

# METER & MEDIUM

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A VISUAL FESTSCHRIFT  
OF ANDERS C. SHAFER



# CURATORIAL STATEMENT

IN ACADEMIA, a festschrift often gathers writings in the form of a book to celebrate a scholar during their lifetime. It seems a proper word choice for an exhibition that celebrates not only the work of an artist, but his influence on students throughout his storied career as a professor at UW-Eau Claire. This visual festschrift gathers the words and art of Anders C. Shafer, or Andy, alongside words and art chosen by his former students. Representative of three decades of Andy's teaching, ten graduates of the Art + Design program were invited to select or create works of art and tell stories about their time as Andy's student to be gathered into an exhibit of art and words to honor Professor Shafer as an artist, teacher, and mentor.

Andy's inspiration and influence run deep. Through many conversations with these alums, two words often voiced were "work ethic." Andy was not only known for giving valuable feedback during critiques, his studio door at Haas Fine Arts always seemed open, art and design students witnessed him regularly at work. His encouragement to some extended beyond the classroom and well after graduation, even personal notes delivered via snail mail to the next planned post office on a bicycle trip. His tenacity and willingness to share his process rubbed off on these artists, who—whether for pleasure, for Marvel or SYFY, for gallery spaces, or for this show—have continued to create long after graduation.

Though their techniques, styles, and mediums are their own, a common thread is that their work always tells a story. This too is the mark of Andy's influence as their teacher. Andy is both an artist and a poet, and his form of sequential art tells stories the viewer can feel. Color and whimsy bleed through his panes and suggest the possibility of leaping into the canvas should Mary Poppins come along, grab our hands, and



Andy and Anna in his Studio

PHOTO ROB MATTISON

count to three. His ability to take a moment or character out of history and make it tangible and visually palpable has the power to tap the imagination and fill his viewers with childlike curiosity and wonder.

At this moment in history, it is right and essential that we celebrate an artist and educator who has done so much for his community. Shafer's stories have traveled to many places, appeared on the walls of many buildings in Eau Claire, and will continue to engage the senses of many more viewers. We look forward to the stories Andy will continue to tell as he puts pen and paint to canvas and paper, as well as the stories the artists he influenced will continue to create. To Marc, Lynn, Frank, Barry, David, Rebecca, Tim, Andrew, Cameron, and Mary—thank you for telling your stories and sharing them as we celebrate the life and work of Anders C. Shafer.

Anna M. Zook, Exhibit Curator  
Arts Librarian, Assistant Professor  
August 25, 2025

FRONT COVER:  
Anders Shafer  
*The Italian Printmaker*  
Acrylic on Canvas  
50 x 60 inches, 2005

# ANDERS C. SHAFER

## CAREER HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

### EDUCATION

B.F.A. University of Iowa, 1966.

M.F.A. University of Cincinnati, 1968.

Post-Graduate study at Hartwick College, Rhode Island School of Design, Studio School of New York, University of Minnesota, and University of Wisconsin-Madison.

### TEACHING

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, 1968-2001.

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, 2003-2011.

### AWARDS AND GRANTS

More than 70 awards and grants including the first-ever grant by the National Endowment for Art, Best of Show, *Paper in Particular*, 2012; Best of Show, Fiftieth Beloit and Vicinity Exhibition, 2007; Best of Show, Midwest Seasons, Center for the Visual Arts, 2018.

### EXHIBITS

More than 50 national exhibit competitions.

More than 90 regional exhibit competitions.

More than 50 exhibit invitations of note.

### COLLECTIONS

Numerous personal and public collections including the Allen Art Museum, Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH; City of Bucyrus, Bucyrus, OH; City of Paris, Paris, France; Columbia College, Columbia, MO; Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington, IL; Kohler Museum, Sheboygan, WI; National Collection of American Art, Smithsonian, Washington D.C.; Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR; Nicolet College, Rhinelander, WI; Royal Credit Union, Eau Claire, WI; Sheldon Museum, Lincoln, NE; University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, WI; University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI; Weisman Art Museum, Minneapolis, MN.

### PUBLIC COMMISSIONS

Notable personal and public commissions including the Royal Credit Union, Eau Claire, WI; Mural History, Northern States Power, Eau Claire, WI, 2005; Viterbo University, La Crosse, WI; Mural History, School of Nursing, JAMF Building, Eau Claire, WI, 2014; Mural, Rusk County Memorial Hospital, Ladysmith, WI, 2015; Mural, Mayo Clinic, Eau Claire, WI, 2016.

