



MERV CORNING

(1926 - 2006)

MERVIN ALLEN CORNING was born and raised in Santa Ana, California and started his career after WWII in San Francisco (1945).

WWII interrupted Corning's senior year of high school when his parents moved from Santa Ana to San Francisco. Corning joined the Merchant Marines at age 17 and remained until the end of the war.

Corning's interest in drawing and painting was maintained throughout his early years. But his first experience as a working artist began as an illustrator for a Bay-area drug company chain. In less than two years Corning was working as an art director for a prominent San Francisco advertising agency. Around 1949, Corning accepted a job as a men's fashion artist for a major department store in Los Angeles.

Corning's versatility carried him into a broader range of illustration. In the years ahead he joined a professional group of artists who pooled their talents and formed the corporation, Studio Artists. He was president of the corporation until 1968.

During Corning's years at Studio Artists he was commissioned by Leach Corporation to create several paintings depicting famous aerial combat scenes, the airplanes of WWI and the men that flew them. The success of his artwork inspired a total of 44 paintings, later featured in a special exhibit at the Pentagon. Ten of the paintings remain in the permanent collection at the Air Force Museum. Although Corning became known as "the guy who paints old airplanes", these subjects represent only a small portion of his versatility.

For example, Corning's many portraits of National Football League football players are equally famous with more than 300 subjects created in the last 30 plus years, aka "the guy who paints those football players".

Like most illustrators, Corning had an overwhelming desire for the freedom to paint the things he enjoyed most. For example: Victorian houses, still life's, people and landscapes. In 1968, he fazed himself out of Studio Artists and devoted his time to fine art painting and commissions.

Corning's beautifully crafted works of art reflect the dedication he has for drawing and painting and his painstaking attention to detail. It's a natural evolution that his art is part of many important collections, in America and abroad.

"THERE IS A GRAND CATHEDRAL IN LONDON (ST. PAUL'S), SURROUNDING ITS VAST INTERIOR IS MANY NICHEs, EACH ONE PROUDLY DISPLAYING AN ORNATE TOMB OF SOME SAINT OR ROYAL PERSONAGE, WITH ONE EXCEPTION. THIS NICHE IS BARE, WITH ONLY A LATIN INSCRIPTION ENGRAVED ON THE STONE AROUND ITS PERIMETER. AS I RECALL, TRANSLATED, IT READ:

" TRAVELER, IF YOU SEEK MY MONUMENT, LOOK AROUND YOU."

IT WAS THE TOMB OF CHRISTOPHER WREN, THE ARCHITECT!
VISITING THIS BEAUTIFUL WORK OF ART AND REALIZING WHAT A GREAT PART OF THE ARTIST'S LIFE WAS INVOLVED WITH THIS SINGLE STRUCTURE WAS AN EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR MERV.

MUSEUMS AND PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum
The Canton Museum of Art
National Portrait Gallery
The National Football Museum, *Hall of Fame*
National Museum of The U.S. Air Force
Heinz History Center Museum
Westmoreland Museum of American Art
St. Vincent College Gallery
Vacaville Museum
Naval Aviation Museum Foundation
The Automobile Club of Southern California, *Westways Magazine*
National Football League
The Leach Corporation/Esterline Corporation
Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church
The Dallas Cowboys, "*Ring of Honor*"
The New York Giants
Planning Research Corporation
California State Park Foundation
Hearst Castle
The California Angels
The Los Angeles Dodgers
The San Diego Chargers

MUSEUM SHOWS

1961: WWI Airplanes "Heritage of the Air" - USAF Archives, Pentagon, Washington D.C.
1977: "Portraits Shows" - The American Institute of Graphic Arts, N.Y.
1979: "American Artists Today" - Gakuin College Museum, Tokyo, Japan
1981: "International Artists in Watercolor" - Mall Galleries, London, England
1981: "Champions of Sports" - National Portrait Gallery, Washington D.C.
1989: "Gameday" - The Canton Art Museum, Canton, Ohio
1990: "Corning's NFL Portraits" - Tampa Bay Center, Tampa, Florida
1991: "American Society of Aviation Artists" - Royal Air Force Museum, Hendon, England
1994: "A Collection of *Westways* Cover Art from the Automobile Club of Southern California" ~ The Peterson Automotive Museum, L.A., California; Bakersfield Kern County Museum (1997), San Diego Museum of History (1996). San Bernardino County Museum (1967), Santa Barbara Historical Museum (1998)

1996: "Merv Corning Retrospective" - Elverhoj Museum, Solvang, CA
 1997: "Nut Tree Remembered" - Vacaville Museum, Vacaville, CA
 2000: "20th Century Showcase of Art" Santa Barbara County Artists -
 Elverhoj Museum, Solvang CA
 2003: Naval Aviation Museum, Pensacola, Florida.
 2006: "The Heritage of the Air" Collection - The Museum of Flight,
 Seattle, WA
 2008: "Merv Corning Retrospective" - Elverhoj Museum, Solvang, CA
 2010: "Scenic View Ahead", Westways Cover Art - Pasadena Museum of
 California Art
 2011: "Scenic View Ahead", Westways Cover Art - Wildling Museum of
 Art, Los Olivos, CA
 2011: "Island Encounters", Channel Islands - Wildling Museum of Art
 2012: "Art of the Steelers", Senator John Heinz History Center,
 Pittsburgh, PA

