

## Rhonda Nass



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### **BIOGRAPHY/ "YOU COULD NEVER BE AN ARTIST"**

Probably all of us can pinpoint moments in our lives that caused an abrupt change of direction, leading us on a distinct future course. My first high school art class was such a moment. From the minute I drew my first portrait of a classmate, I was hooked on the limitless possibilities of communicating through art. It was in that class that my teacher told me, "You could never be an artist." Those words were all a stubborn teenager needed to catapult her into the field of art. I received an art education degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, married a fellow student the next day and shortly thereafter birthed our illustration studio, Ampersand, beginning our lives as professional artists. After 45 years we continue to operate Ampersand from our home/studio along the Wisconsin River in Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin.

Along with commissions, creating new works for River Arts on Water Gallery, and teaching workshops nationwide, I've recently self-published my second illustrated book, ***Scratchings of a Madwoman*** (the first being ***Gifts From the Earth***, co-authored with Char TerBeest).

Artists most influential in developing my style are Caravaggio, Wayne Thiebaud, Robert Bateman and Rick Nass. I regard *contrasts* (light, texture, color, space, temperature, etc.) as one of the most effective visual communication tools, so one can recognize my graphite, colored pencil, acrylic, or scratchboard works generally by such contrasts.

I'll always be amazed that one can make a living doing what one loves, and can, in the process, keep stretching and passing discoveries on to others. It's a gift for which I'll continuously thank God.