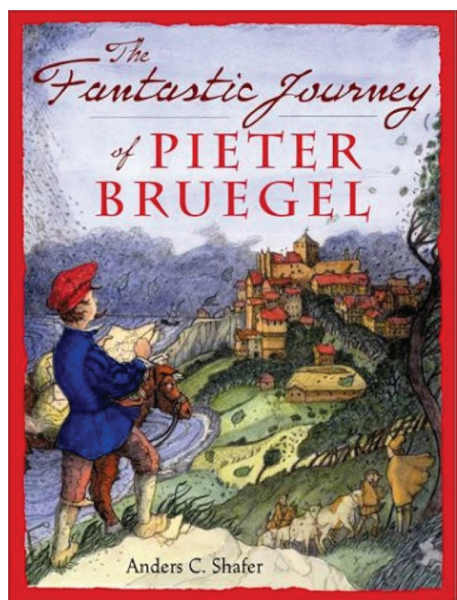
### WRITER AND ILLUSTRATOR

Anders C. Shafer, *The Fantastic Journey of Pieter Bruegel*, text and illustrations.

New York, NY: Dutton Children's Book, Penguin-Putnam, 2002.

Anders C. Shafer, *Poems, Written and Painted*. Eau Claire, WI: Inner Peace Press, 2024.

Wil Denson, *The Dancing Bear*, illustrations Anders Shafer. Eau Claire, WI, 2015.





*Ramblin' Round with Woody Guthrie*  
Acrylic on Paper  
34 x 40 inches, 2005  
ANNA ZOOK



*Jack Cole: His Life and Death*  
Acrylic on Paper  
30 x 40 inches, 2000





*Children of Europe*  
 Acrylic and Oil on Canvas  
 50 x 60 inches, 2015



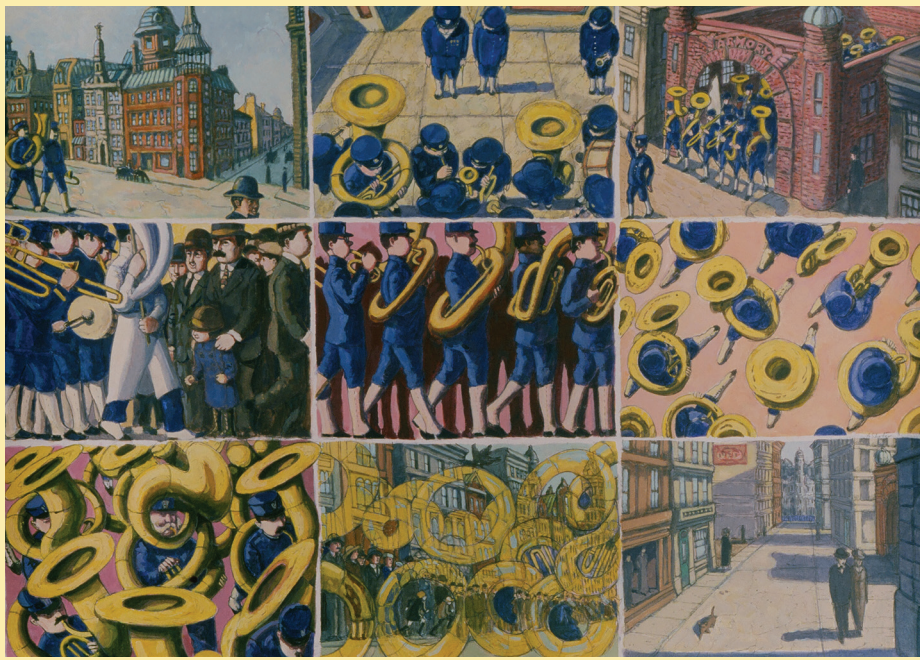
*1951*  
 Acrylic on Paper  
 33 x 42 inches, 2004



*Davy Jones' Locker*  
Acrylic on Paper  
60 x 65 inches, 2004  
LISA ASPENSON



*Bellini*  
Acrylic on Paper  
33 x 42 inches, 2007



*Band*  
Acrylic on Paper  
22 x 30 inches, 2002  
UW-EAU CLAIRE MUSIC DEPARTMENT



