsy's Pub in Washburn, trying out a new song, telling stories, sharing a drink or two or three with friends and strangers. Hell, it's only TIME. As young geezer Nelson has been known to suggest upon many such occasions: "You're going to be dead millions and billions of years—so why not stay up late tonight?"



Warren Nelson at the Big Top Chautauqua near Bayfield.

I've known him a few years, spent a little time with him in both Bayfield and Door County. Been fortunate to have been a guest on his Tent Show Radio program and share the Up North religious experience of "Life Under Canvas" as he knows, lives, and loves.

The man's beyond friendly. A '60s expression comes to mind in his presence: "good vibes." "Magical," some might call it. Or even "charismatic," which sounds a little too Californian for the Midwest where "a darn nice guy" might say it all. (The closest thing to a Scandinavian superlative.)

We talked about a lot of things Up North where he lives and breathes that fine Lake Superior air. Everything from his history with Big Top Chautauqua, to regionalism, songwriting, fame, the new creative period he seems to be entering, and even that new fishing lure he's invented: "The Lure of The Northwoods." We talked about his "big dang deals," such as *Riding the Wind*. He says:

It's a musical, it's a sit-down-read-the-story musical, combining original songs and storytelling with maybe 1300 or 1400 historic photographs projected as slides. It's the third show of this type. The first one was produced way back in 1976 for my hometown of Fairmont, Minnesota. At that time I was given the gift of time by my partner, then mate, Betty Ferris, who took me out of the bars and off the road and gave me time to 'thunk stuff

up.' So I thunk up this idea. I wrote in my journal . . . 'A thing: Combine songs, stories, photographs, history into a concert program.' So this is the third one. *Riding the Wind* was commissioned by the Bayfield Heritage Association and the Apostle Islands Foundation for the Arts, which is a group that used to exist. We called them Uffda at the time.

Which, in essence, was the genesis of the whole Chautauqua idea.

Up here it certainly was . . . Bayfield had to get one of these Big Dang Deals, so they commissioned it, and Betty and I do what we do. We start researching these things, which is just—get in your History Suit, jump off the dock and start swimmin' around in all this lake of stories. Which is probably the most enjoyable thing, you're very familiar with, Norb, talking to the elders. Just sitting back and listening, at how one thing leads to another. When you look at a photograph, there are songs in there. Things start to happen. And that's why I think that people really catch on to them, you know. You're not only hearing a song, but they're illustrated. It's time traveling. And the script is a combination of a few poems I throw in, and quotes and stories. A lot of the later shows have evolved into stage plays, with costumes and everybody memorizing their lines.

As soon as you start to dig, one thing, like I said, leads to another and you find out some astounding, amazing things, which I guess are not so surprising here on the shores of Lake Superior—you know, Big Lake, Big Ideas, human ideas in the past. Once you start a program like this it sorta has a life of its own. It just leads you around. And all the crew members and all the people that you talk to, you know, leads you to another, or to another woman, and there's stories . . . you do this and then you end up meeting the most fantastically interesting people. There's just a different way of talking. I'm writing in, I mean obviously the English language moves . . . but reading the journals of the lighthouse keepers is just magnificent language. It's almost like old English. I mean it's not, but it goes back. And so I certainly borrowed heavily from them . . . let's see, there's a verse in the song 'Keeper of the Light' . . . mmm, let's see,

I'm the Keeper of the Light on Michigan Island,
the candle in the night for the steamboat trade
with an eye on the wick and a whistle to the ships
that are bound for the bay or runnin' for a lee.

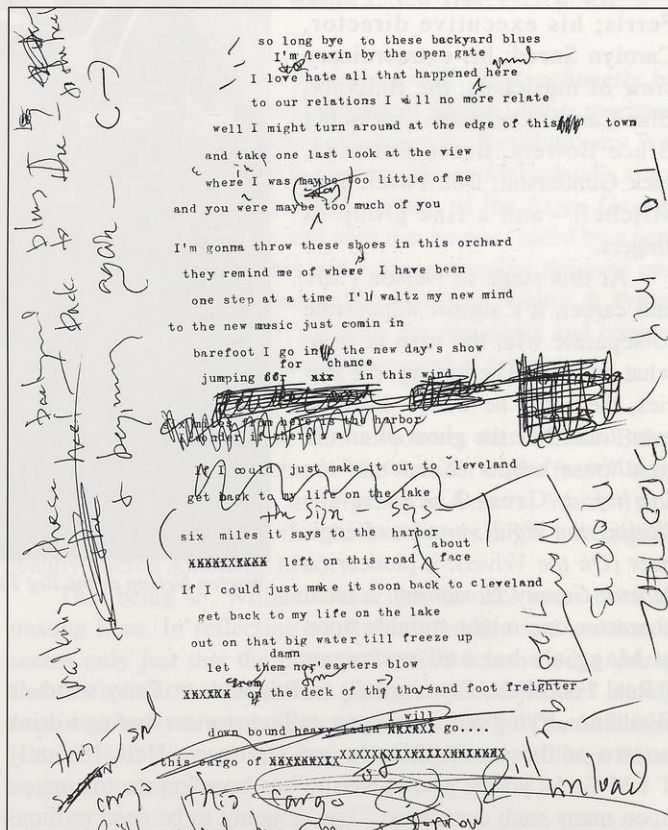
We lit the lamp at sunset, afraid the clocks would break
then anew it blew a hurricane, the tower began to shake.
It was damp in the lamp and freezing, the oil all congealed.
We were scrubbin' with brine on the lantern glass to
remove the angry sea; our dock was driven to the boulders;
to talk, we had to shout. So splendid was Superior's fury
twenty-five miles out.

Now that was . . . those were mostly words I picked out of journals. And I put 'em in order to make . . . they're probably from

five pages, but I just . . . you know . . . Who talks about oil being 'congealed' anymore? I love those words you can bite into, that never get used.

Universities, organizations, libraries, literary historians in Wisconsin, often pay tribute to the state's outstanding writers and artists for their contribution to the local culture. They are profiled in prestigious publications. Called upon to give readings, exhibits. Awarded grants. While the talents of a writer/songwriter/poet/musician/local historian/producer such as Warren Nelson never quite receives the attention he deserves in the intellectual community. Perhaps because he doesn't fit into the normal category of writer or poet. Perhaps because he's "just a performer"—that Big Top Chautauqua guy up in Bayfield.

Though his name will probably never appear in any literary history of the state, consider any of his lyrics and one is astonished by the poetry. Long after the work of others has faded, I'm convinced there will remain this vibrant body of "Big Dang Deals" set in Wisconsin by a unique artist from Washburn. A treasure trove of stage presentations—words and music by Warren Nelson—which generations to come will easily and eagerly tap into. Works steeped in local history, humor, talk and song, perfectly capturing a Wisconsin culture, time and place, reaching beyond the Midwest as well.



Original notes for the new song "Backyard Blues."

