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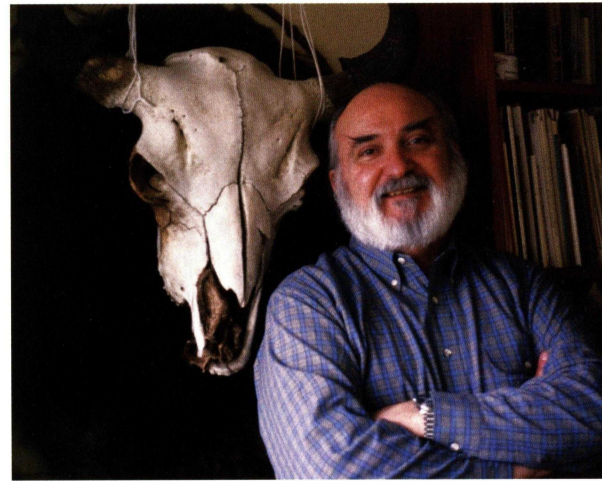
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P A U L



PAUL CALLE

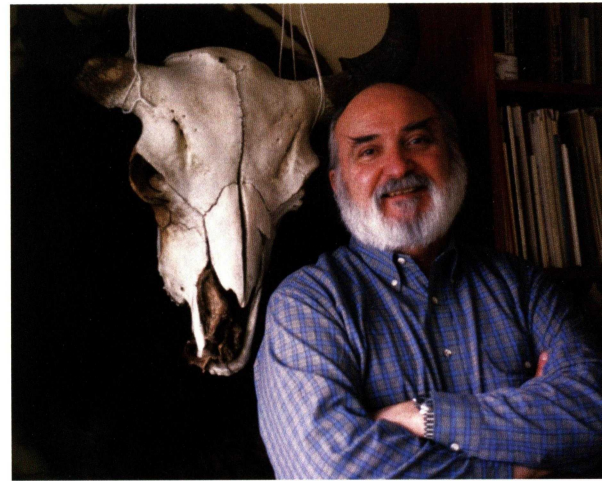
Chronicling American Heritage

BY PAULA HALL

THE BURLY, BARREL-CHESTED ARTIST sits in his studio, overlooking the wooded Connecticut countryside, recounting events of his 40-year career.

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Paul Calle, Hunting the Bighorn, 1984, 40 by 30 inches, pencil



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*Paul Calle, Hunting the Bighorn, 1984,
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Paul Calle, The Silenced Honkers, 1991, 22 by 30 inches, oil on panel



have presented themselves to me. I'm just one of the lucky ones."

His strikingly rustic appearance is hard to overlook and sets the stage for his whole demeanor. The grizzly beard and unruly eyebrows provide him with the perfect look to serve as model for the mountain men and fur trappers which dominate so many of his western paintings. Or perhaps a Shakespearean actor would be a better role. Add his infectious laugh and he would make the perfect Saint Nick.

But aside from his physical features, the most outstanding characteristic that Calle shares with those who know him well or meet him for the first time, is his zest for life.

Calle is passionate about his art, family and the subjects he paints today, as well as those he has painted in the past. And he has anticipated ardor for those subjects he still may paint. "It's not over yet. The journey has just begun," Calle says.

Calle has experienced many artistic milestones in his life, gaining national and international attention. So many, it is difficult to point to one accomplishment for which he is "best known."

He is a master of both oil painting and pencil drawing. Few contemporary artists have mastered pencil drawing as skillfully as Calle, whose sketches have the quality of fine etchings. He has shared his learned

skills in a book, *The Pencil*, a record of his development as "an artist with a pencil," now in its 12th printing.

His postage stamp, *First Man on the Moon*, designed for the U.S. Postal Service in 1969, had a distribution exceeding 150 billion. During his 20-year career as a commercial illustrator, he was commissioned by some of the most prestigious publications, including *National Geographic*, *Time*, *Look* and *The Saturday Evening Post*. Prints reproduced by Mill Pond Press of all his current drawings and paintings sell out consistently. His work is sought by major corporate and private collectors.

While all these accomplishments may appear unrelated, his work has a common thread — the portrayal of great moments in history which have contributed to the development of America. From his illustrations depicting the evolution of surgery to his paintings of western frontier life of trappers, Calle remains a visual historian.

"Although it may be difficult to compare what seems like light years apart, there are similarities. I like to use the analogy of the oneness that I see between Neil Armstrong's boot sinking into the dust of the moon and the moccasined foot of a man like John Colter sinking into the snow as he entered the Yellowstone River Valley for the first



Paul Calle, *Where Eagles Fly*, 1989, 43 by 56 inches, oil on panel

“I had sketches and photographs of this Canadian Rockies scene for a number of years and could not decide what to do with it,” Calle says. “I did just a landscape drawing and still couldn’t make up my mind. I added the eagles and thought

about adding Indians. But I decided to build the rocks in the foreground first. And then I saw it perfectly. It had to be a couple of mountain men with their pack horses, coming up the trail.”

In his zeal, Calle thought if two mountain men would be good,

why not four, or six or even more, meeting on the trail.

“I just kept adding until I knew I had to stop. But I think it turned out really well. Olga came up with the title.”

time,” Calle explains.

Calle’s meteoric accession in his career began after attending Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. Born in Manhattan in 1928, he finished high school at the age of 15. He began free-lance illustration after graduating from Pratt with honors when he was 19-years-old.

As he admits, he has experienced some luck and one of his luckiest moments came when he met Olga, his wife. Shortly after embarking on his career, he was drafted for the

Korean War and stationed at Fort Dix, New Jersey. The high school sweethearts were married after he completed basic training.