*Blackhawk*  
Acrylic on Paper  
33 x 42 inches, 2006  
PRIVATE COLLECTION

*Pirate Jenny*  
Acrylic on Paper  
33 x 42 inches, 2006



*Brancusi*  
Acrylic on Paper  
35 x 43 inches, 2024  
CAMERON ANDERSON





*Ramblin' Round with the Old Man*  
Acrylic on Paper  
33 x 42 inches, 2013



*Winter Coming In*  
Acrylic on Paper  
33 x 42 inches, 2014



*The Blot Man*  
Acrylic on Paper  
34 x 42 inches, 2025



*Dancers Being Blown Off the Stage of History*  
Acrylic on Paper  
39 x 50 inches, 2008  
MARISA MICKEL



*Gentile Bellini's Dream IV*  
Acrylic on Paper  
36 x 44 inches, 2005



*One Fine Evening In The World*  
Acrylic on Paper  
22 x 29 inches, 2001



*Moments Disappearing into  
the Twentieth Century*  
Acrylic on Wood  
42 x 48 inches, 2024



*Performing Elephant*  
Acrylic on Canvas  
50 x 60 inches, 2022



1950  
Acrylic on Paper  
38 x 46 inches, 2001



After the War  
Acrylic on Paper  
33 x 44 inches, 2015



*Gentile Bellini's Dream V*  
Acrylic on Paper  
22 x 30 inches, 2005



*Giacometti*  
Acrylic on Paper  
36 x 44 inches, 2024  
CAMERON ANDERSON

# AT THE CONFLUENCE





*Incident at Little Falls*  
Acrylic on Paper  
30 x 40 inches, 2000

Here at the river's edge, one feels  
a strong impulse to proceed. Still, one must  
consider how one moves, must consider  
what one hopes even now to move toward.  
—Scott Cairns, from his poem "Vision"

## CAMERON J. ANDERSON

FOR 43 YEARS, ANDERS C. SHAFER TAUGHT UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EAU CLAIRE STUDENTS TO DRAW THE FIGURE, MAKE PAINTINGS, AND TALK ABOUT ART. IN A LIFETIME, FEW ARTISTS WILL REALIZE PROFESSOR SHAFER'S LEVEL OF PRODUCTION AND RELATED ACHIEVEMENTS. FOR THE TEN ALUMS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS EXHIBIT, HE WAS AND REMAINS A MENTOR OF CONSEQUENCE.

### CULTURE

Having completed his B.F.A. at the University of Iowa and an M.F.A. from the University of Cincinnati, Shafer joined the UW-Eau Claire Art Department in 1968. Two years after his arrival, to meet growing demand for studio and art education courses, a new fine arts building (now Hass Fine Arts Center) opened on the north bank of the Chippewa, across the river from the university's lower campus. The complex, also home to the Music and Drama departments, featured the Foster Gallery and much-needed lecture halls, studio, and office space. Almost immediately, the Foster began exhibiting works by artists of regional and national importance and UW-Eau Claire's Art Department prospered.

In the early 1970s UW-Eau Claire art majors received instruction from faculty like Bill Benson, Charlie Campbell, Joseph Campbell, Janet Carson, Ed Fish, George Hagale, Richard Joslin, Steve Katrosits, John Lawler, Bill Lee, Tom Lilly, Signe Ortiz, Tiit Raid, and Anders Shafer. The department offered a full slate of traditional course work: ceramics, design, drawing, fiber, painting, printmaking, and sculpture. Andy taught figure drawing and advanced painting. During those years, some of us were also reading journals like *Artforum* and *Art in America* and heading to Chicago, Minneapolis, and New York to experience all the contemporary art we could. In the 1960s on the heels of painters like Willem

de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, and Mark Rothko, ideas about art—Conceptualism, Earth Art, Minimalism, Neo-Expressionism, Op, and Pop—entered regular classroom conversation even in a sleepy college town like Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Postwar baby boomers were witnessing an art world in motion, from the thrall of Modernism to a so-called Late Modern period.<sup>1</sup> We were drinking in what art critic Robert Hughes later termed “the shock of the new.”<sup>2</sup>

But if the rapid expansion of UW-Eau Claire’s art program was remarkable, in the larger frame it was not exceptional, for at the zenith of the American Counterculture, college and university art programs prospered nationwide.<sup>3</sup> And in this regard, the popularity of art education in the ‘70s is only a partial account of what was happening in private and public universities in the U.S. From 8.58 million students in 1970 to 21.02 million in 2010, undergraduate and graduate enrollment soared. The growth was due mostly to STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and an assortment of preprofessional degree programs. During these same years, the earlier vitality of the arts and humanities waned; three realities contributed to this decline.