For pure poetry, take a single stanza and one chorus of his song "Autumn Fancy":

The lake hills turn the color of a fox's coat
Easy in the breeze the leaves go float
When the birch burn yellow and the maple red
And the apples are ripe overhead
When the fall is falling all around
Get your wood up quick winter coming to town
The way Indian Summer lays on the bay this fine October day

[Chorus] Blue on the Big Lake/blue in the sky
Blue down the river of the time gone by
Green come the summer to a golden end
Yellow is the eye over Earth my friend—

When did the songs begin? I ask him. Where did they come from?

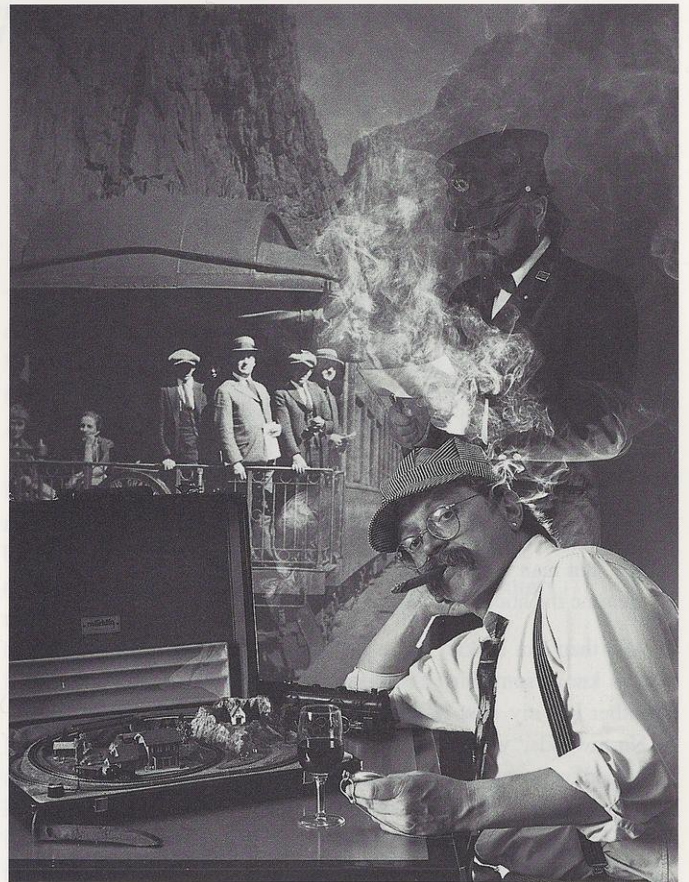
Ohoooooooo . . . they just fly in, you know. Just land. They're just little birds, my songs are small birds and they land on the branch of my heart . . . isn't that sweet? I don't know. I keep saying they come from behind you somewhere. They come in from all directions. It's so hard to say. They just start. They just begin.

It's so much like the ordinary writer, yet so different. You got lyrics, and you got music. That's a whole different dimension.

Yeah . . . I don't know if it is. Maybe it is because you know prose . . . words have their own sound too. I've always heard the music in words. The roundness of sound, and the squareness and cut of it and the stab of it . . . All the songs in the show *On the Velvet* were some that I carried inside me before I even sat down to write 'em down. The first song I ever wrote . . . I must have been about thirteen or fourteen years old and I heard a song on the radio and it was a folk song. It was a Kingston Trio song I think. And I always played a band instrument, and I read a lot as a kid. And I never thought about why it was, I just did. And I remember writing stories. And of course my stories were—I was probably ten or eleven, and my stories were:

It's the bottom of the 9th inning . . . two out . . . the bases are loaded . . . we're behind three runs and Warren Nelson is up! The crowd is on their feet. Here comes the pitch—it's gone! Boy, he's the hero! He won the game! . . . It's the Fourth Quarter—we're on the half-yard line. There's only 99.5 yards to go. Here comes Warren Nelson into the game! Isn't that sick? Or you know like . . . We're invading Iwo Jima. All the soldiers are there and no one volunteers to stand up—there's Warren Nelson! He's going on! Now he's shot . . . he's losing an arm . . . he's going on . . . Everyone is saved. His dying words are: Oh, I saved the world! Don't make my statue too small . . .

But there's a down-home humbleness to the man when it comes to talent, fame, his whole future.



Warren Nelson as "Traveler" in *Big Top Chautauqua's* original show *On The Velvet*.

When I first started to be an entertainer, I would just dream away. And then it's very important when you get older, when you're trying to really wanna just be honest, or make yourself smaller. The smaller you make yourself, the bigger chance I think you have as a writer to have something come through you that belongs to a lot more people than just yourself. And might be interesting to somebody.

Make yourself small. Make yourself available and if inspiration—breath, that's wind, things that blow through, water that rolls over the stone of us—whatever you know, just ideas and things go on by. People come up to me and say, 'Warren, you have a gift.' Everyone has a gift of some kind, probably. I understand my gift, I think, because it has to do with creating songs or writing things like that. I always have to look over my shoulder and say: I don't know where that came from.

I get embarrassed selling my own tapes and CDs at shows, and I know I shouldn't. I think that's part of being small. I remember part of my mission when I was turning twenty was to be famous. Get recognition. You wanted to make a name for yourself . . . after awhile, either because it didn't happen, and it gets old or futile . . . you just start to learn.

Now I just want to do more. I wanna do more—I wanna do more. And I wanna take the experience I’ve had and the old impulse of it, and I just want to get back to work. I’d love to be left alone, and it’s really, really hard to be left alone . . . I have about 200 plays I would like to write—musicals. I want to write a Baseball Opera. I mighta told you that. Nine acts. And I told you about that play I want to write: *You Have 216 Messages*.

I have a house-building play I’ve been meaning to write for years called *Sixteen Pennies* about how a couple falls in love, gets married, wants to build their own house, ya know. Gotta do it! The woman gets to have the child, so the man’s gotta, well, here ya go—it’s the Hero again. ‘I’m building this, Honey.’ ‘Let’s buy a house dear.’ ‘No, I’m gonna do it! We’re gonna do it! I’m gonna build a nest . . . gonna go out there and gather twigs and man, wait’ll you see this house. It’s gonna be a great house!’ So you go into it, build it, and then . . . I don’t know if you’ve ever seen a man and wife haul dry wall around or insulation, but man there are the greatest fights in the world! And by the time the house is all done, they’re divorced.

And then I’m looking for a cheap shot to make a quick buck. You know, something that could just pay for everything. And either it’s my new fishing lure that I call ‘The Lure of the Northwoods,’ which is a muskie jig. It’s Leinie’s bottle (my son helped me invent this), a bunch of spoons hanging from it. And the muskie hits the bottle and drinks the beer and swims over to the boat for the rest of the six pack, jumps in the boat . . . I’ll show it to you later. Or else I’m thinking about doing a . . . you know, you hear all those little tapes . . . nature sounds, the peaceful sounds of the lake lapping up against the shore? Well I have an idea for a stress-inducing tape. You come up north and you start to relax and feel good. Then all of a sudden there’ll be sounds of big domestic arguments, plates flying, traffic jams and fights, drive-by shootings . . . what do you think?

So, anyway . . . I just think now I’m at some stage of something’s happening again. Something’s opening up. If I could have anything, I would love to have a sabbatical. I would love to be left alone for a year. I want to go out and FEED! I wanna READ! Travel. The best line still is Yogi Berra’s: ‘When you come to the fork in the road—take it!’ You have to do it. You have to do it like you have to breathe. You have to do it because it’s what makes you live, and if you don’t, you go.

