



*Arthur Jones*  
Photograph by the author

## VESTIGE VERMONT

### *A Conversation with Dorset Artist Arthur Jones*

Images courtesy of Arthur Jones Gallery

**Ruth Greene-McNally:** When we met a few years ago, I was opening an exhibition on Jay Hall Connaway at the Wilson Museum at Southern Vermont Arts Center. I'd been interviewing his few remaining friends, primarily collectors and his gallerist, our mutual friend, Robert Deeley, who died recently at age 95.

**Arthur Jones:** I'm the last man standing.

**RGM:** As the last living artist associated with the collective originally known as Southern Vermont Artists, I'd like to know more about your background and affiliations with the artists. The arts played a significant role in the history of the region for the better part of the twentieth century.

**AJ:** It was a miraculous thing when the founders acquired the [Gertrude Devine] Webster Estate on the hill. Until then the artists were exhibiting on the green, at the Equinox, and the school gymnasium.

**RGM:** Was Connaway a part of the effort to find a home for the organization?

**AJ:** He was. He arrived in Dorset shortly beforehand but he knew the artists and he had local patrons.

**RGM:** Connaway made a brief appearance in 1926 under the auspices of Bartlett Arkell, president of Beech Nut Company. At that point, Connaway found the landscape dull. He wanted to paint the sea and Arkell sent him to Monhegan Island. At that point Robert McIntyre of Macbeth Gallery represented Connaway and helped with rent and supplies.

**AJ:** I've actually never been to Monhegan but the isolation of the island is a story unto itself. No doubt about it. I knew many people who painted there and it had to affect his mood because Monhegan is remote. His colors of the sea were very true. Given that he was born and raised in Indiana, it's remarkable that he became a marine painter. My impression is that it took



*“Big Barn” by Arthur Jones*

Connaway quite a while to achieve the feeling of the Vermont landscapes, especially some of the earlier ones. But he achieved his own Vermont landscape theme and I think he represented the elements quite well. I think he grew to adore it here.

**RGM:** After seventeen years on Monhegan, Vermont was salvation.

**AJ:** He wanted to be alone but he was liked. His gruff exterior was a persona. He really worked it. Did I tell you the day we met – it’s probably not publishable – but when he came here, somebody gave him a place to live up in Dorset Hollow. It would have been after World War Two. We had a very dry summer and there was a fire up there. I remember my father went to it and the whole town was trying to fight the fire. But after that Jay Connaway was always going around with a pack on his back and few knew who he was. A lot of people thought ‘who is this tramp up in the hollow?’ That was the appearance he presented. (Laughs) He probably set the fire! Some people referred to him as ‘poor Jay.’ (Laughs)

**RGM:** I’d not heard that story.

**AJ:** He’d kept himself very aloof. It wasn’t until Louise arrived from Monhegan that they became social and went out for dinner with artists.

**RGM:** I see a lot of emotion in his work. Intimacy is conveyed in his figures. I think the figures are about human connection, his connection to the viewer and the viewer’s to the landscape.

**AJ:** The way he placed the figures in the setting presents a tremendous amount of loneliness. He used the figure to translate the mood he was trying to create.

**RGM:** I have no hard evidence but Connaway may have studied Casper David Friedrich’s landscapes. He used a figurative device called the Rückenfigur, a German word for “back figure.” Prominent figures in that style have been in film noir and photography. In Connaway’s landscapes, the figure is anonymous, generally a silhouette.

**AJ:** I think, quite frankly, Winslow Homer did the same thing with his figures. I think Jay used the figure to create a deeper sense of the loneliness of the sea and the mountains.

**RGM:** There is similarity. Connaway's representation of the sea, to my eye, conveys more emotion. His figures are flat, painted with broad brushstrokes in a muted palette as opposed to Homer's use of color and detail. Connaway admired Homer but I think Connaway was expressing terror rather than beauty. He was injured at the start of the First World War and while recovering drew medical illustrations of patients for army doctors. He did a series of paintings depicting widows afterward. The motif is repeated throughout his career.

**AJ:** Jay came to Dorset by himself. I don't know what Louise was doing at that point. I had very few visits with Louise but one time she described the winters on Monhegan. The islanders did this progressive dinner thing to keep themselves going. And of course a drink in every place and a bit of food and that's how they survived up there. They were a very close-knit group on the island, those who wintered there. There were only a few of them.

**RGM:** Louise didn't come with him right away? I know he moved to Dorset in 1947. Bartlett Arkell left the Monhegan house to Connaway in his will and Jay sold it and later bought the house in North Rupert.