First, to accommodate growing student demand, most universities invested in new buildings and infrastructure, created new majors, and added record numbers of faculty and staff. Tertiary education had always relied on donor support, but added sources of revenue were now needed and strategies designed to gain market share soon eclipsed older, more altruistic notions about the nature and purpose of higher education. In due course, careerism recast the mission of higher education. Prospective art students and their parents began to do the math. If the expense of completing a B.F.A., say in painting or sculpture, was outpacing annual cost of living increases and if chances for gainful postcollege employment in the arts seemed slim, then studio intensive degrees appeared to be a bad investment.

Second, the swift ascendance of the digital age reconfigured the course of art

education. iPhone in hand, everyone was becoming a photographer, designer, writer, and filmmaker. Personal computers, the internet, and powerful software upended traditional art department curricula, degree plans, and faculty hiring, not least because good careers could be had for creatives skilled at building brands and launching effective marketing campaigns. Fields like 2D and 3D design, architecture and interior design, and film production opened wide. But if these new careers met the need for reliable post-graduate employment, they also provoked a paradigmatic shift in art education: though barely noticed, art training existed more and more in service to consumer capitalism and the generations of art students who built things mostly by hand became a fixture of the past.

A third factor contributing to the decline of art education is more subjective: the idealism of the Woodstock Generation did not hold. In 1975—after massive protests on campus and in the streets—U.S. armed forces finally retreated from Vietnam. But a deep divide in America’s body politic remained. Racism at home and a host of troubling global crises appeared tragically out of sync with competing accounts of human progress. In the 1980s, postmodern thought further radicalized parts of the academy. Art critic Eleanor Heartney observes, “In this strange new world, art works are reborn as texts, history is exposed as myth, the author dies, reality is repudiated as an outmoded convention, language rules and ideology masquerades as truth.”<sup>4</sup> While waves of deconstruction followed by the emergence of critical studies generated a bounty of creative possibilities, these philosophical moves further alienated the arts and humanities from the rest of the university.

At this point the account I am offering takes a curious turn. Incubated in an admixture of relative prosperity, ubiquitous digital media, globalization, and shifting social agendas, a new class of creatives rose up to displace the older artworld bohemi-  
anism.<sup>5</sup> While these young professionals liked the arts in concept, they turned from



Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *Peasant Dance*, c. 1568

studio intensive degrees toward computer science, design, and business to advance their careers.

For every serious artist, context matters. During his 43-year tenure at UW-Eau Claire, Shafer witnessed the sweeping pedagogical changes and cultural shifts outlined above. As we turn to consider his legacy, consider Andy's steady pace, his resolve to do the work. Notice that while ever conversant with the contemporary scene, Andy often swam upstream, against trending artworld currents. No matter, to the watching world his strokes seemed sure.

#### MAKING PAINTINGS

Shafer is a painter's painter. He knows what paint does and recognizes its potential. He is also a colorist who understands the push-and-pull of pigment, its highlights, shades, and saturations. Andy approaches artmaking knowing what his hands can do and perceiving what his eyes see. Plying these skills, his work features three key elements: scene building, figure drawing, and narrative invention.

When making a painting, Shafer's first task is to organize the picture plane. This typically

begins at square one, the upper-left corner of his canvas. From this starting point he ventures forth to watch the rest of his story unfold. Pencil in hand, he lays down preliminary sketches in a continuous line. Then Andy infills emerging areas and shapes with washes of pigment, adding darker tones and more vivid color as needed. More outlines in pencil or pen may follow, but invariably Andy's ideas about landscape, public streets, plazas, and interiors must assume a form. In the end, his birds and beasts, skies and parks, and far off places occupy pictorial space and become stages where narratives unfold and tales are told.