I got this new song, if I can remember it . . .

He reaches for his guitar. Hits a few chords. It’s a comfort to know that songs still fly to him like little birds; a joy to be around a talent like his as he shapes the music and gives the words life.

“It’s called ‘Backyard Blues,’” he says, suddenly shifting his talking voice into song, filling the air with that folksy fine

sound of his: “So long ‘bye to these backyard blues . . .” stopping momentarily, hitting the strings again, starting then stopping, trying to remember the next line. He rummages through all the stuff on his kitchen table, searching for a piece of paper filled with his scrawls and the words to his new song. “Here it is.”

*So long, ‘bye to these backyard blues
I’m leavin’ by the open gate
I love hate all that happened around here
to our relations I will no more relate*

*Well I might turn around at the edge of this town
and take one last look at the view
where I was maybe too little of me
and you were maybe too much of you*

*I’m gonna throw these shoes in this orchard
they remind me of where I have been
one step at a time I’ll waltz my new mind
to the new music just comin’ in.*

It’s another Warren Nelson song one swiftly takes to heart. The lyrics have already worked their way in, bringing a warmth, a sadness of time passing, a love for what once was, and an immediate recognition: *Yeah, I’ve been there too. That’s how it was.* Not unlike “Autumn Fancy,” “Little Missouri,” or even his classic “Yo Ho Buffalo.” Most of his songs leave you humming in the night. And always seem morning fresh.

“It’s just a little country waltz with a bluegrass shuffle,” explains Warren. “And it’s understated musically. My favorite line here is, ‘I’m gonna throw my shoes in this orchard . . .’”

It’s my favorite too, I tell him. It’s a great line.

While he muses over the song, I recall a scene at the Big Top Chautauqua Tent the night before where I had gone to see *Keeper of the Light*, a show he no longer performs in but attends once a season. We meet during intermission, and as the band begins to play, I follow him toward the back of the tent for the second half of the show.

He’s telling me six different stories at the same time, all the while commenting on the tempo of the music, the songs coming up, the Big Top itself. There’s a heavy mist hanging in the dark air, but there is warm shelter ahead—a canvas tent which appears to be inhaling, exhaling, breathing life. He revels at the blue and white stripes, touches the canvas lovingly, and lures me on—like two kids sneaking into a circus. He keeps slapping at the canvas with the palms of his hands till he finds the flap that opens again into the music and light and stories of his own world. The Tent that *is* Warren Nelson. That encompasses us all. ♪

Editor’s note: Norbert Blei received the Wisconsin Academy’s 1997 Gordon MacQuarrie Award.

From *Letters to My Father*

by David Kherdian

In the closet of the master bedroom,
neatly stored in the trunk,
was the uniform my father wore
when he was a soldier
in the U.S. Army
during the First World War.

Every time mother opened
the trunk, I would stare at
its woolly hairiness, and the
strange brown coloring,
a brown that I thought of as unique
to the uniform,
and of course it was,
being a color that only
the Army wore.

It was an object to take pride in
because of what it stood for,
the life my father lived
before I was born,
that was outside my imagination
but very much inside my curiosity
and wonder.

It lay there like a dead relative
that one could visit
provided one did not speak
but only coughed back at the moth balls.
Nor were there answers
to the questions I didn't know to ask
as a youngster then.

Did all that end after the parade?
It must have because the experience
of that uniform would have been different
after that, and if it had been different,
I would have remembered it as such,
instead of this frozen memory I have
of that uniform locked away with memories
it was unwilling to share, as if there was
nothing more that it was able to say
to the rest of us.

That is, until my father put that uniform back on
even though I was unaware at first that he had.
For I was in the street holding my mother's hand,
there on the corner of State Street & Douglas
Avenue, watching the parade on the 4th of July.

Did I know my father would come
marching by, or was I caught completely
by surprise? I know that I was startled by the
recognition of him, there among the lines of soldiers,
marching in their uniforms, and keeping
to the manly beat of the drums,
flags and banners flying over their heads.

I let go of Mother's hand and ran to join him—
and I did, marching with him all the way to
Lake Michigan. And then, holding his hand
in appreciation and awe, we walked back
in silence through the streets of our town.



I see him swimming
the moonlit river.

He names the river
in France, and explains

it was during the
First World War.

He is far from Adana
and the Hotel Thomas

dishwashing job,
heart of Racine

from where he was
conscripted.

I picture the river, and
the Hotel Thomas nearby.

He is telling the tale
to me, his son

who wonders too
where he belongs.

They are in the river
he and his buddy.

Swimming with two
loaves of bread

in upraised hands
trying to keep them dry.

It is a thrilling picture
my father late at night

upon a foreign river
in the long ago

now suddenly real—
for I see it, my father

daring the waters
and the war, swimming.

But to where?
He remembers now

the object of the night
and hesitates, then

describes French women
upon the bank, waiting

for my father and his friend,
and the bread.

He does not
explain

he does not finish
the story

but looks at me
in wonder

and I no longer see
what he sees

moving water grown still
under moonlight.



After the war, when you became
an American citizen, were you glad
that you didn't kill the Turk that you
were told was in your company—
for no reason but that he was there—
claiming that imprisonment would
not have troubled you, for it would have
been worth it after what they had done
to you and all our people.

Years went by, I was born, you died,
and the stories about you that could
have been told were buried
with you, making it so hard for me
to wander with you over your life,
that I felt I needed to do in order
to better inhabit my own.

For am I not also you, and are you
not also me, torn away not only by
time but by my own neglect.
I wanted just once to sit with you
and listen to Shah-Mouradian sing,
the great Armenian hero whose voice
bled for the suffering of our nation—

Who came to Racine once and sang
at Dania Hall, there beside the Hotel
Thomas where you once worked.
I sat in the balcony years later, after
you were gone and imagined it,
imagining it without you, as I have had
to imagine so many things we might have shared.



He would say, I'm starting to smell,
time for some fresh air,
and he would pull his tie tight
and walk out the door.

On Sundays he bought the papers
that only I could read and that
Mother skimmed, because it gave
him an excuse, midmorning, to walk
in the sunshine, or under the clouds—
it didn't matter which.

I'm a house-smelling man,
he would say in Armenian,
and jump for the door.
My mother and I would smile,
knowing he would soon return.

Island Park

for Jens Jensen

by David Kherdian

Openly hidden in the middle of our town, where the river stopped, turned around on itself, inhaling once, twice in a loop, before exhaling again in the direction of the factories, tanneries, and bridges of commerce. Island Park was the held breath of grace, the one complete gift of love to the city of Racine and its people.

Here everything conjoined, and at the same time was set free to go its way. It held in its arms bridges, ball parks, pavilion, playgrounds, foot paths, lawn and picnic areas, and, of course, the boundary river itself that gave it its name—all of it contained, uncrowded, and without the least pretension, in less than nineteen acres of space.