**AJ:** When Louise came, no one really knew about their daughter Leonebel until she finally appeared.

**RGM:** Leonebel was at Bennington College, likely the reason the Connaways chose to be close. Of course Robert McIntyre had a house in Dorset and had been a supporter. He exhibited with the Dorset Artists in 1927.

I wonder if we could talk about Southern Vermont Artists as an art colony. The collective was strong but it's never referred to as a bonafide colony of artists that attracted talent. I'd like to focus on some of the painters involved in the development of the group, yourself among them.

**AJ:** There is no one left. The only history is what's been printed up. I joined in 1948, a mere child.

**RGM:** How old were you?

**AJ:** Just twenty. Last summer when SVAC announced its sixty-fifth season, I realized I had exhibited in most of the exhibitions. I was blessed to know the artists. Wallace Fahnestock, for example, was so quiet and gentle. He



*“Looking South from Pawlet” by Arthur Jones*

was living up in the Hollow. And Herbert Myers was grand. I knew every one of them. They were actually all a part of my career. They all bothered to give me critiques and attention. Apparently they saw something in my work, even Jay. He was having a one-man show the same summer I was having mine; he was downstairs and I was upstairs. For some reason he came up to look at my show while I was getting it arranged. He didn't say anything until he was ready to go out the door and then said, "I like that one." Well, I couldn't see which one he was referring to – and it was very rare for Jay to make a comment. I never found out which one he liked!

**RGM:** Louise referred to him as monosyllabic. I'd like to know more about your formative years and influences.

**AJ:** I was born in South Dorset. I've lived my whole life in Dorset, except for two years in the service on the West Coast, but I never went overseas. At first, painting was a hobby and that's all it was going to be. Jay taught classes at SVAC but that one comment was all I got from him. At first I painted with a watercolor set and didn't tell anybody, but then Ada Davis, the daughter of artist John Lillie, discovered what I was up to and she asked if I wouldn't like lessons. So I painted with her in her room. We finally got outside to paint just once from nature – we were always up in her little

studio – but I always liked to start with small paintings. I never met John Lillie; he had died before I went there but she had all his paintings and was trying to sell them. Some people came to see her father’s paintings and I had one of my little paintings on the floor and I was off somewhere probably in my gardening work but no one could find me. The couple wanted the painting and Ada called my mother but she didn’t know where I was. Then Ada commented, “I’m going to sell it because he’ll be telling this story the rest of his life.” And of course, I have. So I sold my first painting for five dollars and it was amazing to me that I could sell it.

Jim Ashley and Dean Fausett both critiqued my work so I had probably had, in retrospect, as much [training] as if I’d gone to the Arts Students League because these artists provided feedback.

I learned from other artists. I would go out on a bicycle and clutch my materials in my arms and basket. Harriet de Sanchez had a great big touring car and knew several patrons. She asked one day if I wouldn’t like to go out painting with her. Of course I was ecstatic. We decided a bend in the river would be a good site to paint so she unloaded me and then announced she would be back to pick me up. She’d ride around for days to find the spot where she decided to paint. I did do a nice painting that day and she gave feedback.

**RGM:** You’ve been referred to as a self-taught artist, yet you had instruction through direct tutelage similar to students attending art school.

**AJ:** I’m self-taught in a way. I would look at paintings and say I can’t do that but as years went on I began to acquire technique. Jim Ashley offered great critiques. All my miniatures were selling quite well. They started at \$5 and in time reached \$100. I told Jim my little paintings were selling very well and my large work wasn’t selling. And he said, “Arthur, your mistakes don’t show in your small paintings.” That was the best critique. As a result I began to concentrate on the larger work because I saw I hadn’t achieved the same quality in them. Isn’t that a great critique?

**RGM:** Insightful but stinging.

**AJ:** He couldn’t have said it better. And of course, when I would tell my friends, they would say, well, I would never let him get away with that remark. But I thought he was so right and I would not have noticed otherwise. Harriet de Sanchez looked at a painting and said, “You need to push this back and pull this forward and I was thinking, but I don’t know what she means. But then maybe months would go by and I would do

another painting and I'd think, there it is.