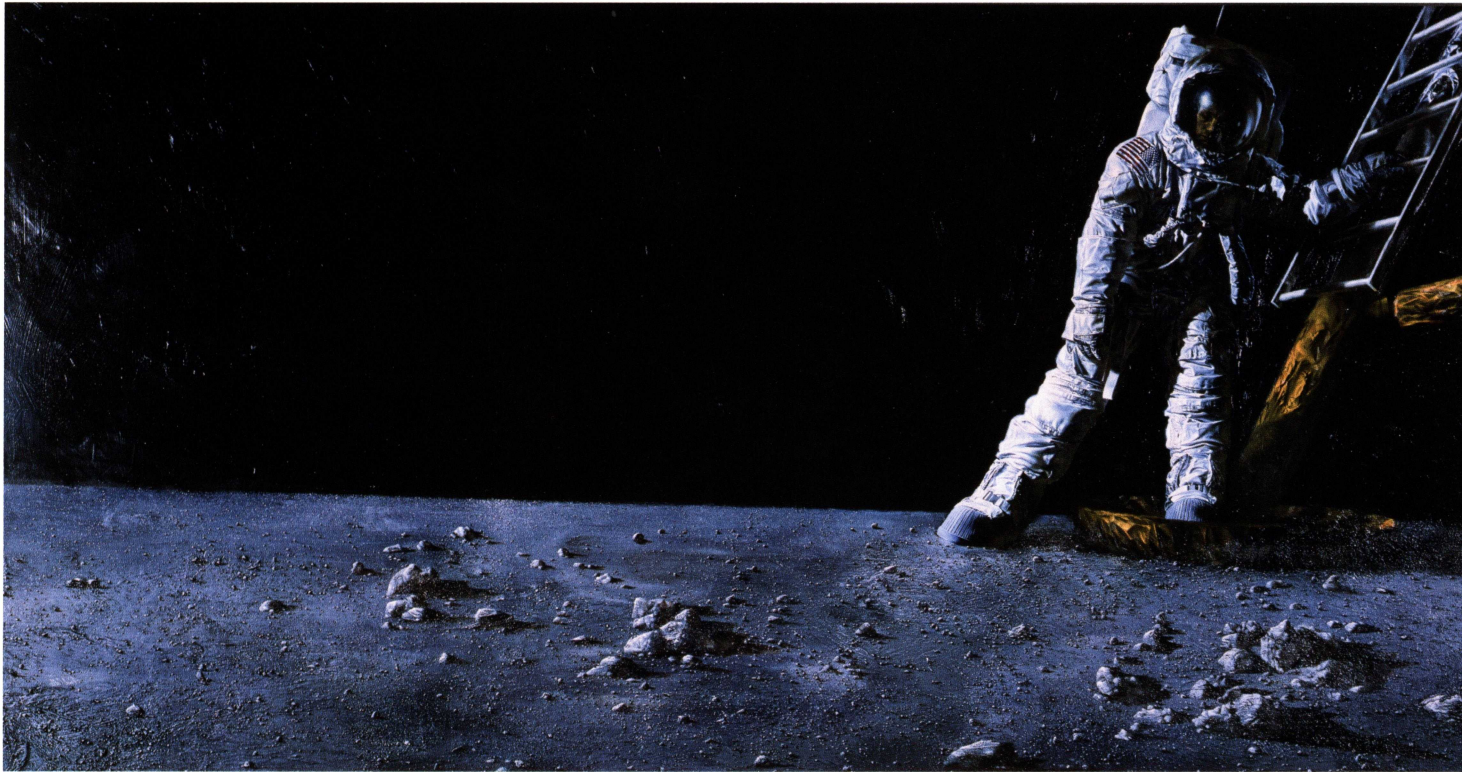
Calle was spared being sent to Korea and was assigned instead as an Army artist. Remaining near New York City, Calle was also able to continue free-lance work in his off-duty hours, with his new bride, Olga, delivering his work when it was completed. She remains a vital part of the team, researching and accompanying Calle on fact-finding



(Far left) Paul Calle, Neil Armstrong Portrait, 1969, 40 by 30 inches, pencil

(Left) Paul Calle, First Man on the Moon Stamp, engraving showing Neil Armstrong setting foot on the moon in July 1969

(Below) Paul Calle, The Great Moment, 1970, 4 by 8 feet, oil on panel



excursions.

“Our joke is that Olga must accompany me on these trips, because she has completed all the research and can tell me what it is that I’m seeing while we are there,” Calle says.

The realism of Calle’s work commands in-depth research of his subjects and he credits Olga with performing a majority of this important task.

“If an artist is going to understand his subject, he should research it

thoroughly and try to experience it. And by all means, if you don’t know, ask. Don’t try and fake it,” Calle says. “Because believe me, there will be someone out there who does know. And the minute that work is seen, that someone will tell you about it.”

Thorough research and direct observation have been the first steps in all Calle’s work. Firsthand experience could not have been more exciting than Calle’s involvement with the NASA Fine Art

Program. In 1962, the late Dr. H. Lester Cooke, curator of painting at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., was asked by NASA to select seven artists to document the space missions.

The NASA program sought the immediacy and spontaneity achieved in on-the-spot sketches of the great events taking place in exploring the vast frontiers of space. Seven artists including Andrew Wyeth, Peter Hurd and Lamar Dodd were asked to



Paul Calle, When Trails Grow Cold, 1991, 36 1/8 by 60 1/4 inches, oil on panel

participate in the program. The name of Paul Calle was included on that prestigious list. But, he did not believe it.

"When I got the telegram, I was convinced it was a joke. So, I never answered," Calle says. "About a week before the first launch, I got this call from Dr. Cooke who wanted to know if I was coming. Of course I said that I'd be there."

Calle's work with NASA began with the Mercury program and followed the decade, culminating with the flight of Apollo 17. He documented in pencil many aspects

of the Mercury, Gemini and Apollo missions, from suit-ups of the astronauts to the lift-offs and splash downs. In 1974, he was in Moscow documenting through the eyes of an artist, the training of the cosmonauts and astronauts that led to the historic linkup of Apollo Siouz in 1976. Many sketches and paintings of these historic events are now part of the National Art Collection.

The only artist to be with the Apollo II crew before their historic voyage on July 16, 1969, Calle sketched as they prepared for the first manned lunar landing mission.



Paul Calle, *Just Over the Ridge*, 1981, 26 by 28 inches, pencil

He was present while the crew, Armstrong, Collins and Aldrin, ate breakfast, donned their space suits and entered the craft.

"It was the most incredible experience of my life. I was sitting with the men who would be the first on the moon," Calle said. "And they were carrying with them the stamp engravings for my *First Man on the Moon* stamp."

As an outgrowth of Calle's participation with the NASA Fine Art Program, he was asked by the Postmaster General's Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee to design a

stamp commemorating the occasion. Working in complete secrecy, Calle consulted with key NASA personnel who helped with the technical problems to design the stamp prior to the launch.

"We knew what foot he would be stepping out on, but we were unsure how far the pod would settle on the surface. Nothing was for certain," Calle said. "So, Olga and I went back home after the launch to be with the children. We sat glued to the television set. Fortunately when he took that first step it was perfect. Just as we envisioned it."

Sharing with his family is another great passion of Calle's. The admiration and joy he relates when speaking of his three children and their families, is indicative of his deep feelings. Paul Peter is a veterinarian specializing in wild animals and his daughter, Claudia, a former midwife, is now a wife and mother. The youngest son, Christopher, is a freelance artist and illustrator who shares a studio with his father.

"Chris is experiencing great success with his illustration. When it came time for the 20th anniversary edition of the Apollo II stamp in 1989, the advisory committee asked Chris to design it. Don't think Mom and Dad weren't proud," Calle says. "This is the child we had to wake to watch the historic landing on television in 1969."

Calle has designed more than 20 U.S. postal stamps including the stamp honoring western artist Frederic Remington, an Easterner like Calle, who was captivated by western heritage.

"It was a true honor to design that stamp," Calle says pointing to the framed version, illustrating Remington's *Coming Through the Rye*. "I've always admired his work. His home where he died is just a few miles from my studio. He painted his entire life in the East. So I joke about our common circumstances with, 'You go West, young man, but return East to paint.'"

Sitting in Calle's studio surrounded by the artifacts and apparel of the mountain men and fur trappers which grace his canvases today, it can be difficult to imagine how the transition from illustrating space programs and other modern events to the historical West occurred.

"It was a gradual process that began when I was appointed chairman of the Artists in the Park

program sponsored by the Department of the Interior," Calle explains. "It was really my first experience with the vastness of the West and the more I got involved, the more I fell in love."

Through the program, the government pays the expenses of contemporary artists to travel and sketch the national parks system. All their paintings and drawings become a part of the National Art Collection. Calle was asked to participate in 1967. The experience awakened Calle to the western landscape and the men and women that participated in its development. The parallels between the contemporary

explorers of space and the frontiersmen of this fascinating western environment were not difficult to make.

The call of the West was tremendously compelling to Calle and he spent a large portion of his time working on western scenes. It was not a romantic adventure for Calle, but rather a realistic challenge. Calle credits fellow artist Frank McCarthy for helping him pursue his growing attraction to paint scenes of the West. McCarthy was instrumental in arranging Calle's first show of his work in Dallas, Texas, in 1970.