It was there I discovered art, and, fortunately, thought of it neither as discovery nor art, but only as wonder—for I saw in man's art his uncontrollable urge to speak intimately with nature, by holding up what he had made to mirror back what he had seen.

For there, at the bottom of Liberty Street, where it entered the park, in the backyard of the house facing the water and the bridge, was a rock garden with a bridge that was a replica in miniature of the bridge I had started to cross, and was looking back from now. My first experience of another world, the palpable world of the imagination.

There too, where I first discovered art, I learned about love, and because love came first, everything else followed. It was my earliest memory of life—my father carrying me in his arms along the worn path, with the bushes around and above me, stirring under a warm breeze. And another was there, perhaps my uncle, and something moved amongst us, a warmth of feeling, a feeling of grace, a blessing that I knew to be love.

Under that same bridge, I crabbed for bait for myself, and also to sell to the fishermen on Lake Michigan. The crabbing

was best there because of the rocky bottom, where the crabs hid and waited, allowing us to coax them out with pieces of liver tied to butcher string that dangled from a cut branch, all but the latter purchased from the Boranian Grocery Store on State Street. Mr. Boranian would always rap extra string around the white butcher paper, for he knew where we were headed. We would stand there silently enraptured by the odors of Armenia that oozed forth from the spices on the shelves, as well as from the opened lentil and bulghour sacks.

And once, just down river from there, I caught a small blue crappie unknown to me, that was too beautiful to be strung on a stringer, and so I rushed over the bridge and down to an abandoned dump just across from where I was fishing, and found a battered kettle that I hurried back with and placed in a depression I scraped out within the cool roots of the lilac tree just above where I was fishing. And soon I caught more of them—an

entire family, that I imagined had journeyed there by accident or design, and I kept them alive in my kettle and took them home to be seen by my mother and father, but I could not eat them and returned with them and set them free. My little brides.

Another time, with Bob and Mel Lamar, who lived at 943 Superior Street, we fished the other end of the park and caught one lone catfish that we threw on the bank and the next day, returning to fish, he was still there, breathing, his skin shriveled, dry, and caked with mud. ♣

From I Called It Home, a memoir by David Kherdian, to be published this fall by Blue Crane Books, Box 291, Cambridge, MA 02238. Photo of Island Park courtesy Racine Heritage Museum.



Two Medicine Pass

All day we circle the canyon wall
to reach this pass, scratch our way
above river till twilight empties us
on Two Medicine Lake where we pitch

camp in mountain shadow, cool
wind washing the trail behind us.
We scabble the rocky shore
to its source, a glacier slowly

ravaging stone, snowmelt trickling
to the lake where dark trout
stare with aboriginal eyes.
We crawl up the glacial belly.

Cold silt shivers our skin
and the mountain crumbles under ice.
We laugh, nervous, so close
to where dark ice swallows

sound and the outer wind circles
the carved canyon walls.
Later, the night so black
I lose your body, we stare

at the yellow liquid fire,
pass the bottle of My Cousin's
Claret you carried ten miles
and six thousand feet, watch pine

explode in sparks that fly up
like angry birds into the black.
We lean back on tired legs under
spilling stars, afraid to touch hands.

The sky ripples like the river
we followed all day just to get here,
where we circle alone, too lost
to bruise ourselves with love.

David Martin

Fireflies

Summer evenings we huddle the
concrete slab, our *stoop*, and wait
for the first wind. Dad's fishbelly
feet trumpet from his pantlegs.
His face glowers from the awful
heat. I find a mustard sandwich
in his lunchpail and chew the warm
bread. He uncrumples a pack
of Luckies, pinches one straight,
spits flecks from his tongue.
I love the long first breath and the blue
smoke. He works too hard, fourteen
hours under the sun's blistering eye,
and we can feel his arms and neck
burning. "God *dammit*," he says,
as if to say he's tired and hot,
and from behind the screen mother
sets the supper, cold sockeyed salmon,
beefsteak tomatoes, cucumbers sliced in
vinegar, and boiled new potatoes.
My brother and I swat bees and mosquitoes
that fester in the neighbor's sour crab
mash. We wait for the evening to breathe,
for dusk to swallow us in cool shadow,
for fireflies to streak the dusk with their
sliding syrup drawl. Dad lights another
Lucky and the match smolders
in the dark stubbled grass. The heat fades
from his eyes. We bring him insects
cupped and buzzing in our hands
and wait for the first breeze.

David Martin

Clara and the Garter Snake

It was one of those familiar love-hate relationships: she called him Red and invited him into her garden, then went anywhere else herself. He did

a leisurely bug lunch, then hung out under the apple tree just to say thanks, low-tailing it into the laurel hedges when she screamed and ran.

She couldn't make the leap from theology to farming; he never thought to offer utilitarian fruit.

Nadine S. St. Louis

Sidewalk Cyclist

So there I am, minding my own and contemplating the neighbors'

About time they got that lawn . . . business, just about to step aside from a low-hanging branch when there he is, no word or sound,

What the . . . hell-bent for collision pedalling four inches away from my right elbow

Didn't your mother teach . . . wrapped in that cloud of invulnerability twelve-year-olds wear

You could have killed . . . and then in a gasp gone, hurrying away on his school's-out errand

Going swimming this early in . . . the way his mother will see him go five or six years from now, telling herself he can't possibly be ready to leave this soon.

Nadine S. St. Louis

Leave-Taking

To the irises, I risk his name, my father's, and an abandoned Wisconsin world comes back.

His flowers, now in loamy Ohio soil, breathing their blue, are freighted with the regret of things long ago finished—the extant scenes of childhood, the voices of the birch trees in our back yard, adolescent storms, scattered laughter.

Leaving, I can still hear his words crash into the sword-shaped leaves, bright blooms, soft sepals. Going, there's no again.

We shattered the colors of that last, warm afternoon. Now full of years, I still touch his flowers and his hand.

Nathalie Ketterer

Saturday Noon

At noon on Saturday this mulling sized
middle western town dies an ancient death—
the tightening cords of sub-zero cold
subdues hopes dreams and aspirations—
when not even an audible hiccup of possibility stirs—
at such times we must learn how to listen
to jazz or rock and roll—putting ourselves
at the drums—singing the lyrics as if we have created
them—to put ourselves at the piano playing riffs
or sling a guitar from our shoulders and make music
a personal expression of natural warmth to drive
against the cold—burrowing at it gopher-like to prevent
walls from folding up and falling to their knees—

David Spiering

Emblems 2

the clouds sky and thinking

I console myself as I glance
up at the winter sky—the clouds
mirror the fallow ground once supporting grain
the clouds leap forward flame fire flow
lunge gracefully floating puffy ovals—
my brain clouds claw their grain fields
thrashing the good grain and burning the chafe—
I fear the thrashing of language
the required violence to attach clouds to paper—
the inadequacies of language crushing what floats
in my head—the trimmed trammels of ale rhyming
with bale stale pail scale and curtail—
the nettlesome searches I conduct
carrying a cattle prod and a butterfly net
shocking pied pieces of myself
from ponds swamps streams bushes
hillocks flower pots green grasses and blue sky—
whatever emerges flash fast I snap my net over
attempting to wrestle it into a pretzel of language.