**RGM:** Were you the youngest member of SVA?

**AJ:** I was. Once I joined, I was a go-fer and I hung all the shows. Around 1955 the person who was supposed to be jurying didn't show up. I was carrying pictures in and Clifford Ashley said, "You'll have to drop the paintings because you have to be one of the jurors." I was absolutely flabbergasted because you're not supposed to know the identity of the artists you're jurying. They don't tell you the names. But I had been carrying the artists' work in for five years and my eyes would crawl over these paintings to study what they were doing so of course I knew every piece coming before me.

If I had been born anywhere else, this all would have been fatal. This era was the place to paint. My father encouraged me. He was a farmer. I wanted nothing to do with farming. I painted little red barns in winter and I made money and renovated this barn and I'm living in it. I've been very lucky. I never sought a gallery for representation. The Arts Center gave me the exposure I needed.

**RGM:** But other galleries represented you.



*"Winter Vista" by Arthur Jones*



**AJ:** My first break was when Alison Leiberman from the Woodstock Gallery came to the Arts Center. She bought one of my paintings and road-tested it and sold it right away and then I sold through her for 25 years. And then Serena Merck from Merck Foundation was a good friend of the woman I worked for and she bought one of my paintings. She invited Mrs. Payson from Long Island to be a guest one summer. I was showing at the Dorset Theatre and she attended and she wanted to show me on Long Island. She helped artists by showing their work and her cut went to charity. From there, I showed in Wilmington, Delaware. There was another Vermont couple that wintered in Palm Beach and she had a very narrow gallery of miniatures hung from floor to ceiling. She contacted me and I sent her paintings and we were off and running. In 1968 we did a one-man show and I took some larger pieces down. The gallery put me up in a hotel and I then moved into the maid's room. I was in Palm Beach for two weeks and while I was there the first painting sold to people that had an estate in Warm Springs. They asked if I did commissions and I didn't have airfare home so I said yes to everything! I had my own cottage and a jeep. I think I was back and forth to Warm Springs for maybe three or four years doing paintings for them.

In the '60s I taught art at SVAC for two years and found it takes too much of your time so I stopped. Jay was director of the art school. Most of the artists taught classes. Then Jay found he didn't want to teach there and he took the whole gang to his place and I made up my mind I wouldn't teach either but after two more years I started teaching again. I had a fabulous group of ten women for over ten years.

Then in 1975, SVAC asked me if I would be the director pro tem. There was an upset between directors but within twenty four hours I knew I wasn't a born administrator. I didn't show my work the summer I was the director. A couple came in and I sold them a Gene Pelham and quite a few others. The couple knew quite a few people in town and was astounded when they discovered I was an artist. They came back the next year, furious that I had not told them so I offered to bring them to my studio. As director, I wasn't there to tap my work.

**RGM:** When the estate was purchased Yester House was transformed into galleries. Where did they hold classes?

**AJ:** There's a garage at the top of the hill where they keep tools. There was a small studio in the attic where we taught. Students had to go to Yester House for a bathroom and the reason I say this was because the first year I taught, I was scared to death. I found out I didn't have a lot of technical



terms. I had one private student that wasn't happy because I didn't know anything and she wished she hadn't spent her money. But within a few classes, I really began to tear them apart. I got the hang of teaching.

**RGM:** What other initiatives came out of the new facility?

**AJ:** A lot of the things we started that were so successful have been dropped along the way. But we had very successful events when people were still spending. We did a fifty-fifty auction so that the artist got fifty percent and the Arts Center got fifty. And one day, my little miniatures were going for \$300. And I knew this one couple that had been collecting them for some time and they ran it up to \$1,200 and everyone was gaga. But first of all, they knew they wanted it and second of all they knew it was an Arts Center benefit.

**RGM:** There were local press and reviews by New York art critics such as Royal Cortissoz and that summoned new clientele I'm sure. The local arts community had all the ingredients of an emerging art colony. Why do you suppose the local culture didn't align in character like that of Rockport, Old Lyme, or the Ogunquit Art Colony and others?

**AJ:** The difference is that Rockport and the other places encouraged people to come to them. Whereas, the Arts Center began as a small group of artists who needed a place to exhibit their work. They started showing at the Equinox and then the high school gymnasium but the organization only included artists within a fifty-mile radius. It was strictly local and limited. What we did get out of that was to have the fall show open to artists far away, but there was exclusion. The group wasn't encouraging wide membership. But I came along and of course others joined but you really had to be in this area to be part of Southern Vermont Artists. So it wasn't quite the same as Rockport. That would be my interpretation. Currently, if you're not a local member, you pay to exhibit.

