



2018
Inductee



Bobbie Brown
Visual Arts – Painting

BOBBIE BROWN

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Bobbie Brown's paintings are inspired by nature and range from detailed realism to imaginative abstraction. Her highly detailed realistic artwork is mostly done in watercolor or colored pencil. Acrylic, pastel, and mixed media lend themselves to looser, more interpretive works. Whether realistic or abstract, Bobbie states: "I want my paintings to be interpretations of nature that evoke an emotional response, invite the viewer's imagination, and share my sense of wonder. By creating art, I celebrate life and attempt to communicate my thoughts, feelings, memories and imagination in a spirit of gratitude." Choosing titles and writing artist's statements about each painting are very important to Bobbie. She paints things that have touched her deeply and hopes that her creations will be personally meaningful to her viewers as well.

Bobbie was born in New York City on October 26, 1946. She graduated from North Plainfield High School, NJ, in 1964. In 1968, she earned a BS degree in Home Economics (minoring in Psychology and choosing all of her electives in Art) from the University of Dayton in Ohio. From 1968 to 1970, Bobbie was a Home Service Advisor for Duke Power Company in Charlotte, NC.

Before becoming a resident of the Fox Valley in 1988, Bobbie began her career as an artist in 1970 when she volunteered at the Alexandria, VA, Mental Health Center and shared her artistic gifts with Art Therapy classes. Moving to Coatesville, PA, in 1973, she pursued her passion for art while raising her family. Numerous classes were taken at Chester County Art Association, and she learned a wide variety of painting techniques in workshops with nationally known instructors. Mrs. Brown studied landscape painting at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 1985. Bobbie credits Anne Buffington and Pearl Slobodian as mentors who led her to become a professional fine artist.

As Bobbie's artistic abilities grew, she also encouraged and inspired other regional artists as President of the Brandywine Valley Art Alliance. An active member of the Creative Hand Artists' Co-op, she exhibited her paintings, nature collages, and silk floral arrangements. Living in Pennsylvania for fourteen years, Bobbie's became well known as her work was featured in numerous one-woman, two-artist, and group shows in the regional, national, and international level.

In 1988, Bobbie Brown moved from Coatesville, PA, to St. Charles, IL, with her husband Dan and sons Trace and Valin. Bobbie completed Master Gardener training in 1991, volunteering her time at the Kane County Extension Office. She designed and hand painted the signs with images of vegetables and herbs for their demonstration garden in St. Charles. Bobbie eagerly sought exhibition opportunities to continue her art career in the Midwest. As she began networking with other artists, she and Rich Nichols exhibited their work together at Marmion Military Academy in 1990. That same year, her painting received the Grand Prize Purchase Award at Elgin Community College's Works on Paper Exhibition. Outdoor shows included the Glen Ellyn Festival of the Arts and the 2004 and 2005 Invitational Fine Art Exhibitions at Oakbrook Center. As her work became better known in the Fox Valley, much of her time was spent creating commissioned artworks. She continued entering international juried shows as well as seeking local opportunities to exhibit her paintings.

As her sons entered college, Bobbie shifted her focus to full time employment from 1988 to 1997 as manager of the Corning Revere Factory Store in the Piano Factory Mall in St. Charles. She represented Corning Revere as a member of the St. Charles Chamber of Commerce.

Bobbie submitted several freelance designs that were marketed on products sold by Corning, and she designed the cover of their employee manual. As time allowed, Bobbie took classes at the Morton Arboretum and achieved certification, first in 1998 in Home Landscape Horticulture, followed by Botanical Art and Illustration in 2001. When the last college tuition payment was completed, Bobbie left Corning and once again launched into the joy of being a full time professional artist.

Joining the Nature Artist's Guild of Morton Arboretum, Bobbie found kindred spirits who shared her love of nature and art. After completing the Botanical Art Certificate Program at The Morton Arboretum, Bobbie became an instructor there until she retired in 2011. "I love teaching," she says. "There's a wonderful energy and enthusiasm shared by nature artists. The students are highly motivated and constantly amaze me with the beauty of their paintings. Each artist seeks to share what they find meaningful and inspiring in their artwork, and kindred spirits tend to become cherished friends."