David Spiering



THE ART OF LEGISLATIVE POLITICS by Tom Loftus.
The Congressional Quarterly, 1994. 179 pages. \$18.95.
ISBN 0-87187-980-8.

by Jerry L. Bower

Tom Loftus served fourteen years in the Wisconsin Assembly, beginning in 1977. In 1981 he was elected Democratic majority leader and then, in 1983, Loftus was chosen Assembly speaker by his colleagues. He served in this capacity until his retirement from the Assembly in 1991, after he had lost the 1990 gubernatorial race to Tommy Thompson. In 1993 President Clinton named Loftus ambassador to Norway.

This narrative is an insider's explanation of how Wisconsin state government operates. Loftus's text flows smoothly, is free of politicians' jargon, and tells some interesting stories about what a speaker can and cannot do. Loftus explains that the "power" of the speaker is something that each speaker creates through his relationships with his own party colleagues, with the minority party leadership, and with the governor.

In the latter relationship, he contends that the speaker's primary task is to defend the independence and integrity of the legislature, even when the governor is a member of the speaker's own party. Loftus argues that the governor/legislature tug-of-war is an uneven contest, due to the governor's veto-in-part power, which is much more powerful than the line-item budget veto to which it is usually equated. With the veto-in-part authority, which has been upheld by Wisconsin's Supreme Court, Loftus says, "... the governor could write a new law simply by playing a one-man game of scrabble" (page 72).

Loftus tells us much about the nuts-and-bolts of Wisconsin politics. For example, he explains why campaign financing limits do not work, even in a state that has some of the toughest laws and enforcement mechanisms in the nation. In chapters dealing with abortion, gun control, and the teachers' union (WEAC), Loftus explains the role of interest groups in the legislative process and how the speaker attempts to finesse potentially explosive battles in the Assembly. For example, the fervor of the major interest group on either side of the abortion issue put every legislator on the spot—they would prefer never to have to record their vote, because no matter how they vote, someone will be angry. So Loftus sent abortion measures to the Assembly Health and Human Services Committee, with the understanding that no abortion bill would be reported out until very late in the session. Then the Assembly routinely passed a bill and sent it to the Senate, where it would die because the senators did not have time to consider thoroughly the measure before adjournment.

Loftus notes that improper lobbying can occur even in Wisconsin, which has very strict lobbying control laws. He makes it clear that lobbyists do not buy votes, rather they spend money and do favors in order to create access to legislators. Loftus believes that the ethical behavior, which normally prevails in Wisconsin, is fostered by three things: tough laws and

their strict enforcement, leaders who set good examples, and fear that the capital press corps will expose any misbehavior.

In his closing chapter, "Legislatures Then and Now," Loftus expresses his opinion about the changes in the makeup of the Wisconsin legislature that occurred while he was a legislator. He writes that there is much more individualism among legislators today, as contrasted with being team players; this is bad, Loftus says, because a team effort is necessary to enact legislation. Loftus also notes that many more female legislators are being elected today, which is a positive development.

Overall, this is an informative and very readable book. Loftus takes the reader inside the Assembly to explain how the legislature works in a down-to-earth fashion. This is the book to read if one truly wants to know how the Wisconsin legislature works.

Jerry L. Bower is professor of history at the University of Wisconsin Center—Richland, Richland Center.

NOTES FROM LITTLE LAKES by Mel Ellis. Illustrated by Suzanne Ellis; edited by Ted J. Rulseh. The Cabin Bookshelf, 1234 Hickory Drive, Waukesha, WI 53186. 260 pages, \$23.95 hardcover. ISBN 0-9653381-0-X

by Faith B. Miracle

I have an old file marked "Ellis" which holds some yellowed newspaper clippings that bear the heading "Notes from Little Lakes." The crumbly clippings have survived various purgings over the years, even my most pragmatic attempts to downsize personal archives. Now, with the publication of this collection, at last much of my Ellis file can be relegated to the recycle bin.

As a young mother living in Milwaukee, I clipped and saved these informative and spirited "notes" because they helped our family observe and better appreciate the natural world around us; and they offered important lessons about human nature, as well. Little Lakes, the name Mel Ellis gave his fifteen acres in Big Bend, was home to his family, which consisted of daughters, known as Rebels, and the two women who assumed the role of Rebel Queen, first Bernice and, after her death, Gwen.

From the time Ellis purchased the land in the late 1950s, it served as a sanctuary not only for the humans who lived and worked and played there, but also for an amazing assortment of plants and animals, "so close to Milwaukee that we can see the haze from the city's smoke."

It is surely a little like your backyard, like the city park you visit, only perhaps there is more of it and it is some wilder. It is a place like your home, with all the good things and all the sad things and all the little everyday happenings which, adding up, accumulate into living.

Ellis's writing appeared in *The Milwaukee Journal* for more than twenty years. He produced thousands of columns as well as numerous short stories and articles for national magazines. He wrote eighteen books, including the award-winning *Wild*

Goose, Brother Goose, which was made into a television film, as was *Flight of the White Wolf*. When he lost his desire to hunt, he fell from favor with hunting magazines, but he continued to write about the outdoors world he knew and respected. He died in 1984.

Learning about nature from Mel Ellis brought one in touch with the sublime as well as the heart-wrenching. He daily faced the entire range of possibilities at Little Lakes and, a realist, he reported all aspects of life with humility and reverence. He responded deeply to the four seasons, rejoicing in Earth's beauty, accepting nature's harshness.

Spring is a time of promise and hope, but it is also a treacherous season. The sun glows warmly, enticing birds north and all creation to flower. Then, in one hour, the heat is turned off, and the skies darken when the wind comes beating down on the earth to cover it with snow, sleet and death.

Summer can be torrid when it "has laid a hot hand on the hills":

Summer is a river of sweat through the dust on the bronze cheek of a child. It is the strident, insistent cicada, heat bug sawing away to make iron filings of a quiet afternoon. It is dazzling on water. Blinding on glass. Wavering from concrete. Lightning flashes from car chrome. Hot enough to turn a blue sky white.

Autumn brings a special magic, "when the moon is round and high and white and the world pulsates to the wingbeat of passing flocks."

Lie in a glade and keep an eye on the moon for the shadows that cross it. These are the migrants, mysteriously moved to desert the homes where they were born and raised and to go to a land they have never seen.

Winter offers many delights at Little Lakes. It is a time to savor an apple before an open hearth, for rosy-cheeked Rebels to romp in the snow; but the winter chores must be done, and cold is not seen as a friend:

I hate it because it has no character. Storms at least shriek or moan. Thunder rolls and lightning flashes. No one can mistake the warnings. But cold is invisible. It comes like a ghost . . . with freezing fingers to wrap death around the unsuspecting.

Any time of the year there are opportunities to remember humankind's place in the scheme of things:

Look up from your dark earth at the sparkling universe. Believe then that your finite mind is no more capable of grappling with the infinite than a just-born babe can fathom physics. So, forget your conceit and let the reasons be.

And always adventure entices and beckons:

There is no substitute for adventure . . . It is as fundamental as hunger. It is as compelling as love. It is as necessary as air. It is as exciting as Saturday.