"I can remember that evening while we were dressing for the

opening, I asked Olga what we should consider as a success. She said that if we sold one or two it would be wonderful. We sold out in the first half hour of the show and that was the beginning of my western art career," Calle says.

Calle turned his full attention to sketching and painting, gradually leaving behind his lucrative commercial illustration career. His nerves were soon calmed about the questionable income from this new venture, as his works were quickly purchased.

"At first I painted Navajo and Hopi subjects but found it difficult to really paint without being close to

Paul Calle, Voyageurs and Waterfowl . . . Constant Companions, 1988, 34½ by 48 inches, oil on panel





Paul Calle, *In the Land of the Giants*, 1987, 38 by 52 inches, oil on panel

In their pursuit of the finest beaver pelts, the trappers moved deeper into the interior from the shores of Hudson Bay, across that great expanse of unexplored land, to the snow-capped Rocky Mountains. Their journey brought them through the Sierra Nevadas to the Shores of the Pacific Ocean.

“As they journeyed to the coast, they passed the giant sequoias,” Calle explains. “In their journals they talk about how amazed they were at these ‘big trees’ and I decided to show the immensity of giant sequoias and how they must have felt. If you look closely, you’ll see a gray bearded man that looks a lot like me.”

Years later when the fur business began to wane, these trappers who had discovered the passages and trails through the mountains became the guides for wagon trains moving West.

the locale,” Calle says. “We were not interested in moving to the Southwest as many of my contemporaries were doing. So my interests turned to something that I could experience and research.”

Once captivated by cowboys and Indians of the old West, Calle became interested with the American fur trade era and the Hudson Bay Co. that began in the early 1600s.

His instincts to paint the mountain and river environments gave

Calle the purpose for painting he sought. For more than two decades he has meticulously drawn renderings and painted large canvases of mountain men, trappers, Indians and most recently voyageurs and their environment.

“My interest really is man, his relationship to the land and the animals that inhabit that land,” Calle says. Many collectors of wildlife art are drawn to Calle’s work, although he categorizes himself as a more



Paul Calle, In the Beginning . . . Friends, 1989, 28 by 35 inches, pencil

“human” artist in approach.

Whether he paints fur traders huddled around a campfire, or the chance meeting of trappers on a lonely trail, Calle conveys a fervent respect for man and his natural environment.

His paintings almost “speak” through the realistic concepts he captures on his canvas. Each painting is the work of a perfectionist who spends hundreds of hours researching the journals of trappers and voyageurs, traveling to the actual sites mentioned and collecting authentic or reproductive clothing, weapons, saddles and other accouterments used by the subjects he paints.

A collection of artifacts Calle uses for props for his paintings is scattered about his studio. Flintlock rifles are displayed above the fireplace, while beaver traps and buffalo skulls are laid nearby.

A scaled replica of a great bark canoe rests on the half wall of the stairway landing. The walls are adorned with a feather headdress, beaver pelts and furs of all types. As Calle begins to describe a buckskin shirt he had made by a friend, his enthusiasm for his subjects becomes infectious.

“I specifically wanted one for a mountain man who had an Indian wife, a shirt that she would have made for him,” Calle says. “It has designs that are part mountain man and part Indian tradition. The beadwork is early 1800s. It’s just wonderful.”

He reiterates how important the artifact collection and traveling to locations where his subjects lived are to the accuracy of his paintings. Gradually, the listener realizes these painstaking details are sought by Calle to reflect not only the historical truth in his paintings, but the emotional truth as well.





Paul Calle, Return to Camp, 1982, 32½ by 51¾ inches, oil on panel

"Many believed these men were outcasts, misfits and illiterates. But through our studies, Olga and I have found that many carried works of Shakespeare, the Bible and often requested other books from the supply posts," Calle says. "They would occasionally meet along the paths and at night read aloud from the books they carried with them. They referred to it as the Rocky Mountain College."

Traveling to various sites in Montana, Wyoming and mountain ranges in the U.S. and Canada that can provide the accurate backdrop for his paintings, Calle sketches on location and takes photographs for reference.

As a founding member of the Northwest Rendezvous Group, Calle

has met and maintained friendships with those who have chosen the more solitary life of continuing the crafts and trades of a much earlier era. These craftsmen meet with artists each year in Helena, Montana, where they reenact historic Rendezvous when trappers, traders and Indians met each year at the base of the Teton Mountains to trade furs for supplies and to "socialize."

"We put on our buckskin shirts, fur hats and rifles and get together to exchange information about this time in history," Calle explains. "I'll pose people in scenes that we have researched and sketch them. Then through my travels, I'll meet others that will pose for me."

Over the years, Calle's library of sketches and photographs has

grown. His ideas and concepts for paintings are most often composites of several sketches that have been completed over a number of years.

"I'll see a landscape or scene that reminds me of something in my research and suddenly an idea for a painting starts forming," Calle explains. "I'm not painting actual historical events that have been documented, like the Lewis and Clark expedition. Rather I paint realistically what might have happened."

Taking a landscape from one place, a rock formation from another time and place, Calle paints a story in such a way that there is little doubt what he portrays is what may have happened during that time.

Pointing to a particular subject in one of his paintings, Calle says,

Paul Calle, Chief High Pipe, 30 by 40 inches, oil on panel



In this new drawing, Calle seeks to depict the danger the mountain men and trappers faced in this isolated environment and the quick response needed for survival.

“There was a crackling in the woods. He didn’t know if it was friend or enemy. Then, realized it was an Indian. He didn’t have time to put the saddle on but grabbed his rifle, a necessity for survival. And away he went,” Calle explains. “I think it has a nice movement.”



Paul Calle, No Time For A Saddle, 1990, 15¼ by 23 inches, pencil

“That’s Dirty Murphy Fox out of Montana. I probably had that sketch around here for years before I found the right setting to use him in. Or I might use him two or three times as the model subject. It’s all how it comes together in my mind.”

From his mind to the paper, drawing is still the foundation of his work. Using the sketches, he completes a full-scale detail drawing on tissue paper.

“I cut it apart and glue it together, until I’ve solved all the composition problems while I’m still on paper,” Calle says. “I’m not a free-style painter, I solve everything completely before I start painting.”

He then paints what he refers to as “my flats,” the backdrop for the major subject, and transfers his drawing onto the panel.

“I do not change from that point on. I work in such detail, I can’t afford the time of wiping out mis-

takes. It’s just my temperament,” Calle explains. “I’ve watched fellow artists scratch out 100 horses and do it again. No way for me. I would just die.”

But Calle is proof that old artists can learn new tricks of the trade. His son, Chris, introduced him to the advantages of a photocopy machine. He now reduces or enlarges the sketches he draws on location, to fit the format of the painting he designs in the studio.

“Boy, does that save time, not having to redraw those sketches to scale,” Calle laughingly admits.

Despite these time saving approaches to developing the design, Calle’s paintings take two or three months to complete. With the same intricate, tiny strokes indicative of his pencil and pen and ink drawings, Calle rigorously works with oils. He produces only two or three each year and collectors

always anxiously await the next completed piece.

The results of his delicate touch captivate the viewer with soft, tiny, down feathers of a Canadian honker and the lined, weather-beaten faces of the trapper.