Bobbie's paintings were shown widely in the Fox River Valley, including public libraries, restaurants, small businesses, churches, and hospitals. She continued exhibiting her works at DuPage Art League, Elmhurst Artists' Guild, Elk Grove Village Art Association, Morton Arboretum, Beverly Arts Center, Nature Art Show at Danada House, Campbell House, Bloomingdale Public Museum, Raue Center for the Arts, Dellora A. Norris Cultural Arts Center, Fine Line Arts Creative Arts Center, Schaumburg Prairie Center for the Arts, and Illinois State Fair Professional Art Exhibitions. Her artwork garnered numerous awards, including dozens of Best of Show awards, Awards of Excellence, and First Place honors. Bobbie gained a reputation as a sought after botanical art instructor at Morton Arboretum. She also taught botanical art workshops at DuPage Art League and Shake Rag Alley in Mineral Point, WI.

Memberships in local and national art organizations brought numerous opportunities to exhibit and market Bobbie's paintings in regional and international juried shows. Over the years, she was represented by William Ris Galleries in Stone Harbor, NJ, and Harrisburg, PA, State Street Gallery in Madison, WI, and locally by Anam Art Gallery in Naperville and Art Images Art Gallery in Geneva.

Bobbie Brown's paintings have been exhibited widely in juried and invitational shows, including the American Watercolor Society's 121st Annual Exhibition, the National Arts Club's 84th, 85th, 87th, and 88th Annual Exhibitions, the National Watercolor Society's 2000 Signature & Associate Members' Juried Exhibition, the Allied Artists of America's 92nd, 93rd, 94th, & 96th annual Exhibitions, the Pennsylvania Watercolor Society's 4th, 5th, 7th, & 27th Annual Exhibitions, and juried shows of the Salmagundi Club and the Catherine Lorillard Wolfe Art Club in New York City, and the Woodmere Art Museum, William Penn Museum, Harrisburg Art Association, and Philadelphia Art Show in Pennsylvania. Her work was also included in the American Society of Botanical Artists' 2002, 2003, & 2005 International Juried Exhibitions and the Colored Pencil Society of America's 10th, 12th, & 15th International Exhibitions, Second Experimental Exhibition, and Midwest Color 2004 Exhibition. She has had more than thirty single artist shows, including one in 2006 at Elmhurst Artists' Guild's Gallery at the Elmhurst Art Museum. Bobbie has won numerous awards for her work in national and regional shows, including the Jack Richeson Silver Watercolor Award in the Philadelphia Water Color Society's 103rd International Exhibition of Works on Paper, the Sharon & Danielle Ortlip Memorial Award at the Salmagundi Club's 2005 Juried Exhibition, and the Allied Artists of America's Pauline Law Memorial Award for Graphics at the National Arts Club in New York City. In 2006, her painting received the Second Place Award followed by 2007 & 2009 First Place Awards at the Illinois State Fair Professional Art Exhibitions.

Bobbie is a signature member of the Pennsylvania Watercolor Society, the Philadelphia Water Color Society, and the Colored Pencil Society of America. She has been elected to membership in Allied Artists of America and the American Artists' Professional League. She is an active member of the Nature Artists' Guild of the Morton Arboretum and served as their program chairman for several years. Bobbie was also previously program chairman for DuPage Art League. Mrs. Brown is a former president of the Pennsylvania Brandywine Valley Art Alliance. Previous memberships include the American Society of Botanical Artists, Chicago Artists' Coalition, Fox Valley Arts Council, DuPage Art League, Elmhurst Artists' Guild, and associate memberships in the American Watercolor Society and the National Watercolor Society. Bobbie served on the Sanford Prismacolor Advisory Council. Her work has been published in *Today's Botanical Artists*, The Colored Pencil Society of America's *Signature Showcase*, and *Vanishing Circles: Portraits of Disappearing Wildlife of the Sonoran Desert Region*.

Paintings by Bobbie Brown are included in public and private collections throughout the United States and in Great Britain and Japan. In 2004, she was commissioned by Ball Horticultural Company to create seven botanical watercolor paintings of plants included in their Centennial Collection. She also completed two commissioned paintings of 'Purple Wave' Petunia for the breeder of the plant in Japan. Two of Bobbie's commissioned paintings are included in the Vanishing Circles Collection of the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. Other collectors include The Sterling Morton Arboretum Library, Atlantic Refining and Marketing Corporation, Lukens Steel Company, Equitable Financial Services, Royal Paper Company, Francissen Landscape Group, Coatesville Federal Savings and Loan Association, Elgin Community College, and Elk Grove Village Public Library.