As the years passed, things changed, of course. The pets were gradually phased out as the Rebels went away to the university and eventually to establish their own homes. But it was difficult to think of Little Lakes without children.

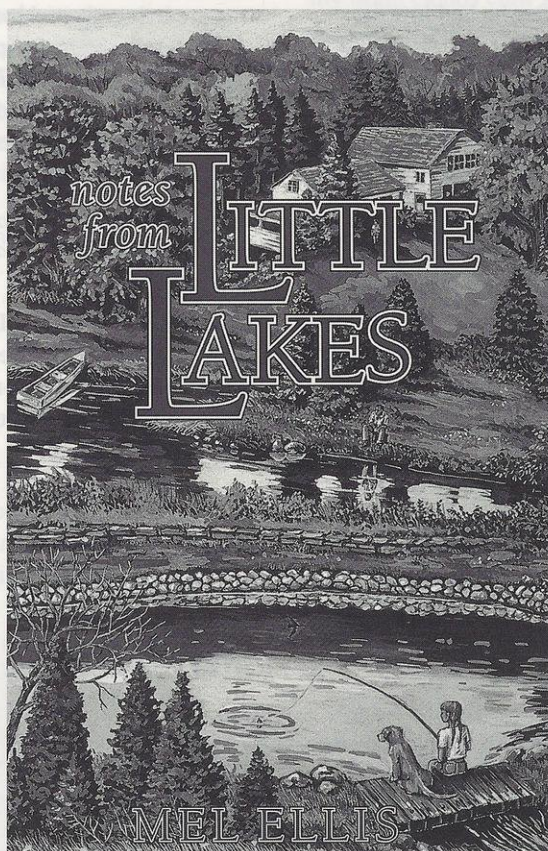
I walk the path beside the vines and, beneath the arching limbs where willows have wept their leaves, I am startled to hear the sharp ring of a skate blade, though no one is skating. I turn my head a little and look up toward the house, but there is no snowman standing there, even if a moment ago I saw the quick black flash of its charcoal eyes.

Occasionally buyers cast longing eyes on Little Lakes, envisioning condos and tennis courts amidst the ponds and thriving trees. But how could the woman understand that no

garden would grow where she pointed "because it was a pet dog burial ground and the earth was too salty from tears." And how could they sell to someone who "did not even estimate the worth of all the pond diamonds set to sparkling when a breeze scuffed the water."

Little Lakes was not sold during Mel Ellis's lifetime, and today it remains the home of Gwen Ellis. She has taken steps to preserve the land as a haven for wild creatures that choose to live there and humans who choose to visit, providing, as Mel specified, they are people who have "learned the language of a wagging tail, a plaintive meow, bird songs that celebrate in litanies the wonders of the world."

One is very much aware of a special quality about this place. Perhaps it has something to do with ancient times when Indians walked the trails. Surely it has something to do with all the joy and sorrow a growing family experienced there. Mostly



it has to do with a writer who was deeply in love with the land, a keen observer who left an eloquent account of life at Little Lakes for us to read and appreciate.

Faith B. Miracle is editorial director for the Wisconsin Academy and editor of the Wisconsin Academy Review.

GERALD J. BOILEAU AND THE PROGRESSIVE-FARMER-LABOR ALLIANCE: Politics of the New Deal by James J. Lorence. University of Missouri Press, 1994. 324 pages. \$44.95. ISBN 0-8262-0918-1.

ORGANIZING THE UNEMPLOYED: Community and Union Activists in the Industrial Heartland by James J. Lorence. State University of New York Press, 1996. \$22.95 softcover, \$68.50 hardcover. ISBN 0-7914-2988-1.

by Frank P. Zeidler

Two books by James J. Lorence, professor of history, University of Wisconsin Center-Marathon County, will help anyone now contemplating the results of the new welfare reform legislation and prospective unemployment to understand what may lie ahead. Lorence's book on the political career of Congressman Gerald Boileau of the Wausau area and on the activities of people trying to help the unemployed in Michigan during the Great Depression of 1929-1940 will find in these books intimations of what could occur if the number of unemployed swells as a result of welfare reform. Militant leaders will arise, political coalitions will form, and demonstrations may take place on behalf of the unemployed if the historic reactions to the Great Depression in Michigan and Wisconsin are any indication of what may happen in our current situation.

Rep. Gerald Boileau—Jerry, as he was familiarly known—came from a family of modest means in Minocqua, served in the army in World War I, and went to Marquette University Law School after the war. He decided to practice law with a fellow student in Wausau. There he soon became engaged in the Progressive Republican group within the Republican Party, rather than with the party's Stalwarts. Further, he allied himself with Senator Blaine's element within the Progressive Republicans. Boileau also became friendly with railroad labor in the area, and in the era of Prohibition he was known as a *wet*, something which helped him among the Germans of his congressional district. Boileau's aggressiveness in making alliances led to his becoming district attorney; and in 1930 in opposition to a La Follette-supported congressional candidate in the Republican primary, he was elected to Congress.

In the Congress, Jerry Boileau identified himself with the demands of labor, of the unemployed, and of the farmers—particularly the dairy farmers of his district. In Congress he became a charter member of the Allied Progressives, a bloc of representatives led by LaGuardia of New York, but consisting mostly of people from the northern plain states. The bloc's voting patterns crossed party lines. After the election of Franklin

Roosevelt, the bloc, in several measures involving farm relief and unemployment issues, sought to push the Roosevelt administration to make larger appropriations than it offered to do. Boileau also fought against several farm bills which he thought would increase the competition for Wisconsin dairy farmers.

After 1934, a liberal bloc emerged in Congress in which representatives from Minnesota with a farmer-labor background played important roles. Boileau allied himself with this liberal bloc and became a main spokesperson for it in Congress.

Gerald Boileau's congressional term coincided with the early rise of Adolf Hitler in Germany and the purges of Stalin in the Soviet Union. In the case of United States policies toward the prospect of war with the former, the Wisconsin and Minnesota Progressives were reflecting, as were the Socialists and pacifists, opposition to wars in principle. In a Naval Appropriations Bill of 1935, Boileau called the navy "absolutely useless except for foreign wars and wars of aggression." He did, however, recommend shifting dollars from naval expansion to air power in order to respond effectively to aggression against the United States. Boileau also did not believe the United States should keep up with Japan's naval construction program and argued that Japan faced different strategic challenges.

According to Professor Lorence, Boileau's suspicion of the military and his opposition to war were based on his personal experience in World War I and on the Progressive argument that it was impossible in a democratic society to have both guns and butter.

As to the Spanish civil war also occurring after 1935, Boileau joined twenty-six U.S. senators and thirty-four congressmen greeting the Spanish Cortez and supporting the Loyalists in their fight against General Franco. This angered the Catholic leadership and also constituents, and this stance may have contributed to Boileau's defeat in the election of 1938.

