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AT A GLANCE:

Gallery website
<http://www.rwnaf.org>

Currently Showing

Enlist! Art Goes to War, 1914-1918
 Exhibition
 Through 11 November 2018

Kent Ullberg: A Retrospective Exhibition
 6 September - 29 November

Eyewitness to History: The Civil War
 Library Exhibit
 5 September - 29 November
 (weekends only)

Coming Soon
A 19th Century Christmas
 Library Exhibit
 5 December - 3 January
 (weekends only)

Voices from the Archives:
 Don Temple
U.S. Army, Vietnam

**AROUND THE GALLERY
 CONTRIBUTORS**

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Around the Gallery

A Publication of the R. W. Norton Art Gallery

A Rare Visit from a Norton Favorite: Kent Ullberg: A Retrospective

Coming to the Norton’s visiting exhibition rooms from 8 September through 29 November of this year is one of our favorite sculptors. If, while strolling through our gardens, you’ve found yourself startled by the predatory prowl of a puma, or delighted by the sight of grizzly eyeing the waters for salmon, then you’ve seen Kent Ullberg’s *Canyon Watch* and *Waiting for Sockeye*. This month we’re extending the Norton’s cache of wildlife sculpture by presenting “Kent Ullberg: A Retrospective”. This show displays fifty of Ullberg’s works from his more than 250 smaller (relatively speaking) pieces along with five large scale photographs of some of his monuments (he has sculpted more than 50 large-scale monuments for various cities and institutions). As scholar Dr. David J. Wagner has written:



Deinonychus
 Kent Ullberg

While deceptively simple because of its elegance, Kent Ullberg’s sculpture is actually very complex. Ullberg’s genius is his ability to manage complexity by layering concepts, composition, and design in his works so that they are enjoyable as a whole and/or in detail and accessible at many levels. Like a world class athlete, Ullberg makes this look easy. But it is definitely not.

Ullberg was born in Sweden, his mother a textile artist and his father a musician. They raised the young Kent in a remote fishing village on the North Sea. As Ullberg says, “That is really where I developed that closeness to nature; it’s where all of my fascination with nature started.” But the sea had first call on him and he signed on with the Swedish merchant marine before he heeded the call of art. Hoping initially for a career as a painter, he enrolled at Stockholm’s Konstfack University College of Arts, Crafts and Design and only took a sculpture class in order to round out his curriculum. But it had another effect: “When I got my hands in clay, I fell in love with it.” While still in school, he began producing wildlife works, but was warned off by his professors. He notes, “Not only were you not really supposed to do realism, you weren’t supposed to do stuff that looked like anything – and certainly not wildlife.” One of his professors went so far as to warn him that he would never make a living at wildlife sculpture, declaring, “Look, why are you doing this? This is archaic; this is not the language of our time.” But it was clearly Ullberg’s language and he refused to give it up.

After brief periods of study in France, Germany, and the Netherlands, in 1967, he was offered a one-year job as a safari taxidermist in Botswana, Africa. Ullberg says, “I got to live my boyhood dream there.” He made friends with the Botswanan director of wildlife and parks who asked him to be part of launching the country’s first museum of art and natural history. As its curator, he led hunts designed to collect animals for the institution; he shot and skinned specimens, taking careful measurements and drawing countless field sketches. He states, “It’s my personal philosophy, and not everyone may subscribe to it,

A Rare Visit (cont'd)

that I do not sculpture anything I have not experienced and preferably nothing I haven't dissected. Until I've looked at the bones and the muscles, I know nothing."

In 1974, an offer from Charles Crockett, Director of the Denver Museum of Natural History, brought Ullberg to America to serve as curator of the museum's African Hall. In Denver, he met a number of other wildlife artists, some of whom introduced him to Bob Zimmerman, head of the foundry, Art Castings of Colorado. In July of 1974, Ullberg's first bronze was cast there, a wildebeest entitled *Migration*, produced in an edition of 15. Ullberg's career as a sculptor was launched.