**RGM:** Let's talk about your favorite artists.

**AJ:** Ogden Pleissner was the most generous in his critiques and involvement. When I was a gardener, I painted on weekends and nights and started having shows at the Arts Center. The woman I worked for was having a cocktail party and asked if I would tend bar. Ogden was one of the guests along with Herb Meyer and many others. I was just a bartender but Ogden came over to chat and the very next day, we were both opening

shows at the Arts Center. Ogden said, “Are you ready for your show?” I said, “Yes,” but he really had no reason to speak to me. It was wonderful that he took an interest. He had a big studio easel he didn’t want and offered it to me, but I never went to get it, and one day he said, “I’m going to do away with the easel.” And I said, “I’ll be right there!” So I’m painting on an Ogden Pleissner easel, which is extraordinary.

**RGM:** Robert Deeley once told me that Ogden Pleissner thought no one could paint the figure as well as Connaway. And meanwhile, according to Robert, Connaway admired Pleissner’s active figures in the landscape.

**AJ:** I “crawl” into these paintings of all these artists and Ogden looked to me to be as detailed as the rest of us but he really wasn’t. His figures take you where he wants you to look and the rest of the painting does what it has to do. I was always intrigued with that ability.

**RGM:** Speaking of detailed, did you interact with Lucioni?

**AJ:** I adored Lucioni. One year I overheard someone ask a patron if he collected my work and he said no because I was copying Lucioni. I wasn’t, but I painted details. If you put our work together you can see differences but we painted the same Vermont settings after all. He took much longer on his paintings than I would.

**RGM:** I admire the etchings. He was a master draftsman.

**AJ:** Yes, and the sad thing to me is the still lifes are so perfect but they’re almost going begging now. They’re not in vogue as much as they were. We go through those cycles every once in a while. Buyers are leaning toward Impressionism again. Lucioni was tight and detailed but, oh, I loved his work.

**RGM:** I was at the Denver Art Museum recently and came upon a Lucioni still life in the American wing. It was wonderful to see a Vermont classic on display in the West.

**AJ:** Luigi did a portrait of the opera singer Gladys Swarthout. She’s wearing a fur stole and, oh, you could feel the tips of the fur. And his velvet! I made a comment and others agreed with me; in the latter years – it happens to all of us – Luigi had lost his velvet. There’s a certain touch to make it right and it wasn’t quite there and I could sense the change because I had studied his

work for years. His “Self-Portrait” in the chair is probably the most effective piece of his I’ve seen.

**RGM:** It’s interesting that during World War One and the Great Depression Vermont artists seemed to do okay. In contrast to what was going on around the nation, patrons attended the annual exhibitions.

**AJ:** Other than World War Two when the exhibitions were suspended, the artists sold their work.

**RGM:** And this is a rather tucked-away pocket not easily accessed in that era. Transportation was limited before the Eisenhower-era highway system. Despite the sensation of Modern Art and the momentous ascent of the Abstract Expressionist movement at mid-century, landscape art remained relevant. Can you comment on the nexus of nature and culture and traditional and avant-garde art in Manchester?

**AJ:** Interest in the landscape and the area is what built the Arts Center. Local people would rent rooms to artists who would come up from the city to paint. Then others came and would stay at the inns and sit on the porches and enjoy the view and camaraderie. Patrons came here to experience Vermont and take it home and of course to mingle with artists. The art sales were strong. They came checkbooks in hand from far and wide to buy. The first little painting I sold in the gymnasium was to two women from Ohio. The locals would say, ‘Well, it’s your family buying your paintings,’ but I was pleased to say no this is a lady from Ohio!

Part of the current problem of the Arts Center is that we don’t have the same strength in the current artists. A lot of them are just getting into it. The local artists who started the organization like Bea and David Humphreys and Harriet de Sanchez (her nickname was “Tarzan,” by the way!); they were trained artists and had a following. Also, the Meyers, they were an entire painting family that included Reginald Marsh, an artist of fame. Reginald married Felicia Meyer. The family got him up here for one summer but he couldn’t stand it! He was all about Coney Island and city streets.

**RGM:** I read that he didn’t like it here. The fortunate thing is that he was here. His presence, however brief, was influential. The New York critics cited the work of established artists and local talent.

**AJ:** We were able to show Reginald’s work through the influence of Felicia.

But the founders gave us the nucleus that established decades of exhibitions. Those artists are gone now. They were strong enough to start something like the Arts Center. It's gotten to be a whole new group coming but I would say what made it work then were the people discovering the artists. Because of course John Lillie, a local, found his fame through Robert McIntyre who exhibited his work at Macbeth. When the Metropolitan Museum bought a painting by John Lillie that was a big deal for local artists. A lot of the artists wintered in New York and came here in the summer so that gave the area its particular character. Personally I don't think these artists cared about being an art colony; they just wanted a place to show their work. They wanted to paint and exhibit.