One of the important issues before the Congress was the funding for WPA projects. During the 1930s the Communist Party, U.S.A., became increasingly influential and effectively took over the Workers Alliance of America, which was the largest organization of unemployed. The Workers Alliance was especially strong in Wisconsin. Despite warnings from Socialists and Farmer-Laborites, Boileau associated himself with activities which were thought to be communist-inspired, and he participated in organizations which were thought by some to be communist fronts. This did not hurt Boileau until the elections of 1938, when a reaction to the communist influences in American labor and a general national reaction to liberal legislation took place, perhaps because war work was now reducing unemployment. Boileau lost his congressional seat in his fifth bid for election.

Jerry Boileau hereafter practiced law and ultimately became a circuit judge showing a considerable leadership in shaping judicial procedure in the state. His main political problem was that he was a Progressive at a time when the Progressive rank and file was going into the Democratic Party

as a result of the New Deal. Boileau later had some ties with the new Democratic state leadership. He died in 1981 after serving in public life from 1923 to 1973.

Perhaps the lesson of his life is that belonging to the political party favored by the voters at any given time is more important than being a champion of people suffering economic hardship. In the case of Jerry Boileau, gratitude for battling in Congress received limited rewards at the ballot box. Lorence's book on organizing the unemployed in Michigan again surfaces some of the same political conditions that affected Wisconsin, but only more complicated in the politics of Michigan with its great industrial establishments in the southeastern part of the state, its conservative religions in the west, and its politically active Finnish population in the Upper Peninsula.

Again, too, the problem of Communist Party control of the Workers Alliance, the relation of the unemployed to the organized trade unions (especially the new Congress of Industrial Organizations, or CIO), and the rise of militant auto worker union leadership is recounted in careful detail. Here the names of national figures frequently appear: the Reuther brothers, Detroit Mayor and Michigan Governor Frank Murphy, Henry Ford, John L. Lewis, and Homer Martin (the first United Auto Workers president) are among those whose roles are portrayed, though sometimes only peripherally, in the problem of getting the unemployed some means of subsistence. Many of these same people were on the Wisconsin scene also.

The biggest effort was to organize WPA workers, and in this the Workers Alliance with both Communists and Socialists in its leadership had some success. Militant action in demonstrations, sit-downs, and lobbying were effective. Again, however, the whole scene changed with the arrival of war orders and defense preparations beginning in 1938, and the problem of unemployment disappeared with war work.

Organizing the Unemployed reports tactics by organizers which could be repeated if sizable numbers of people are removed from public assistance, do not find private work, and major hardships result.

To this reader, a tragic situation in the case of the Farmer-Labor-Progressive movement and the Workers Alliance movement is illustrated in both books. The Communist movement, tied to the murderous regime of Stalin, fragmented the effort to improve the conditions of the poor. Labor and Socialists, committed to democracy, would not join forces with agents of a totalitarian regime in working for the relief of the poor. Within the effort to help the unemployed, there was this struggle between advocates of democracy and advocates of a totalitarian state. It is necessary to read Lorence's books for a full understanding of the Great Depression in the Midwest.

Frank P. Zeidler, former mayor of Milwaukee, is a member of the state executive committee of the Socialist Party of Wisconsin.

BOOK AND VIDEO NOTES

DRIFTLESS SPIRITS: GHOSTS OF SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN by Dennis Boyer. **Prairie Oak Press, 1996. \$14.95 softcover, 184 pages. 1-879483-35-1. Order from 821 Prospect Place, Madison 53703**

The author is a Dodgeville attorney who has become intrigued with supernatural secrets which he has discovered in the ridges and valleys of southwest Wisconsin. These ghostly stories stretch in time from Native American tales to contemporary versions of folklore.

SEWING TOGETHER: A BIRTHDAY QUILT by Jocelyn Riley. **Her Own Words series, 1996. 15-minute video, \$95 1-877933-65-1; 114-page resource guide, \$45, 1-877933-66-X. Order from P.O. Box 6264, Madison 53705** Riley's nineteenth video in her series on women's history, literature, and art documents a project in which fourth- and fifth-grade students design a patchwork quilt which includes the name and birthday of each young artist as well as their enthusiasm for working alone and together.

FRAGMENTS IN US by Dennis Trudell. **The University of Wisconsin Press, 1996. 73 pages softcover, 0-299-15214-6** This collection of poems by the winner of the 1996 Felix Pollak Prize in Poetry (selected by Philip Levine) covers thirty years of writing about a wide range of topics, including basketball, Central America, family relations.

JESSICA by Stephen M. Miller. **Pudding House Publications, 1997. 26 pages softcover, 0-614-24057. Order from 60 N. Main St., Johnstown, Ohio 43031**

A story of a relationship and its development, told through poetry and poetic prose with strong flavor of the out-of-doors.

RECENT CHAPBOOKS FROM CROSS+ROADS PRESS
P.O. Box 33, Ellison Bay 54210

FINDING THE LOST WOMAN by Dyanne Korda, 1996. **33 pages, 0-9644333-9-7**

A poet's journal by a Stevens Point author.

THE LAST HOUSEWIFE IN AMERICA by Donna Balfe, 1997. **53 pages, 0-9644333-7-0** Poetic musings and pensive reflections for each month of the year.

THE JAMES DEAN JACKET STORY by Don Skiles, 1997. **37 pages, 0-9644333-8-9** Four short stories by Skiles, whose first collection was nominated for the Hemingway Award.



The Wisconsin Academy at Monona Terrace: “The Wright Picture”

by Richard J. Daniels

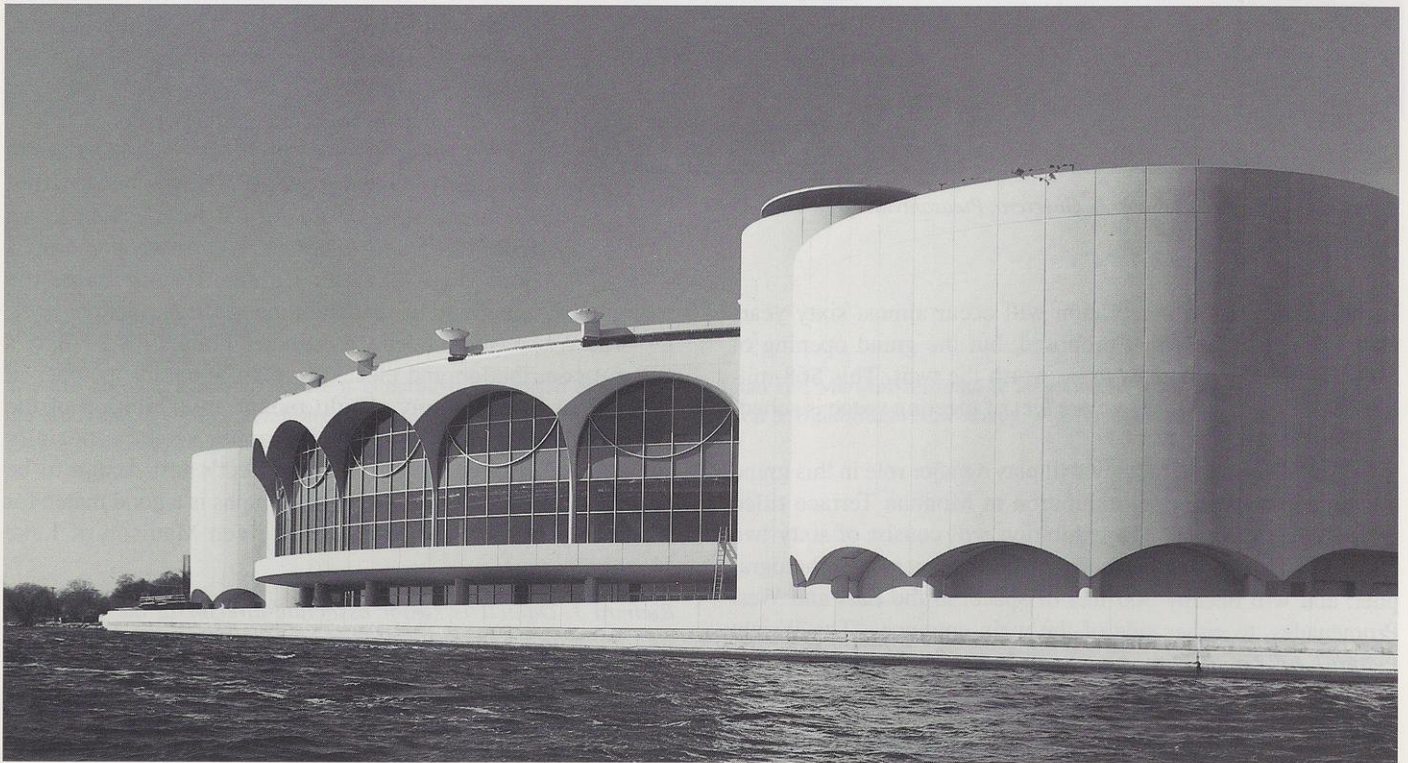
By her foresight and courage as manifest in the promotion of the Monona Terrace Project, Madison itself awakens as a city and ransoms its own beautiful site, combining her present civil assets with her future growth and power. A great pooling of her actual resources, in which she herself—Madison—creates wealth beyond immediate computation—a real wealth that is both physical and spiritual.