Since then, his works have been exhibited at important galleries and museums around the world, and he has been commissioned to produce a significant number of monument sculptures worldwide, from dinosaurs in Philadelphia to whooping cranes in Washington, D.C., to a 65-foot-high installation for the Swedish Government Tele-Com Center. His Fort Lauderdale, Florida and Omaha, Nebraska installations are the largest wildlife bronze compositions ever done, spanning several city blocks. He has also become an ardent conservationist, working for preservation efforts around the world, while continuing to sculpt at his studios in Colorado and on Padre Island in Texas. In 1996 he was awarded the Rungius Medal, the highest honor bestowed by the National Museum of Wildlife Art. The award is given to artists, authors, and conservationists and other who have made significant contributions to the interpretation and conservation of wildlife and its habitats. It is named for premier wildlife artist Carl Rungius.

We are delighted to have this opportunity to share the work of this remarkable artist with you.

EA

**In the Library: *Eyewitness to History: The Civil War*
5 September - 29 November
Saturday and Sunday only: 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm**



Unknown
Soldier

Most of the time we find ourselves oblivious to the "history" happening around us as we focus on the multiple tasks of our daily lives. But, as the old curse goes, "May you live in interesting times", occasionally, people are forced to admit that the times are indeed something out of the ordinary – and record what they see and do. Therefore, we have in the Norton's Rare and Antiquarian Collection of books these first-hand accounts of what it felt like to witness and participate in the most deadly war of American history – recording a time when our nation was almost riven in two and the dreams of our forefathers for a United States dashed.

EA

**In the South Wing Corridor: New "Recruits" Highlight
*Enlist! Art Goes to War, 1914-1918***

Join the Army Air Force: Be an American Eagle
Light Consumes Coal: Save Light, Save Coal
Be a U.S. Marine!
One of the Thousand Y.M.C.A. Girls in France

Those four posters, and 16 others provide new insights to the world of World War I. They are replacing some of the first posters put on display last August in the Norton's four-year exhibit on World War I.

In all, thirty posters constitute the current exhibit; however, the museum has collected more than 100 of these works, and will "freshen" the display so that all the posters will be on view during the exhibit's four-year run. Visitors who return frequently will see the "new" works that combine art and propaganda.

In the South Wing Corridor (cont'd)

These posters urged Americans to join the armed forces and for those at home to use less fuel and consume less food so that the American Expeditionary Force could carry the fight to the enemy in the Great War. During those years, city streets like those in Shreveport were outdoor art galleries, with posters glued to walls, displayed in public buildings, and slathered onto the sides of streetcars.

More than mere propaganda, the posters truly were art in their use of innovative design, new typefaces, images and imagery. They also signified a marriage of art and industry. New printing techniques allowed greater use of color, with strong images grabbing the passersby's attention, much more so than the "wordy", often one-color posters of the previous century.

The creators of these posters included some of the top artists in America. Charles Dana Gibson, creator of the famous "Gibson Girl," headed up The Division of Pictorial Publicity (part of the government's Committee on Public Information). The well-respected Gibson convinced other artists, such as James Montgomery Flagg and Howard Chandler Christy (creator of the "Christy Girl") to offer their talents free of charge. Eager to do "their part", such artists who may have charged \$15,000 for a commission for any other work, asked only to be re-imbursed for materials used, sometimes receiving only \$8 for their time and talent.

By the early 1900s women artists were getting their share of commissions, too. Neysa Moran McMein (1888-1949), who created *One of the Thousand Y.M.C.A. Girls in France*, enjoyed a career as one of the top graphic designers for leading magazines such as *McClure's*, *Woman's Home Companion*, and *Collier's*. An accomplished pianist, entertainer, and lecturer, she also sailed to France during the war where she entertained troops, often appearing at YMCA "huts" where the men could get hot coffee, sweet donuts, and a touch of home.

The exhibit enters its second phase on 7 May 2015 when it marks the sinking of RMS *Lusitania*, a passenger ship torpedoed by a German U-boat. Among 128 Americans who perished, two, a mother and daughter, were from New Orleans. Soon, visitors will see World War I weapons and trench art that soldiers fashioned from available materials, along with clothing and "kit" of American soldiers who were often called "Sammies" as well as "doughboys". The exhibit brings the early 20th century to life—a time of great social change, as well as a world war. Both still affect our lives today.