You speak of the landscapes, but as we opened up the Arts Center in the '50s, we began to get abstract paintings, but the staff wasn't quite sure what to do with them. Stewart Bennett from the Manchester Journal used to review the shows. One year we put the modern work all in one gallery; we didn't mix it, which we eventually learned to do but when Stewart reviewed the shows he referred to the abstract gallery as the room of horrors! You can imagine how the artists felt. But after that, we realized that if you hung the abstracts with the landscapes, one style helped the other.

RGM: You paint a number of solitary barns.

AJ: Several artists in my age group, who showed in the Manchester and Woodstock galleries, pictured farm scenes as symbolic of the region's agricultural lifestyle. They were the subjects to paint. But in this span of fifty years those farmsteads have disintegrated. And that's what makes them collectible. That painting over there (AJ points) is the barn encircled by Equinox Nursery on Route 7A. The barn is a now the florist shop but to look at the painting, you'd never recognize it. So much has changed. And that one there (Arthur points) with the yellow barn, that's in Pawlet. This (points again) was a group of barns in Pawlet that no longer exist. That barn (points) is on the West Road but most of the sheds are gone. That's the reason the artists are significant. They came here to paint these scenes and the experience is different now and so are the artists. I did a talk for the Rotary one night and they wanted to know how I survived as a painter and I quickly came up with the three B's: bridges, birches, and barns.

Winter itself is a subject. Winter offers more color than you'd think. The summer is pervasive green but winter has a distinct palette and the landscape is changing constantly. The older structures had real quality to

them. Now they're too expensive to build and they're erecting domes with cheaper materials and the farms and barns just don't exist anymore. Luckily, I made some money on little red barns in winter.

**RGM:** Lucioni referred to the rural barns as "Vermont Castles." They're vestiges of the past but indicative of the agrarian lifestyle and the area's artistic and cultural history.

**AJ:** That lifestyle was in decay and I wanted to preserve it. I wanted to save this old barn to put my students in it. Once I put in electricity and bathrooms, I made it my home. But the unpreserved barns eventually fall inward because in time the backbone shatters, they're leaking, and then the roof falls in. It's heartbreaking to see them self-destruct.

**RGM:** There's a somber beauty about them.

**AJ:** I've always painted the more lonely aspect of barns. When you speak of the figure, I usually don't like a figure in the scene because it's static but as you say, Jay's worked but I never included figures or cows. My farm scenes are barren to emphasize change. A fellow asked if I would include a cow in one of my scenes and I finished the painting and mailed it. When he got it, he called me because I outsmarted him – the title of the painting was "Cows Behind the Barn." (Laughter) And he loved it.

**RGM:** Your barns suggest activity transpired.

**AJ:** I'd rather paint an old truck or an old rake than human activity. It's very rare but I have maybe three winter scenes with a rabbit in the composition. I did a big winter scene with a squirrel, a rabbit, and a fox. But those are rare. I did a series of found objects and one with a dead rabbit and a squirrel, and one with a dead deer. Those were early paintings.

**RGM:** How did you address the problems in the larger paintings?

**AJ:** I wasn't spending enough time on them. I would decide it was finished and it wasn't. Artists think that by a certain point you have it figured out. But you never do. I will work upstairs and the light changes. I come down and I stare at it all night and it is so wrong. The layman may not understand that sometimes you spend a whole day painting and the next day you scrape it all out.

I worked past my limitations. Ada Davis was very reassuring. Sometimes

you understand what an instructor says to you after the fact, like what Harriet de Sanchez meant; so I did absorb all of their advice. I was in awe of Luigi but I seldom spoke with him even though I would study his work, his greens especially. I wouldn't steal his greens or other aspects because I didn't really agree with everything he did. That's a saving grace if you are going to be self-taught. It's not good to copy.

**RGM:** But it pays to be influenced.

**AJ:** Virginia Webb studied with Jay and painted like Jay. After she studied at the Arts Students League she came home and said, "Arthur, I had a wonderful time and I painted all day and I drew all night and I'm home and I can't do anything." I said, "Virginia, let it gel. You have to think about it." I, who never went to New York, was giving her a pep talk!