As the quality and attention to detail of Mrs. Brown's botanical paintings became widely known, she was sought after for detailed commissioned artwork. These included major works completed for Ball Horticultural Company, the Arizona Sonoran Desert Museum, and Daigaku Takeshita, breeder of 'Purple Wave' Petunia for the Kirin Brewing Company in Japan. Bobbie illustrated Chuck Bianco's children's book, *Big Hearted Little Phoenix*, and her paintings have been included in books published by the Colored Pencil Society of America, American Society of Botanical Artists, and the Arizona Sonoran Desert Museum.

Bobbie has served as a judge for Downers Grove Art League and DuPage Art League. She has demonstrated her painting techniques for local art groups including the Nature Artists' Guild and the Lifelong Learning Institute. In 2007, Bobbie's artwork was featured on the Lake Geneva Garden Club's promotional material for their House and Garden Cruise. Proceeds of this benefit were used to promote conservation and education and to help sponsor horticultural, civic, and environmental projects. Bobbie's engagement within the community found that she has donated her art prints for auction toward the scholarship funds, provided by the Fox Valley Beaux Arts, for students of the arts. She also designed the cover for a local church group's retreat manual and provided "comfort" when she painted a friend's dream as therapy.

Bobbie is most grateful to the numerous professional artists who so generously shared their artistic passion and passed on the techniques that she incorporated into her own artistic vision. Her hope is that her teaching and mentoring has likewise inspired other artists to paint what they love and share the gift of their creativity.

In 2006, I was contacted by Pan American Seed Company in Elburn asking if I would be interested in creating botanical paintings of 'Purple Wave' Petunia. In their offices, Daigaku Takeshita, Plant Breeder with the Kirin Brewery Co. Ltd. Plant Laboratory in Japan, had seen reproductions of seven of the botanical paintings I had created for Ball Horticultural Company for the cover of their catalog featuring their Centennial Collection in 2004. I was excited about the opportunity since 'Purple Wave' Petunia is such a beautiful plant that I use extensively in my own garden since it's introduction.

In correspondence directly with Mr. Takeshita, he told me that he would like to commission two paintings. One would be given to the Plant Laboratory where the 'Purple Wave' was bred, and the second would be for his private collection with limited edition prints given as gifts of appreciation to "persons of merit" involved in the breeding of the Wave petunia. He told me, "The success of the Wave petunia is historic accomplishment in the flower industry. I am so happy to be a breeder of the Wave petunia. I want to tell them how much I appreciate with your painting."

Of course I replied that I would be delighted and honored to do the two botanical watercolor paintings that Daigaku Takeshita had requested! We agreed on a smaller painting of a young plant showing the trailing habit, and then a larger one of a mature potted plant showing the cascading habit, which is pictured in Today's Botanical Artists. In the hopes that my completed works would be all that Mr. Takeshita had imagined and more, I began months of meticulous painting with great attention to accuracy and detail. Painting is a joy for me, and it was with great pleasure that I presented the first original to Mr. Takeshita here in St. Charles and saw the broad smile on his face! The second was shipped to him in Japan, and he shared with me photographs of the framed painting hanging on the corporate wall.

Bobbie Brown

PETUNIA F1

Wave® Purple'



Flower judges were awestruck when they saw petunia entry 92F17. Unlike all other petunias in 1992, this entry did not grow vertically but grew along the soil like an ivy ground cover. When a judge picked up a stem, it had rooted into the ground. By August, the stems radiated in all directions growing 3 to 4 feet and hugging the ground with a height of 4 to 6 inches. The totally unique plant habit, obvious vigor, and continuous flowering were traits previously unseen. The flower color was debated. Was it rose, magenta or purple? Finally in 1995, the petunia was introduced as an AAS Winner named, 'Wave® Purple.'

A young flower breeder, Mr. Daigaku Takeshita, with Kirin Brewery Company, Ltd., had an idea to breed a new petunia with traits that would be irresistible to home gardeners. He searched the globe for wild petunia species that were strong plants, easy to grow, free flowering and not susceptible to disease problems. Crossing numerous petunia species, he selected offspring with superior garden qualities. During the crossing and selection phase of breeding, his number one priority was garden performance. After several years, he was asked to prove that his petunias were superior to others on the market. With faith in his abilities, Mr. Takeshita entered into the AAS Trial. His petunia was recognized as an AAS Winner with genuine, credible new traits unavailable in any other petunia on the market. Mr. Takeshita was given the All-America Selections Breeder's Cup Trophy because of the impact 'Wave® Purple' made on annual flowers and the renewed gardening interest in the entire genus.