For the last four years, the Calles have been researching the voyageurs of the Canadian Northwest. These were the cargo carriers who transported the furs from the outposts to Hudson Bay. Their research has taken them as far as Alaska and through parts of Canada, traveling some of the original trails used by these transporters of goods.

How does he measure his success now? Calle, of course, considers the sale of his paintings and prints a good indication. But more importantly, he feels the number of collectors who have retained his work, an even greater marker.

"That means they really like it to the point they want to live with it," Calle says.

And every once in awhile, Calle will happen upon someone who makes all the months and years of research, sketching and traveling worthwhile. He tells the story of a Western Heritage exhibition in Texas where a painting of his, included in the show, depicted a mountain man standing on a mountain rock, surveying the vast landscape below (not shown in the painting). His laden horse stands behind him.

Eager to see how the painting looked hanging, Calle went to the show and encountered an older gentleman standing in front of his painting intensely studying it.

"A painting should evoke some sort of response from a viewer, either positive or negative. I like to know these reactions," Calle said.

"The man stood there with his hands behind his back for at least a good two minutes."

Preparing himself for the worst, Calle approached the older gentleman and introduced himself. Much to Calle's surprise the viewer complimented Calle on his knowledge of horses.

"He told me, 'You really know your stuff when it comes to horses from the 1800s, young man. This jug head and thick neck are great. Sometimes these artists make them look like quarter horses, not the type of horses back then,'" Calle recounted. "I don't get that kind of reaction all the time. But it's pleasant to hear that kind of response. I always learn something when I ask. That's the joy of this. There's always something to learn."

There are thousands of people who have viewed and enjoyed the work of Paul Calle during this 40-year career, who would love to say, "You sure know your stuff." ▽



Paul Calle, *Wood Gatherer of Walpi*, 1973, 26½ by 38 inches, oil on panel



Paul Calle, *Storyteller of the Mountains*, 1985, 35½ by 53 inches, oil on panel

“When the day’s work was completed, the long evenings and nights were spent in snug lean-tos around roaring fires as the trappers engaged in debates and friendly arguments in what was referred to as the Rocky Mountain College,” Calle writes of this painting.

During his research, Calle recreated a full-sized fur trader’s camp in the backyard of his studio, complete with an authentic lean-to which figures

prominently in this major oil painting. Sketching and photographing the camp in all types of weather, Calle added to his collection of reference material.

“Because I’m telling the story through the painting, I put myself as the old storyteller,” Calle says. “Many people think it’s Willie Nelson.”

When asked if he is fulfilling a silent dream of being a trapper

or trader of that era, Calle says he would have preferred to be an artist going along documenting the events.

“It was an extremely hard life, though,” Calle says. “But to see and paint those scenes for the first time, must have been a tremendous experience. I stand in awe of the work of Thomas Moran, Albert Bierstadt, George Catlin, Carl Bodner and Paul Kane.”



Capturing the Spirit of Nature

BY PAULA HALL

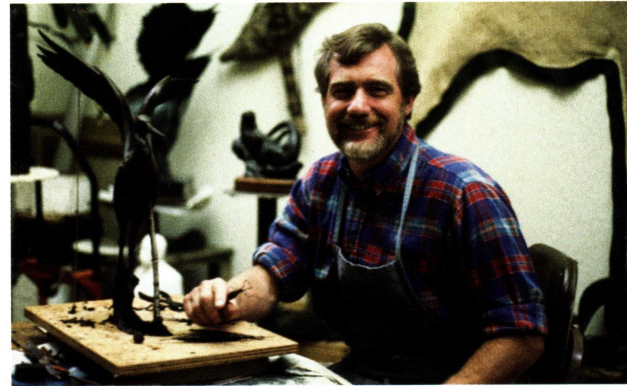
MANEUVERING HIS BOAT

CLOSER, without disrupting the tranquil scene, Kent Ullberg points to a blue heron poised on one leg near the shoreline.

“Look at that old fellow. Isn’t that plumage wonderful,” Ullberg explains in an excited whisper. Taking an even closer look through a pair of binoculars which lie close at hand, Ullberg inches the boat nearer his subject.

“That’s why I do all my work from direct observation. I believe it’s the only way to get authenticity and

RENDEZVOUS SCULPTOR



KENT ULLBERG, NA

Kent Ullberg, Bighorns, 16 by 13 by 6 inches, bronze





Left, Kent Ullberg, *Curlews*, 10 by 7½ by 5 inches, bronze

Top left, Kent Ullberg, *Sentinel Rock*, 16 by 11 by 9 inches, bronze

Above, Kent Ullberg, *Deinonychus – Dinosaurs*, 22 by 16 by 10 inches, bronze

honesty into the work,” Ullberg later explains. “I see a great blue heron one day standing on one leg, with one wing out preening itself and it triggers something inside me. I see a beautiful sculpture shape created naturally, instantly.”

Communicating his love of nature through small and monumental sculptures in bronze and stainless steel, has earned Ullberg a well-deserved international reputation as a wildlife sculptor. The graceful flow of forms and energetic movement of his animal subjects have become the trademarks of this Swedish-born sculptor who moved to the United States in 1974.

“I’m inspired by direct observation. I can capture more than just the likeness of the animal by actually seeing it in nature. I want to communicate the spirit as well,” Ullberg says.

His strict rule of never sculpting

an animal species without having first observed it in the wild, has led Ullberg from his home in Sweden, through Europe and Africa and to his current home on Padre Island, near Corpus Christi, Texas.

Ullberg’s love and empathy for nature began at a very early age. He grew up on the craggy, rocky coast of western Sweden, spending the majority of his childhood in the seafaring town of Gothenberg and on a small island off the coast.

His father, a landscape painter, musician and sometimes seaman, would take his young son along on painting expeditions near their home. He hoped to interest his son in landscape painting. But, instead, young Ullberg spent most of his time watching and studying animals in the Swedish countryside and coastal regions while his father painted. The closeness to nature that Ullberg experienced during those early years of his life has remained a major influence throughout his career.

Ullberg was also “fascinated” by the works of Ernest Hemingway he read while growing up. An avid reader, he dreamed of seeing firsthand the Paris and Africa that the famed author described in his books.

“If you are lucky enough to have lived in Paris as a young man, then wherever you go for the rest of your life, it stays with you, for Paris is a movable feast,” wrote Ernest Hemingway in *A Movable Feast*.

This description, along with many others by Hemingway, enticed Ullberg to travel and experience the world outside his Swedish home. After high school, the lure of the sea called him to join the merchant marine, sailing to such places as South America. He returned to Sweden to study sculpture at the Swedish State School of Art in

Stockholm.

To finance his education, he worked as a taxidermist at the Swedish Museum of Natural History in Stockholm, while attending art classes at night. He credits his experience in taxidermy, scraping skeletons and reconstructing animal figures “from the inside out,” for his broad understanding of animal anatomy.

Upon graduating from art school, he traveled to Germany where he studied and was employed sculpting animal models for a large manufacturer of school teaching aids during this time. While in Germany he also received an associates degree for museum exhibition planning and design.

Finally, armed with Hemingway’s pre-World War II images of the Parisian literary and art world, Ullberg descended on Paris in 1967, and found a different city.

“Of course I was disappointed because what Hemingway described was no longer a part of Paris,” Ullberg says. “I have often felt that I was born too late and that has always seemed to follow me.”