In the long history of art, figurative work has routinely fallen in and out of fashion for social, religious, and aesthetic reasons. In Ancient Greece and then during the Italian Renaissance, perfectly rendered figures in paint or stone extolled the apex of human glory. Fast forward and under the influence of Wassily Kandinsky and others, early modernists moved decisively away from realism toward abstraction. But this is only a partial account; many notable moderns continued to render the figure. Edgar Degas sketched and sculpted ballet dancers, Vincent van Gogh depicted field laborers, Paul Gauguin painted Tahitian



Jean-Honoré Fragonard, *A Gathering at Wood's Edge*, c. 1770–1773

islanders, and Eduard Manet produced his controversial *Olympia*. In the 1940s and '50s, abstract expressionists continued to occupy the critical center of the artworld. Nonetheless, in the early '60s another movement—New Figuration—entered the scene. This loose affiliation of artists like Frank Auerbach, Jack Beal, Eric Fischl, Lucian Freud, David Hockney, Frida Kahlo, and Philip Pearlstein continued to produce important figurative work.

In the company of these and many other artists, Shafer drew and painted the figure. Soon after arriving in Eau Claire, he paired up with a faculty colleague on a regular basis to draw from a live model. Fifty-seven years later he and Barbara, his wife, gather most Saturday mornings with a handful of local artists to continue the practice. For them, studying the figure is basic, a skill foundational to most two- and three-dimensional narrative-based art.

Stage set and actors in place, Shafer builds worlds. These often appear as fictional reconstructions of real events; social, political, and aesthetic field reports, if you will. Amid bucolic landscapes and crowded pla-

zas, actions rise and fall. We meet puffed-up politicians, luminary boasters and raging tyrants, artists, rubes, and dreamers. There are scientists, fat cats, preachers, and farmers. Spectators gather in the street, trains and circus wagons pass by, and ducks swim in ponds. Urban and automated, planes are streamlined, bombs atomic. The world becomes modern.

Observer and reporter, Shafer creates what he calls “sequence art,” the kind of storyboard format one might find in a nineteenth-century flip book, twentieth-century Marvel comic, or a contemporary graphic novel—but more painterly. For many centuries these kinds of narrative programs were worked out on the walls of churches, monasteries, and civic buildings to retell biblical stories and ancient myths. And in the West, at least, these episodes were read left to right and top to bottom, advancing linear conceptions of time and progress.

While Shafer makes paintings for us and for himself, his work also exists as homage to the great makers who precede him, the earlier witnesses. Consider, for instance, his fascination with sixteenth-century



Thomas Hart Benton, *Poker Night* (from *A Streetcar Named Desire*), 1948

Northern Europeans like Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Hieronymus Bosch, Lucas Cranach the Elder, and Hans Holbein. Following a seven-month fellowship in 1986 at the Rhode Island School of Design where he focused on illustration, Andy launched a creative project that would span more than a decade: the publication of *The Fantastic Journey of Pieter Bruegel*, for which he created the text and illustrations. In this children's story, young Pieter journeys from Antwerp to Rome and back. From the boy's journal entries, we learn that he stops to talk with peasants, marvels at the Alps, sees a Protestant prisoner, falls into an Ottoman raid on the town of Reggio, and even meets the great Michelangelo.<sup>6</sup>

Shafer is also drawn to the flourish of Rococo artist Jean-Honoré Fragonard, Impressionists like Paul Cezanne and Vincent van Gogh, the Fauvists, Cubists, and Futurists, and on the American scene, the visual ideas of WPA artists John Steuart Curry and Thomas Hart Benton. We have entered Shafer's visual imagination, and to our delight it often opens up to a kind of magical realism. As such, Andy's oeuvre embraces the arc of human life, its tragedy and glory, all anchored in narrative.