GALLERY SHOWS

The Nut Tree Gallery - Sacramento, Calif.
 Brand Library, Glendale, Calif.
 Copenhagen Gallery - Solvang, Calif.
 Muckenthaler Cultural Center - Fullerton, Calif.
 Huntington - Sheraton Galleries - Pasadena, Calif.
 Old Town Gallery - San Diego, Calif.
 A. Huney Gallery - San Diego, Calif.
 Cody Gallery - Los Olivos, Calif.
 Carolyn Summers Gallery - New Orleans, La.
 Ambassador College - Pasadena, Calif.
 Circle Galleries: San Diego, San Francisco, Woodland Hills, and New Orleans
 Conacher Galleries - San Francisco, Calif.
 Young's Gallery - Los Olivos, Calif.

BOOKS

"L'Homme, L'Air et l'Espce" - Editions De L'Illustrations
 "Las Vegas"
 "The First Fifty Years"
 "The Pro Football Experience"
 "Great Teams - Great years"
 "More Than a Game"
 "A Century of Baseball"
 "200 Years of Sports in America"
 "The U.S. Air Service in WWI"
 "The Professionals"
 "Champions of American Sports"
 "The First 25 Years - The Dallas Cowboys"

"Fifty Years of NFL Excitement"
 "American Football"
 "Great Ones"
 "The Landry Legend"
 "The Super Bowl"
 "The Official History of Pro Football"
 "The Official NFL Pro Set Card Book"
 "Aviation - A History through Art"
 "Sidelines"
 "75 Seasons"
 "Rebels with a Cause"
 "The Basics of Buying Art"
 "Legends of Flight"
 "The NFL Century"
 "The Vintage Era of Golf Club Collectibles"
 "Merv Corning ~ Paintings of the Santa Ynez Valley"
 "The Art of Merv Corning" - 70's Pittsburgh Steelers
 "Scenic View Ahead" - Westways Cover Art - The Automobile Club of
 Southern California
 "Ruanaidh" - The Story of Art Rooney and His Clan

PRINTED REVIEWS

1961: *Des Moines Sunday Register*
Leach News - WWI series
 1963: *Argosy Magazine* - WWI series
 1977: *Southwest Art* magazine
American Artists magazine
 1978: *NFL PRO!* magazine
 1979: *The Mylar Method Manifesto* - The New Lithography
 1980: *Art Voices South*
 1984: *Meridian Publishers*
 1988: *Southwest Art* magazine
 1991: *Legends Magazine*
 1992: *Robb Report Magazine*
 1993: *Great American Aviation Artists* magazine
Team NFL magazine
 1994: *Legends Magazine* - Sports Memorabilia
 1997: *U.S. Art Magazine*
 1999: *Inside the Santa Ynez Valley* magazine
 2002: *Montecito Magazine* - cover and inside story, Spring Ed.
 2003: *Foundation Magazine* - Naval Aviation, spring Ed.
 2006: *King County Journal* - Museum of Flight Show
 2009: *Westways Magazine* - "One of a Kind"

PUBLICATIONS

Over 65 magazines have reproduced Merv Corning's artwork, including: *Aviation Week, Gameday, Life, Time, Reader's Digest, Art & Antiques, Architectural Digest, L.A. Magazine, Super Bowl* and *Foundation Naval Aviation, Westways Magazine*.

AWARDS

Society of Illustrators of Los Angeles

Illustration West

"Citation of Merit"

1964 (2) ~ Leach, "Heritage of The Air Series"

1970 ~ NFL

1972 ~ Westways Magazine

Second Annual Belding Awards

Creative Achievement in Advertising

"First Place"

1967 ~ Leach, "Heritage of The Air Series"

Art Director Club of Los Angeles

23rd Annual ~ *"Certificate of Merit"* ~ Leach, "Heritage of Air Series"

24th Annual ~ *"The Art Director Medal"* ~ Leach, Heritage of The Air Series"

30th Annual ~ Western Advertising Art Expo (1975)

"Gold Medal Award" for the "Dillon Lauritzen Memorial Award" ~ Pro Magazine, NFL

The American Institute of Graphic Arts

"Certificate of Excellence"

1971 ~ Cover 71 ~ NFL

1977 ~ The Mental Picture III ~ Portraits ~ NFL

The American Indian & Cowboy Artist

San Dimas Festival of Western Art

"Artist of the West"

1989 ~ Watercolor of "Normandie Island"

Naval Aviation Museum Foundation

"Excellence in Naval Aviation Art"

2003 ~ WWI watercolor

MERV CORNING'S ORIGINAL WATERCOLORS, GICLEE & LITHOGRAPH PRINTS
ARE AVAILABLE THRU:

LISA YOUNG FINE ART

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