My neighbor Wallace Fahnestock owned a house at the foot of Nichols Hill. There was a family of Kinneys who lived at the top of the hill. It used to be Kinney Hill; then it was changed to Nichols Hill. Eventually, they'll have to call it Jones Boulevard but they haven't gotten to that!

**RGM:** They had better.

**AJ:** Wallace was the most kind, gentle man. His window faced Nichols Hill. He'd sit in the studio doing what we all do – staring at a canvas. Well, old man Kinney came down and knocked on the door and said, "Well, I seen ya' sittin' there. Thought I'd come in and visit." It was the epitome of naiveté. Poor Wallace was working, but poor Mr. Kinney didn't know this. And Wallace just endured this visit. You spend a lot of time mulling a painting over in your head.

**RGM:** Your larger scale work is on canvas and the miniatures are on board.

**AJ:** Once I moved into the barn I worked on larger canvases. I primarily did miniatures because they were the bread and butter. The early miniatures are on Masonite and the hard surface allowed for fine detail. I don't have eyes that can cope with all that detail now so I'm now working on canvas and I'm much more loose with that.

**RGM:** Which artists have you collected?

**AJ:** Only because you're a fellow writer and artist, I'll let you into the boudoir. I bought at various artists' studios. This is a Brian Sweetland in

pencil. That's a Natalee Everett. She recently died. Carolyn Droge did these cows. Dean Fausett did this Grandma Moses portrait. And this is Nicolas Comito. And here's an early Herb Meyer. That's a little Luigi over there.

**RGM:** Caught my eye from across the room.

**AJ:** The Arts Center had what they called a Little Collectors Gallery and they sold these for twenty-five bucks but I found that painting in 1980 at Arlington's Ice Pond Antiques and it was over \$300 and oh, I wanted it so badly. A friend said I'd regret it so I bought it. It's worth thousands now. I have about eleven Lucioni etchings.

**RGM:** Laurance Rockefeller collected your paintings. They're on display in the estate house at the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller.

**AJ:** I took a friend recently. We walked past several Hudson River School paintings and then there were mine in the dressing room where Mary had hung them. She bought them at Woodstock Gallery. I had one-man shows every two years.

For one show I was encouraged not to come to the opening early, to make an entrance, so to speak. I found a cheap motel and later went to the Woodstock Inn for a martini, walked down to the gallery like I was staying at the Inn, and by then they had dots all over the sold paintings. I was there another day and chatting with a lovely woman for some time, suddenly she said, "Oh, I think Larry is going to buy another one." I didn't know I talking with Mrs. Rockefeller! If you're in a museum, what's left?

**RGM:** I'd like to see you represented at the Bennington Museum.

**AJ:** One of your colleagues has put a bug in their ear.

**RGM:** You speak fondly of the old guard.

**AJ:** Yester House was a warm wonderful place and we would roar with laughter on the nights of the openings, and it's gone because nobody knows anybody any more and the wealth that supported the Arts Center is gone. I didn't have a patron like Connaway but the people who collected me were enthused about my work. I got by per painting. The pre-eminent artists helped the emerging artists. If I were twenty years younger I might get involved but I'm not twenty years younger. And I don't know if I'll give any further interviews either. (Chuckles.) But I did want to talk with you.



**RGM:** Twenty years ago, the administration was gathering support to build the Wilson Museum at SVAC to house the permanent collection. No one could have anticipated the recession of '08 or the numbers of supporters who have passed on. What suggestions would you offer?

**AJ:** I would suggest better light bulbs. The new variety don't light the paintings well. They could close the facility in winter like we did in the old days. Or don't turn on the lights until visitors come in. The Arts Center was a lucrative enterprise in its heyday. Art can be a gamble in this day and age.

**RGM:** Do you still paint?

**AJ:** Not quite every day but I'm in the studio every day. The eyes are rebelling. Early in my career I thought that if I got a painting in one living room, I would eventually find my way to another living room. The man who washes my windows said that everywhere he goes he sees one of my paintings.

**RGM:** What advice would you give to an emerging artist?

**AJ:** Be open-minded. The women I taught improved, and I had two nine-year-olds and two teenagers. Some of the women began to think they knew it all but that attitude stunts your growth. By the time I turned forty, I'd done a lot of soul searching. My one-man shows were selling out and I didn't have a bona-fide studio at that time but I gave up my job, started painting full time, and doubled my income. It was the right era. It's not the time for young artists to take that risk now. The art market has slowed. But even if I don't sell another painting, I'll still be up in the studio every day. □