Ullberg found solace in studying and observing the “enormous mass of work by the great sculptors of Europe.” He particularly admired and studied the work of French sculptor Auguste Rodin (1840-1917), whom he credits as the greatest figure sculptor of all time.

“I like the enormous spirit of his work — the power of expression. His work is like an erupting volcano,” Ullberg says. “There has never been a sculptor in modern times that has been able to express the emotion of the human figure as Rodin.”

Although he does not sculpt human imagery often, Ullberg says Rodin's work stands as a milestone to which he can judge his own development in all work.

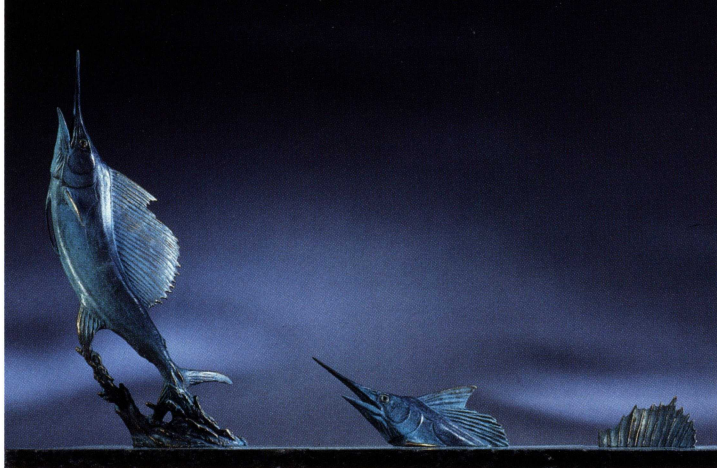
"Rodin's great work remains the constant. As a sculptor, I can view his work over the years and gauge how my sensibilities are evolving," Ullberg explains.

Describing the development of his style, Ullberg recalls his confusion during his early training in Stockholm when pop-art was the driving force in the art world. A self-described romantic, Ullberg says he had a difficult time with the modern, stark, artistic language so popular during the 1960s.

"I have always been a naturalist and realist in my work and I was forced to deal with the contemporary language of art in school," Ullberg explains. "Once again, I felt I was born much too late, because I related more to the classical works. I was often frowned on by my teachers of contemporary art because my work contained too much realism and representationalism."

However, Ullberg did grasp the contemporary artistic language popular of his day and applied certain aspects of the style to his individual work as a sculptor. Today, Ullberg says he thinks strongly in terms of abstract design, even though his work is most often "extremely realistic."

During his early twenties, romantic images continued to draw Ullberg to pursue his dream of observing different species of



Kent Ullberg, Free Jumping, 72 by 30 by 15 inches, bronze

Top, Kent Ullberg, Sailfish in Three Stages of Ascending, 13 by 20 by 8½ inches, bronze



Kent Ullberg, Making Waves, 17 by 10 by 6 inches, bronze



Kent Ullberg, Whale Song, 13½ by 5 by 9 inches, bronze

animals in the wilds of Africa. He wrote letters espousing his virtues to every African-based company for which he could find the address. After his short stay in Paris, he eventually signed on with a safari company as a taxidermist for a year in Africa, an agreement he made in exchange for payment of his ticket from London.

"On arriving in Nairobi, I knew from the paved roads and big city this was not the romantic Africa Hemingway had written about, with snowcapped mountains towering over fields of wild game," Ullberg laughingly explains. "I eventually went to Botswana which had just received its independence from Britain and was still very primitive. It was a totally different kind of Africa than I had read about, but it had its own charm."

He lived and worked in Africa for seven years. His experience in arranging exhibitions proved

helpful in acquiring a position as curator at the Botswana National Museum. His more adventurous duties with the museum included accompanying research expeditions into the Kalahari Desert and areas "untouched by civilization." While in Africa he sculpted native Bushmen, as well as the wildlife that surrounded him.

"I always continued sculpting through all the years of working and traveling. With each new animal species I encounter, forms consume my mind and I sculpt," Ullberg says. "I do a few human figures, but animals take up my whole consciousness. They are where I concentrate my work. My experiences in Africa were tremendous and I still travel there to renew those images."

It was during an expedition trip for the Botswana National Museum that he met staff members from the Denver Museum of Natural History. He was invited to visit Denver by the staff in return for his hospitality.

In 1972, Ullberg made his first trip to the United States and decided immediately he wanted to return. Ullberg returned to Denver in 1974 when he was employed by the Denver museum and shortly after married his wife, Veerle, a Belgian native.

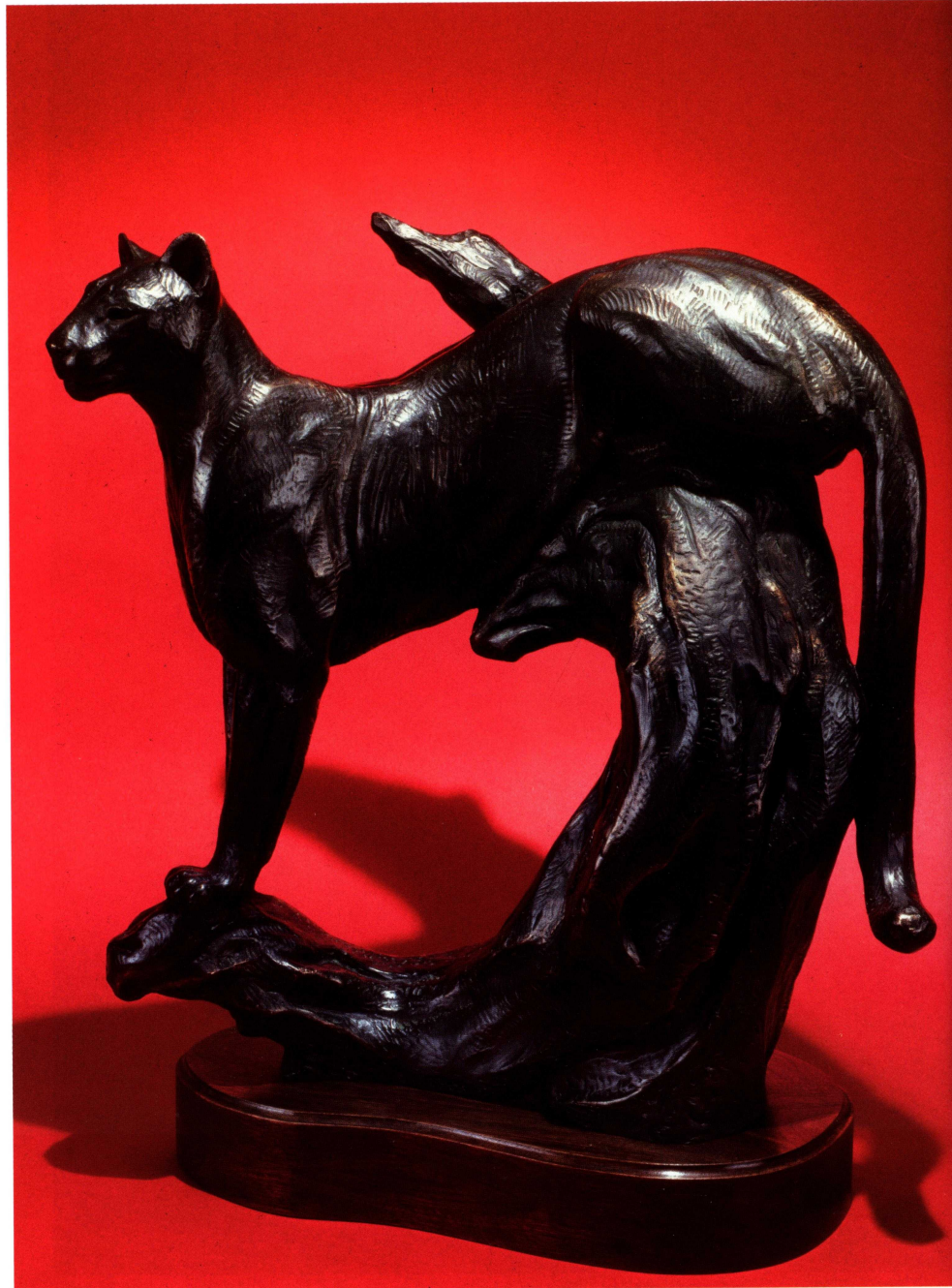
The following year a bronze sculpture of a leopard he had completed while in Africa earned him an award from the National Academy of Design and his first national recognition as a wildlife sculptor. A growing list of commissions followed and Ullberg was prompted to leave his job at the Denver Museum of Natural History to pursue his career as a sculptor full time.