GF



Coles Phillips

Coming Soon

In the Library: A 19th Century Christmas

5 December - 3 January

Saturday and Sunday Only: 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Most of us assume that Christmas as we know it (aside from the consumerism) has been around for a couple of millennia now. However, such is not the case. Christmas is an accumulation of traditions and activities from various nations and even various religious groups over time and it really didn't take off until the 19th century. When Washington Irving popularized the early Dutch colonists' version of Santa Claus and Queen Victoria and Prince Albert put up a Christmas tree in Buckingham Palace, the holiday took on the central position in which we know it today. The 19th century saw the popularization of Christmas greenery like holly and mistletoe, the invention of Christmas cards, and *The Night Before Christmas* by Clement Moore, just to name a few. In this new exhibit, our library features Christmas illustrations, advertisements, and literature from the magazines, journals, and scrapbooks of the 19th century, replete with hopes for "peace on Earth, good will to men!"

In the Gardens: A Spring in September's Step

Too many people let September slip away in a garden. Summer's blooms fade. Autumn has yet to dip its brush and paint trees red and yellow and crispy browns. Gardens are overlooked in Septembers busy with back to school, back to work from summer vacations, and down here in the South: back to the gridiron.

September kicks off its own season at Norton Botanical Gardens, and I love one wonderful day of it in particular: the first time I step out in the morning, knowing the day will warm, but the thick, wet blanket of humidity that soaks a summer in the South has vanished. Before the month ends, September turns cooler and drier under a vivid, azure sky. Seems like my energy revs up a notch in this hyphen month between summer and autumn.



Encore Azalea

And yet, spring takes a curtain call in September. Likely you know of our dazzling display of azaleas in March and April, but do you think of returning to the Norton for another azalea show this month? Among our plant world here, **Encore Azaleas** are twice-as-nice: they bloom heartily in spring and again in September and October.

Okay, I'm a little partial to Encores; they just happen to be a Louisiana "native". Nurseryman Robert E. "Buddy" Lee of Independence, Louisiana coaxed this variety to life. One day in 1980, Buddy stopped in his tracks when he saw some azalea cuttings in flower in summer. So, he crossed spring-blooming azaleas with another variety from Taiwan, *Rhododendron oldhamii*. Eureka! Buddy gave birth to azaleas that do double duty in summer and fall.

We've spread our Encores in our Maple Ridge Garden where walking paths wind beneath tall trees and pause at garden benches. Don't expect the big, mass showings that you enjoy in spring. Still, Encores give you one more look at these flowers before winter separates autumn from spring.

Next, sniff the air. That's our **Butterfly ginger** (*Hedychium coronarium*). Its fragrance, however, comes at a high cost to its flowers. Each blooms only one day with beautiful, showy white flowers. But don't worry; one bud may produce hundreds of flowers during a six-week period. You'll have to enjoy them in the garden, however. Blooms snipped to bring their fragrance indoors don't last long. Butterfly ginger is tall, ranging up to five feet.

Elsewhere, the gardens blush with **bottle brush**, so named for its red flowers that remind you of that kitchen gadget with which you clean bottles. Its true name is *Callistemon*, a genus first described in 1814 by Robert Brown (1773-1858), a Scottish botanist known to pioneer the use of microscopes. If your space for gardening is limited, bottle brush is a good plant to pot.

You'll love September in the Norton Botanical Gardens, when it's part summer, part autumn, and with Encore Azaleas, a final salute to spring.

KD

Voices from the Archives: Don Temple US Army, Vietnam

Mr. Temple, a tax consultant who lives in Longview, Texas, served in Vietnam as a lieutenant in headquarters company of a signal battalion near Hue. While he regrets the ill-conceived strategy that lost the war, he does praise his training Officer Candidate School:

It taught you discipline. It taught you to take care of the details - if you take care of the details the big things will take care of themselves - and to set an example. The motto of Infantry OCS is, "Follow Me." And if you set the example and ask people to follow you then you've got to do it right. So, those are things that affected me my entire life and my entire career. When you look back on Vietnam, you know there were many lives lost there. One of my best friends in college, Jay Sims, I still remember him. He was an infantry officer. He didn't make it. You look back and you think about the politics of it and the thousands and thousands of people who died,



Voices from the Archives (cont'd)

and it was for a war that you don't really see any benefits from the results of that war to this day. The worst thing probably for anybody that was over there is that we didn't try to win the war. We just played their game. We could have won the war by going in and bombing Hanoi but I guess it wasn't politically expedient enough for them that it never did happen. And that's the reason so many people died and they shouldn't have. So that pretty much is my story.