Frank Lloyd Wright, 1955

The extravagant prose of Frank Lloyd Wright seems quite fitting today as the construction of the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center, on the shoreline of Lake Monona in Madison, nears completion. The common criticism voiced since completion of the exterior is that one can only properly see the building from across the lake. This criti-

cism overlooks something fundamental to Wright's architecture: the preeminence of the experience of his buildings' interiors. The perspective offered from inside Monona Terrace captures the beauty of Lake Monona, perhaps as never before.

As Wright's words celebrate the city of Madison, the city will celebrate Wright upon the completion of the Monona



Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center, Madison, Wisconsin, 1997. Courtesy the Monona Terrace Film Group.

Photo by Timothy Ellestad



*Frank Lloyd Wright and Pedro E. Guerrero, Pleasantville, New York, 1949.
Photo by Keneji Domoto.*

Terrace project. The celebration will occur almost sixty years after the project was first proposed, but the grand opening of Monona Terrace promises to be worth the wait. This \$68-million facility with 250,000 square feet of meeting space is scheduled to open on July 18.

The Wisconsin Academy will play a major role in this grand opening by mounting an exhibition at Monona Terrace titled "The Wright Picture." The exhibition will consist of sixty-two photographs by Pedro E. Guerrero, Wright's personal photographer, and will occupy 300 feet of space, in the East and West Promenades, to either side of the main entrance. "The Wright Picture" will be up from July 18, 1997 through June 30, 1998.



Guerrero's work is familiar to Academy members. He exhibited twenty-five photographs on Wright at the Wisconsin Academy Gallery in 1993. The good will formed through that exhibition and the encouragement of Gerard McKenna, the Academy's vice president of arts, and Terry Haller, former president of the Wisconsin Academy Foundation, helped ensure that this exhibition would occur.

Designed by James Richerson—master of fine arts in design and sculpture from the University of Chicago—the exhibit is divided into eight sections which include, among others, portraits of Wright; Taliesin in Spring Green, Wisconsin; Taliesin West in Scottsdale, Arizona; private homes and public buildings. Richerson worked closely with Aubry Banks and Anthony Puttnam, both of whom were students of Wright. Banks is responsible for the selection and design of the furnishings in the public space at Monona Terrace. Puttnam is the architect who adapted Wright's 1955 design of Monona Terrace for its present use as a convention center. Brian Lorbiecki of Wisconsin Public Television created the graphic design for the Guerrero exhibit.

Guerrero's working relationship with Wright began in 1940 and lasted until the architect's death. His photographs appear in numerous documentaries on Wright, including Ken Burns's *Florentine* Film documentary scheduled for release next year. Guerrero's work has been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, the Guggenheim Museum, among others.

In 1994, the year after his exhibition at the Academy, Guerrero published a book titled *Picturing Wright: An Album from Frank Lloyd Wright's Photographer*. He is currently preparing a book on Alexander Calder. He attributes the

rebirth of his creativity to his exhibition at the Academy.

The Wisconsin Academy recognized Frank Lloyd Wright's cultural contribution and elected him an honorary member in 1946. That the Academy should mount an exhibition of the work of Wright's personal photographer seems especially appropriate in what may be the architect's last design to be built. The beauty of Guerrero's photographs is a good match for the beauty of the view Wright has given Madison of Lake Monona.

Richard J. Daniels is senior associate director of the Wisconsin Academy and executive director of the Wisconsin Academy Foundation.



Taliesin, Spring Green, Wisconsin, 1940. Copyright © 1985 Pedro E. Guerrero.

Acknowledgments

The exhibition at Monona Terrace is generously supported by Timothy Erdman and Marshall Erdman & Associates, Madison, who have donated materials and labor for assembling and framing Guerrero's photographs; Nielson & Bainbridge, New Jersey, who have donated the frames; Midwest Express Airlines, which is providing transportation, and others.



*Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center, Madison, Wisconsin, 1997. Courtesy the Monona Terrace Film Group.
Photo by Timothy Ellestad*

Wisconsin Academy Gallery, Wright-related exhibitions:

- “The Artistry of Maginel Wright Barney,” Frank Lloyd Wright’s sister, curated by Mary Jane Hamilton, 1992.
- “The Images of Frank Lloyd Wright,” the photographs of Pedro E. Guerrero, 1993.
- “Frank Lloyd Wright’s Japanism: Japanese Art on Paper from His Collection,” curated by Virginia Boyd, professor of decorative arts at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1994.
- “Wright’s Monona Terrace: A Work in Progress,” a history of the project, 1996.

Wisconsin Academy Review, Wright-related articles:

- “Sweetness and Light” (life at Taliesin) by Robert Spence. Winter 1966.
- “Frank Lloyd Wright’s Sense of Geometry” by Narciso G. Menocal, March 1986.
- “Frank Lloyd Wright in Tokyo” by Ron McCrea, June 1987.
- “Connections: The Cultural Imperatives of Olgyivanna and Frank Lloyd Wright” by Mary L. Meixner, Spring 1991.
- “Maginel Wright Barney: An Artist in Her Own Right” by Mary Jane Hamilton, Fall 1992.
- “The Solar-Hemicycle Revisited: It’s Still Showing the Way” by Donald W. Aitken, Winter 1992–93.
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