As the images of African wildlife began to be replaced with those of North American animals, Ullberg began to travel the United States in

search of fertile observation grounds.

"The first North American animal that really impressed me was the bison. They are like walking sculptures," Ullberg explains. He cast a series on the North American bison after watching a herd located outside Denver.

His attraction for the ocean led him to move his family to the Gulf coast of Texas where he could view daily some of his favorite subjects, marine life. He and his wife, Veerle, have lived on Padre Island for 13 years, and his son, who now attends college in the East, grew up there.



Kent Ullberg, Surveyor, 23 by 23 by 13 inches, bronze

"I love the sea and wanted to be near the things that I grew up with as a child. I wanted my children to experience it also," Ullberg said.

His home and studio are located on a canal which allows Ullberg direct access to his boat, docked just outside his back door. The canal leads to the shallow, warm waters of Corpus Christi Bay, which teems with shoreline birds and fish of all varieties. From there he takes his boat on out to the waters of the Gulf of Mexico where he can view firsthand all types of marine life.

Ullberg also maintains a large studio in Loveland, Colorado, where he creates monumental works. The studio is located near the casting foundries for sculptures which he says are not available near his Texas home. And he still finds time to take an occasional excursion to see the bugling elk or bighorn sheep of the region.

"I'll never stop studying wildlife. It's my passion and I love it," Ullberg says.

Keeping a journal of his outdoor excursions, Ullberg takes notes and sketches various animals' anatomy, such as a wing or bill shape. He also takes photographs of his subjects to use as reference. Instead of making detailed pencil sketches of the subject, however, Ullberg first begins with a small thumbnail of the animal in clay.

"I can work quicker in clay or wax, than I can on a flat plane," Ullberg explains. "It also helps me determine the design in a three-dimensional format. Sculpture is a medium in the round and I cannot design on a flat piece of paper."

Ullberg is a staunch believer that sculpture "must have some interest from all sides to be successful."

Making certain his large monuments have that interest from all angles takes a great deal of plan-



Kent Ullberg, Sailfish (Monument Study), 20½ by 9¾ by 4 inches, stainless steel

Ullberg often models several small clay sculptures before making a final decision on design for a large monument. A sculpture commissioned by the Corpus Christi Caller-Times to commemorate its 100th anniversary was to be placed in the center of a major traffic circle in the city. Ullberg decided a spiraling design would best suit the site and set about working on a design.

"I decided to express that spiraling movement in the beautiful supple forms of sailfish. This first clay concept was an abstract study focusing entirely on the spiral movement. The

viewer can see the sailfish through purely abstract shapes," Ullberg says.

For the completed monument, Ullberg broadened the appeal through a very realistic execution of the sailfish. Ullberg would like to complete more of his work in abstract shapes and has plans to do so in the future.

"But my main work will always remain representational of nature," he says. "By combining the abstract with realism, my art communicates on more levels."



Kent Ullberg, *Mountain Calls*, 13½ by 11 by 7 inches, bronze

ning and work with architects and building contractors on the site where the sculpture will eventually stand.

Examples of his dedication to provide an interesting sculpture “in the round” can be seen in all his work. From the 25-foot high bronze *Deinonychus* — *Dinosaur*, or Terrible Claw, that stalks Philadelphia’s Logan Square, to the 14-foot high stainless steel pair of whooping cranes that grace the grounds of the National Wildlife Federation’s

Washington, D.C., headquarters, Ullberg’s work is distinctively captivating from any direction.

As one of the first sculptors to work in stainless steel for large monuments, Ullberg likes to “bridge the gap between realism and contemporary buildings by using modern materials.”

Ullberg worked with owners and architects of Lincoln Center in Dallas, Texas, to create a sculpture that could “provide warmth to the center which was very high tech in

design.” Knowing the sculpture could be seen by passing motorists on a nearby freeway, Ullberg proposed a 10-foot tall stylized eagle with closed wings to be placed on a 14-foot high black granite column.

“They wanted a subject that people could relate to and understand and that’s why I suggested the eagle. But I produced it in polished stainless steel to complement the modern surroundings,” Ullberg explains. “Warmth of the environment is reflected in the

eagle, as the stainless steel mirrors the golden colors at sunrise or sunset and the darkness of an overcast sky.”

Researching his subjects always takes Ullberg beyond firsthand observation. He is a naturalist who studies the habits and environment of each species. Book titles that line the shelves of his Padre Island studio indicate his passion for learning about the subjects he sculpts.

Before beginning the whooping crane monument for the NWF’s headquarters in Washington, Ullberg read and studied about the crane’s natural history, habitat and population dynamics. He also spent weeks making sketches of them in their habitat and eventually decided on a design of two cranes performing a mating dance.

Starting with his small thumbnail in clay, Ullberg often goes through many phases of a design creating several small clay models before ultimately deciding on the final sculpture. He then models the final monument design to scale.

Pointing to many small clay sculptures in various stages of progress around him, Ullberg says many are cast as small pieces. Calling them “studio debris,” Ullberg says he may return to an unfinished version several years later and complete it for casting.

“I usually have two or three at some stage of progress at the same time. But while I’m up in Colorado working on the large monument pieces, most of my time is devoted to that particular project,” Ullberg says.

In Autumn Season, Ullberg captures the different personalities of two white-tail deer, a buck and a doe during courtship season.

“The buck, all alert, twitching muscles and sinews, standing possessively as closely as possible to his conquest, looks over his shoulder for rivals and danger. The doe on the other hand, is relaxed, feigning and totally disinterested,” Ullberg says.

Kent Ullberg, Autumn Season, 13 by 11½ by 5 inches, bronze





From a small-scaled model, Ullberg and his assistants erect a metal skeleton to full size. They then cover it with a polyurethane form and then lots of clay for sculpting the details. Once the large clay model is complete, a mold is made, from which the bronze or stainless steel sculpture is cast. The size of the monuments demand long and grueling hours of work. Most monuments will take Ullberg two years to complete.

Ullberg is working on one of his most extensive projects and the largest cast bronze composition attempted in modern times, *Sailfish in Three Stages of Ascending*. Currently being molded and cast in his Colorado studio, the 36-foot high and 120-foot long bronze sculpture and fountain will eventually stand as an integral part of a major convention center in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. When completed later this year, Ullberg will have spent three years on the project.

