

Ronald Dennis Reams

Ron Reams, a Florida native, grew up in Sarasota. The artist began his formal education in 1969 at the Ringling School of Art. Following his graduation in 1973, he chose to continue his education at the University of South Florida.

Ron continued to study art privately with three key figures that would influence his style, as well as change his life, forever. Each painter was an outstanding artist in his own right: David Anderson, Edgar Miller and William Pachner. There, Ron began his own path while observing and evolving into his own self-awareness. These mentors allowed Ron to reach beyond a standard classroom type of education and move forward into a personal quest that would take him around the globe and back again. This journey brought into his life a myriad of artists, teachers, and friends that would make his life a tapestry, a rich and woven piece of art in itself.

The early black and white pen and ink drawings Ron created for his first book, "American History in Verse," not only taught him value in tone and structure, it also opened up great opportunity in national recognition. This started a chain of events that would lead him into a solid foundation in the fine arts.

By the mid-seventies, Ron had signed on with Pallas Galleries. Based in London, Pallas marketed much of Ron's early black and white Americana prints throughout Europe and the Middle East. James Horne, the director, would oversee and suggest directions that Ron's art would take. In addition, he would handle the public relations that accompany the task of selling on such a vast geographical scale.

The battle between abstraction and figuration has been essential to Ron's art as he moved from his profound pen and ink illustrations in the mid-seventies to the discovery of color in the early eighties. Having undertaken three major one-man shows before reaching the age of 30, Ron's direction seemed promising in the field of fine art. The balance between his graphics background and his passion with the brush seemed to always be a challenge. His love for conceptual design and renovation with properties continued to keep him challenged. One would surmise that he always liked his plate too full and thus his focus always shifted due to lack of time to balance all his interests.

By the time the late eighties rolled around, Ron was restless and motivated for a massive life change. At this time, Reams' method of painting changed so that it would encompass his new found spiritual quest. It seemed to take priority over all else in life. In 1988 Ron relocated to Atlanta, Georgia, for another chapter – one that would bring forced growth and awareness; that there is more to life than he realized existed. Atlanta was a challenge in and of itself. Not knowing anyone there forced Ron to reach out beyond his comfort zone and enroll in several self-awareness groups. This probably helped Ron's direction in his art more than anything leading up to that moment. Getting involved with the Human Rights

Campaign fund, and several galleries affiliated with it, opened enormous opportunities to get his work sold to large private collectors and major corporations.

Atlanta was going through a recession at the end of the decade which forced Ron to accept a position as a flight attendant with Eastern Airlines. This was to supplement his income but the added benefit also gave him travel opportunities all over the country. This travel provided new avenues as well in cities such as New York, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, and Chicago. Wherever Eastern flew, artwork and artist followed. Three years had passed when Eastern Airlines closed due to multiple strikes and management differences.

Ron was on the move again -- this time across the Atlantic, landing in London, England. The next six years would be the greatest and most challenging that Ron would ever imagine. Ron's years of reflection and sacrifice opened up yet another chapter in his life. Traveling through Great Britain brought Ron's travel stop to Calstock, a small picturesque hamlet in the West Country of England. Calstock is situated in Cornwall and Devon with a beautiful river separating the two counties. Ron purchased a large historic church that was built into the cliffs overlooking the Tamar River. There he set up a gallery and a living space to allow him space to create from his new experiences. Ron began creating spiritual art retreats for visitors to come and enjoy the beautiful, rural countryside. It was also a place for local artists to stay and paint in the splendor of Celtic forests and expansive fields, a place to visit and be whatever you wanted to be. It was a challenge; an accomplishment: a beginning, middle, and, an ending. It provided the setting for whatever you wanted to do at that particular time in your life.

Calstock offered the perfect home base for an artist, located only 13 miles from picturesque Plymouth, England. It brought tourists on the train to the station that happened to be just outside the front door of the church – now known as Harmony Hall. This name Ron chose to embrace his goals for the structure and his connection to the locals that lived in the village hamlet itself. Ron felt truly home for the first time in many, many years.

As the months and years passed, Ron's church became the hub for the locals – theatre, art showcases, the annual art carnival, and a space for workshops for local artists. There were also trade shows and educational instruction for school children as a community outreach. Ron was living his dream!

At this time, travel played an important role in Ron's life. The ferry in Plymouth took passengers to many destinations: France – Ireland – Spain. The trips were inexpensive with or without a vehicle. Fare for a walk-on passenger was less than ten pounds (approximately \$15) and, if you had a car, it would be thirty-five pounds (approximately \$70) with no additional cost for passengers in the car. This opportunity allowed Ron to travel and create art everywhere he wanted to go. A make-shift bed in his Volvo wagon

and an instant studio just out the doors created a never ending canvas for Ron.

During this time, Ron created more art than he had ever before in his entire life. He carved Celtic images in stone, created over 1000 studies that he uses to this day for his new canvases. His majestic landscapes sold quickly to local art galleries owned by England's National Trust. Ron did not amass a great deal of money at this time, but gained a great deal of personal and spiritual growth.

At the winding down period of his English experience, Ron's art became fragments of construction started by putting pieces of drawings and paintings with natural materials mixed of marble dust, leaves, cork, etc., together in layers of elements with paint applied into deeply etched surfaces. Five or six coats of thick varnish finished these huge fifteen foot panels creating the equivalent of a more or less abstract collage. These panels, in hindsight, reflect his search for a new, non-routine way of picture making. This media of expression opened up his probing for later works that followed. Reams became less involved in the final result and his focus was centered more in the process of discovery. His brush strokes became more fluid, broader in movement and color, creating the large panels into smaller compositions (squares) that were then repainted into semi autonomous units. These were piled up into stacks of sixty units to each 15 foot panel. Overall, 20 panels were created and then cut into units (individual squares), then stored for later observation and study. These pieces were filed in large notebooks and served the artist as a thumbnail memo for his later works in acrylics that are now seen today.

The viewer of Ron's art can clearly see that time has continually evolved from Point A to Point B, always changing, always going to another level of personal expression.

Ron Reams captures emotional images and explores the emotional gap between what we see and what we feel, relaxing the logical mind to give freedom to the intuitive link between creator and all of creation. His studies in England allowed experimentations that expanded his perceptual boundaries into new directions to combine color and form harmoniously. Ron has always had a spiritual restlessness probing his creativity, pushing form from one style into the next. He best describes his work as single steps taken toward discovery, rather than to a painting's finish and, to Ron, a painting stops momentarily only to resume again on another surface.

Reams describes himself as a man that has chosen to paint as a means of self-discovery, to devote himself to art without expectation for a final result, and to simply paint for the process, a never-ending road, a road that takes many directions and new expressions of the self.

We invite you to experience the pieces we have to share in our gallery.