Mr. Temple is among more than 800 men and women from the Shreveport-Bossier City area and beyond who graciously gave their time to tell us their life stories of service and sacrifice. We're presenting these stories as part of our Oral History Project, an ongoing effort to interview veterans of conflicts from World War II to the present. We also seek the life stories of eyewitnesses to and participants in the civil rights struggle, pioneers of the energy industries, those who created "The Shreveport Sound" in music, and others. Click [here](#) to view additional photographs and to listen to the audio of the interview with Mr. Temple. If you or someone you know would like to share his or her stories with us, please call (318) 865-4201 ext. 122, or contact ohp@rwnaf.org.

From the Permanent Collection: *Child of the Forest* by Stephen Elrick (1941-)

The title of this painting is a subtle tribute to its subject: the word "orangutan" means "person of the forest" in the Malay language. Orangutans are a Great Ape like gorillas, chimpanzees, and bonobos; we share 96.4% of our own genetic makeup with them! Living in the wild on the islands of Sumatra and Borneo, orangutans are recognizable by their long red hair; males often grow a beard and moustache as adults. While their average lifespan is 45 years, one captive male named Gus lived to age 58. Unfortunately, they are endangered as their natural habitat, the rain forest, is being cut down; only 6,600 remain in Sumatra and fewer than 54,000 in Borneo where a century ago there were nearly half a million. Like many other ecologically minded artists, Stephen Elrick tries to raise consciousness about this endangered species that so closely resembles our own, in this case with a sly sense of humor.



Child of the Forest
Stephen Elrick

Currently residing in Michigan, Stephen Elrick claims that he first developed his passion for nature in fifth grade when he put on glasses for the first time and *discovered that I could see every leaf on the trees . . . and the birds that were in them.* He started taking art courses in college, but discovered that his professor wasn't interested in realism as he was, but in the abstract and conceptual art that dominated academia at the time; he got a C- in the course! After graduating from Carleton College, certain that he didn't have the wherewithal for a career in art, he joined the Peace Corps, working in the Dominican Republic. There, he watched pelicans and egrets diving and floating around the home he built on the Ozama River. After returning to the states, he joined the staff of a reform school just outside Audubon, Pennsylvania, where he often visited the grounds of Audubon's first American home. Still not sure where his passions lay, he attended graduate school at the University of Chicago before a chance invitation by his sister to create a bird sculpture for her finally led him into the field of art. Of our particular painting, he noted, "*Child of the Forest* challenged my ability to show sorrow and vulnerability on one hand . . . while at the same time showing the pensiveness, bemusement and humor that I found in the orangutan."

EA

Worth Quoting

Animals are such agreeable friends – they ask no questions, they pass no criticism.

George Eliot



LIBRARY TOURS

Library tours are offered every Saturday and Sunday from 1:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

STROLLER TOURS

THIRD WEDNESDAY of each month we offer a tour just for parents and caregivers and their children 2 years of age and younger. All tours start at 10:00am and will meet in the lobby of the museum. Single strollers, tandem strollers, and front-carrying baby carriers are permitted. If you have questions please call Emily Feazel at 318-865-4201, ext. 130 .

GROUP TOURS

Seven group tours are offered at the Norton ranging from the Greco-Roman Tour: Myths and Wars to the Cowboy Artists Tour. Group tours are available by appointment year-round for groups of 10 or more and last approximately 45 minutes.

For more information or to schedule a tour or presentation, please call 318-865-4201, ext. 128.

SUGGESTIONS AND IDEAS?

To offer us feedback or suggestions, please email Ashleigh:
anm@rwnaf.org

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

The R.W. Norton Art Foundation is pursuing interviews with veterans of World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Iraq and Afghanistan. Also of interest are individuals who were involved in Louisiana's civil rights struggle, energy explorers, and those who gave the state of Louisiana and the city of Shreveport its musical and artistic heritage. Each interview will be digitally recorded by the Norton to be stored and used for historical purposes, and each interview subject will also be given a copy of the recording to share and preserve his or her memories for family and friends.

If you are interested in participating in or would like more information about the Oral History Project, please call 318-865-4201 ext. 122 or visit the Norton's website:
www.rwnaf.org

MUSEUM LOCATION AND HOURS:

4747 Creswell Avenue
Shreveport, LA 71106
318-865-4201
www.rwnaf.org

Tuesday through Friday 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Closed Mondays and National Holidays