"They wanted something that communicated marine environment so I suggested a composition that includes three levels," Ullberg explains. "At the very top is a series of a sailfish ascending from the water in three phases, with the largest being 30-feet-tall. Then below are groups of life-size dolphins, a school of bait fish and sea turtles."

In a curious way, the stop-action design of the ascending sailfish brings Ullberg full circle to his early days of studying and struggling with the pop art of the 1960s.

"I think of it as an homage to pop artist Claus Oldenburg who was Swedish born and became very famous in the U.S. and Europe,"

Kent Ullberg, *Meeting of the Mountain Lords*, 39 by 20 by 18 inches, bronze

Kent Ullberg, *Running Pronghorn*, 14½ by 18 by 8¼ inches, bronze



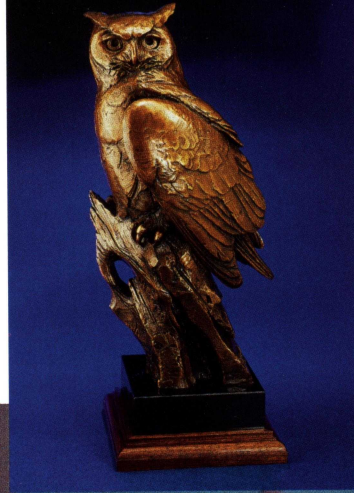
Kent Ullberg, Old Fiddler, 23 by 25 by 11 inches, bronze



Kent Ullberg, Falcon, 17½ by 8 by 6½ inches, bronze



*Kent Ullberg, Nightwatch, 19½
by 9 by 8 inches, bronze*



*Kent Ullberg, Victory Eagle Monument, 9 feet
6 inches by 14 feet by 10 feet, bronze*

Ullberg says. "In the early 70s, he did a piece in California of a cowboy hat in three stages of descending. Although my design is very naturalistic, I utilized that same concept in creating the sailfish."

At 46-years-old, Ullberg feels he is finally "in tune" with the time in which he lives.

"Artists reflect the concerns of their time and culture and I'm dealing with very contemporary issues of today. The deep concern about nature is a global issue and I am expressing those environmental issues through my work," Ullberg says.

He points to the fact that historically, animals were seldom subjects for public art. But with the renewed conservation interest, Ullberg's wildlife images depicting "the preciousness of our environment" are in great demand.

"The monumental sculpture gives me a bigger voice to speak passionately about nature and conservation. All my life, I have tried to teach and remind people of the beauty of nature. I have not changed the direction of my work. The times have simply changed and my work symbolizes the concerns that are most evident now," Ullberg says.

Ullberg's work has been shown around the world including Sweden, France, Africa, China, England and across the United States. He has completed 27 monumental sculptures worldwide and hundreds of smaller sculptures.

Recognition of his work has earned Ullberg a variety of awards from juried shows by the National

The oil spill in Prince William Sound, Alaska, so stunned Ullberg that he deviated for the first time from his well-known style of sculpting the beauty of nature.

"I was so angered that I grasped for expressionist language. I wanted to make a wide statement. I selected the American symbol of the bald eagle, saying in a way that we are killing a part of our heritage," Ullberg explains.

Ullberg admits the design of the dying eagle is not the kind of sculpture that many Americans would like to have in their home, but a few environmentally concerned people and institutions have added it to their collection including the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency.

Academy of Design, the Allied Artists of America, the National Arts Club, the National Sculpture Society and the Society of Animal Artists, Inc. He has received the gold medal for sculpture in 1981, 1982, 1988 and 1990 from the National Academy of Western Art.

In 1990, Ullberg was elected a full academician, NA, by the National Academy of Design, New York City, one of the highest professional recognitions bestowed on visual artists in America.

Despite the international recognition of his work, Ullberg is mindful of his past and earlier struggles, and takes what seems to many as expeditious success in stride.

A very sensitive man, Ullberg savors mementos recalling those individuals who have helped to shape his career. In one corner of his Padre Island studio hang what at first appears an eclectic group of pictures.

"That's my wall of heroes, I guess you might say," Ullberg laughingly admits. "That one is, of course, Rodin and that one is from Anders Zorn, a brilliant figurative painter I admire. And that's John Wayne. It probably sounds rather silly, but he



Kent Ullberg, *Requiem for Prince William Sound*, 26½ by 8 by 8 inches, bronze

has always symbolized something special for me. I'm a staunch individualist and believe our individual qualities are all that we have to contribute to this world. America is, I feel, built on individuality and as a child John Wayne symbolized that self-reliance."

Growing up in a socialistic environment, Ullberg treasures the freedom and individuality that America affords its citizens. He recalls the struggles and sacrifices that his parents made as artists in Sweden. His father, who eventually gained recognition as a landscape painter, had a difficult time "making a living while we were growing up." Ullberg's mother once studied sculpting, but later turned to textiles and operated a commercial weaving studio to help with the family income.

"When I was very young, maybe one- or two-years-old, she would take me with her to sculpting class. I still have a sculpture she did of my left hand when I was one-year-old. I didn't realize until I was an adult the sacrifices she made in her art to help make a living," Ullberg says.

Ullberg's sensitivity is not only reflected through his childhood recollections, but most evidently through his work. His greatest hope is that his sculptures will help advance the cause of conservation.

"I try to communicate the beauty I see in nature," he says. "If I can make people see the beauty and how protecting it is tied to our own survival, then I will be successful." △

The title for the beautiful, almost playful, depiction of two otters comes from a book by Gavin Maxwell of the same title. Ring of Bright Water II received a gold medal award from the National Academy of Western Art in 1990. A smaller model will be offered for sale to

members of Gilcrease Museum for the 1991 Rendezvous. "The book is not well known in America, but every child in Britain has read Maxwell's story of two otters in Scotland," Ullberg explains. "It's one of the most lyrical descriptions of nature and I loved it as a child."



Kent Ullberg, Ring of Bright Water II, 41 by 14½ by 24 inches, bronze

RENDEZVOUS SCULPTOR

Works for Sale

Autumn Season, 13 by 11½ by 5 inches, bronze
Bighorns, 16 by 13 by 6 inches, bronze
Bluewater Hunters, 24 by 25½ by 6 inches, bronze
Burst of Blue, 25 by 14 by 7½ inches, bronze
Curllews, 10 by 7½ by 5 inches, bronze
Deinonychus — Dinosaurs, 22 by 16 by 10 inches, bronze
Eagle Monument Study, 24½ by 9½ by 9 inches, bronze
Eagle's Point, 24½ by 16 by 10½ inches, bronze
Eagle Rock Monument, 94 by 45 by 45 inches, bronze
Equipoise, 14½ by 10 by 5 inches, bronze
Falcon, 17½ by 8 by 6½ inches, bronze
For Fear We Shall Perish, 24¼ by 16 by 9½ inches, bronze
Free Jumping, 72 by 30 by 15 inches, bronze
Greater Kudu II, 14 by 12½ by 5 inches, bronze
Great Blue Heron, 75 by 30 by 20 inches, bronze
Laid Back, 9 by 10 by 5 inches, bronze
Making Waves, 17 by 10 by 6 inches, bronze
Mountain Calls, 13½ by 11 by 7 inches, bronze
Newborn Giraffe, 5 by 9 by 6 inches, bronze
Nightwatch, 19½ by 9 by 8 inches, bronze
Old Salts, 18 by 11½ by 7 inches, bronze
Pintails, 17¾ by 15 by 7 inches, bronze
Requiem for Prince William Sound, 26½ by 8 by 8 inches, bronze
Rhapsody in Gold, 17 by 6½ by 6 inches, bronze
Ring of Bright Water II, 41 by 14½ by 24 inches, bronze
Rites of Spring, 27 by 21 by 12½ inches, stainless steel
Riverbank, 10 by 10 by 4 inches, bronze
Rivermates, 12 by 7½ by 8 inches, bronze
Royal Portrait, 28 by 18 by 9 inches, bronze
Sailfish in Three Stages of Ascending, 13 by 20 by 8½ inches, bronze
Sentinel Rock, 16 by 11 by 9 inches, bronze
Silverking II, 33 by 18 by 11 inches, stainless steel
Spring Blizzard, 10½ by 9 by 5½ inches, bronze
Spring Plumage, 17½ by 8 by 6½ inches, stainless steel
Standing Tall, 12 by 14 by 7 inches, bronze
Striped Marlin, 18 by 22 by 6 inches, stainless steel
Sundown, 34½ by 17 by 13 inches, bronze
Surveyor, 23 by 23 by 13 inches, bronze
Tidal Dance, 24 by 15½ by 13, bronze
Victory Eagle, 30 by 30 by 10 inches, bronze
Victory Eagle Monument, 9½ by 14 by 10 feet, bronze
Waterplay, 39 by 28 by 12 inches, bronze
Whale Song, 13½ by 5 by 9 inches, bronze
Windborne, 13½ by 6 by 5 inches, bronze



Kent Ullberg, *For Fear We Shall Perish*,
 24¼ by 16 by 9½ inches, bronze

Retrospective Sculptures

Lent By The Artist Unless Indicated

Blacksmith, 22¼ by 7 by 5½ inches, bronze
Cougar by the Stream II, 22 by 23½ by 14 inches, bronze
 lent by Mr. and Mrs. David Guthery
Desert Elephant, 9½ by 15½ by 6 inches, bronze
Herdmaster, 23 by 24 by 14 inches, bronze
Meeting of the Mountain Lords, 39 by 20 by 18 inches, bronze
Necking Giraffe, 18½ by 14½ by 9 inches, bronze
Ocean Dream, 22½ by 9 by 6 inches, bronze
Old Fiddler, 23 by 25 by 11 inches, bronze
Pula — Raindream, 16 by 8 by 7½ inches, bronze
Running Pronghorn, 14½ by 18 by 8¼ inches, bronze
Sailfish (Monument Study), 20½ by 9½ by 4 inches, stainless steel
Whale Courtship, 20 by 31 by 21 inches, bronze
Wind in the Sails, 36 by 26½ by 13 inches, bronze

RENDEZVOUS ARTIST

Works for Sale

- Almost There*, 1991, 18 by 27 inches, oil on panel
Chief of the Piegan Blackfoot, 1991,
 21½ by 22½ inches, pencil
No Time For A Saddle, 1990, 15¾ by 23 inches, pencil
The Silenced Honkers, 1991, 22 by 30 inches, oil on panel
Sioux Mother and Child, 1991, 16 by 23 inches, pencil
Study for Almost There, 1990, 6 by 6¾ inches, pencil
They Call Me Caleb, 1991, 11½ by 14 inches, pencil
They Call Me William, 1991, 11 by 13 inches, pencil
When Trails Grow Cold, 1991, 36½ by 60¼ inches,
 oil on panel

Retrospective Paintings

- Apollo Sketches* (6), 1969, approximately 14 by 17 inches,
 pen and ink, lent by Olga Calle
And Still Miles to Go, 1977, 36 by 44 inches, oil on panel
 lent by Wayne Banes Rumley, II
Chief High Pipe, 1980, 30 by 40 inches, oil on panel
 lent by Wayne Rumley
Children of Walpi, 1974, 21 by 38 inches, oil on panel
 lent by Wayna Joan Rumley
A Day's Ride to Camp, 1990, 40 by 20 inches, pencil
 lent anonymously
First Man on the Moon, 1969, 8 by 10 inches, tempera
 painting on board, lent by the United States Postal
 Service, Washington, D.C.
The Free Trapper, 1986, 32 by 48 inches, oil on panel
 lent by George B. Stumpp
The Frontier Blacksmith, 1985, 21 by 23½ inches, oil on panel
 lent by Jane Ann and Bill Benton
Generations in the Valley, 1977, 30 by 40 inches, oil on panel
 lent by Sharon LeAnn Rumley
The Great Moment, 1970, 4 by 8 feet, oil on panel
 lent by John J. McMullen
Hunting the Bighorn, 1984, 30 by 40 inches, pencil
 lent from the collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Weaver
In the Beginning . . . Friends, 1989, 28 by 35 inches, pencil
 lent by Mr. and Mrs. Pat Murphy
In Search of Beaver, 1983, 32 by 47 inches, oil on panel
 lent by Dr. and Mrs. T.P. Votteler
Into the Great Alone, 1987, 42 by 48 inches, oil on panel
 lent by Mr. and Mrs. Garland Williamson
Just Over the Ridge, 1981, 26 by 28 inches, pencil
 lent by Olga Calle
The Landmark Tree, 1981, 30 by 40 inches, pencil
 lent by the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American
 History and Art
NASA Mission Sketches (7), 1969, approximately 14 by 17
 inches, pencil, lent by from a private collection
Neil Armstrong Portrait, 1969, 40 by 30 inches, pencil
 lent by Olga Calle
Power to Go, 1969, 48 by 48 inches, oil on panel
 lent from a private collection



Paul Calle, The Landmark Tree, 30 by 40 inches, pencil

- Prayer to the Great Mystery*, 1980, 31 by 42 inches, oil on
 panel, lent by John H. Hill
Return to Camp, 1982, 32½ by 51¾ inches, oil on panel
 lent by Kenneth H. Hofmann
Sioux Chief, 1975, 40 by 30 inches, pencil
 lent by Kenneth Shumway
Storyteller of the Mountains, 1985, 35½ by 53 inches, oil on
 panel, lent by Mr. and Mrs. Fred S. Williams
Two from the Flock, 1982, 32½ by 51¾ inches, oil on panel
 lent by Kenneth H. Hofmann
Voyageurs and Waterfowl . . . Constant Companions, 1988,
 34½ by 48 inches, oil on panel
 lent by Kenneth H. Hofmann
When Trails Cross, 1984, 36 by 51 inches, oil on panel
 lent from the Estate of B.F. Phillips, Jr.
When Snow Came Early, 1978, 30 by 40 inches, pencil
 lent by Sharon LeAnn Rumley
Where Eagles Fly, 1989, 43 by 56 inches, oil on panel
 lent by Mr. and Mrs. Trevor Eyton
A Winter Feast, 1989, 40½ by 59 inches, oil on panel
 lent by Paul and Beverly Shaw
The Winter Hunter, 1979, 40 by 30 inches, pencil
 lent by Mrs. Ola Rice
Wood Gatherer of Walpi, 1973, 26½ by 38 inches, oil on
 panel, lent by Olga Calle

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and Retrospective List 31

Paul Calle Sale
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FRONT COVER:

Paul Calle, *Almost There*, 1991
18 by 27 inches, oil.

BACK COVER:

Kent Ullberg, *Pintails*,
17 3/4 by 15 by 7 inches, bronze.

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