Martin Buber, the celebrated twentieth-century Jewish philosopher, describes the origin of art like this:

This is the eternal origin of art: that a human being confronts a form that wants to become a work through him. Not a figment of his soul but something that appears to the soul and demands the soul's creative power. What is required is a deed that a man does with his whole being: if he commits it and speaks with his being the basic word to the form that appears, then the creative power is released and the work comes into being.<sup>7</sup>

Fiction, art, and history animate Shafer's picture plane, and so also do childhood memories and experiences. Andy hails from an educated family. Boyd C. Shafer, Andy's father, was a professor of European and American history, a university leader, and noted public servant. Boyd Shafer's career kept his family on the move: from Arkansas to Paris and eventually the Washington D.C. suburbs. Understandably these locations, paired with his father's intellectual pursuits, impressed Andy. A studio artist and not an academic per se, he followed his

father into academe. During his tenure at UW-Eau Claire, his cultural literacy was widely respected by colleagues in English, History, and Philosophy departments. As confirmation, he was appointed Max Schonfeld Distinguished Professor in 2000, a fitting honor for Andy, the artist intellectual. It comes full circle, Schonfeld, a UW-Eau Claire professor, was an historian like Boyd Shafer.

## POESIS

When curator, Anna Zook, first shared her vision for this exhibit, she rightly drew a connection between Shafer's paintings and poetic discourse. According to Andy, "I think my paintings are painted poems. . . They seem to come from the same magical place."<sup>8</sup> But given poetry's diverse schemes and ambitions, what shall we make of Shafer's claim? An insight from poet Scott Cairns helps sort the matter:

. . . the *poetic* text must allow the reader to entertain certain—if not necessarily all—of the words themselves as *sculptural* matter, as opacities, to be observed and engaged (rather than as transparencies to be *moved through*). . . It must provoke a sense of words not merely serving as *names for things*, but as *actual things*, even as *powerful things*, things having *agency*, generative and, as I like to suppose, *regenerative agency*.<sup>9</sup>

If, as Cairns suggests, words may be likened to sculptural matter, opacities, and actual things, it is reasonable to propose that a viewer's encounter with a painting smartly parallels a reader's encounter with a poem. Poesis can be present in strokes of paint applied to a panel just as it is in a word well placed on a page. The poetic spirit of Shafer's work resides in the plasticity and materiality of what he has made and it is there that the comic and the tragic, the prosaic and the sublime camp out.

There is a Whitmanesque quality to Andy's work. *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman's masterpiece and one that was subject to the poet's continuous revision, describes all manner

of human making. For instance, in the stanzas of "I Hear America Singing," the nineteenth-century bard lauds mechanics, carpenters, masons, boatmen, shoemakers, woodcutters, mothers, young wives, and girls sewing and washing.<sup>10</sup> In the writer's broad survey of American life and culture, he celebrates orators, singers, wanderers, musicians, preachers, and presidents. For Whitman, every labor, belief, emotion, and experience bear mention. These thematic concerns are present in works like: *Ramblin' Round with Woody Guthrie* (2005); *Assassination Attempt of Harry Truman* (2007); *Performing Elephant* (2022); and *The Rise and Fall of Cincinnati Ohio* (2025).

Young Hugo von Hofmannsthal, a late eighteenth-century Austrian writer, set out to be a poet, but by 1900 turned to fiction, drama, essays, and became, notably, a librettist for the celebrated composer Richard Strauss. In 1903, Hofmannsthal drafted a letter from Lord Philip Chandos (Chandos being a fictional character and the letter dated August 22, 1603) to the late philosopher Francis Bacon. In this epistle, Chandos wrestles to understand how one can apprehend meaning.

Everything seems to mean something, everything that exists, everything I can remember, everything in the most muddled of my thoughts. Even my own heaviness, the usual dullness of my brain, seems to mean something: I feel a blissful and utterly eternal interplay in me and around me, and amid the to-and-fro there is nothing into which I cannot merge. That it is as if my body consisted entirely of coded messages revealing everything to me. Or as if we could enter into a new, momentous relationship with all of existence if we began to think with our hearts.<sup>11</sup>

In many respects, the Chandos Letter, which anticipates the multiform challenge of finding meaning in the modern world, anticipates the dilemma facing so many contemporary artists: how to locate and apprehend meaning. While Andy primarily

wrestled with this through making paintings, he also published some fine poems. “Eau Claire Wisconsin,” goes like this:

Two rivers rolled  
Through great pine forests.  
People came, savaging an ancient world,  
Building where the ice broke,  
Fire smoke mixing with winter stream,  
Rising between trees falling,  
Into fast, heavy water.

Still through the mud clouds  
Came shining fish.  
You could see them leave,  
Passing the sawdust piled high,  
That seemed to hold the town.

After the last logs bumped south  
Toward the Mississippi  
Fishermen, entering the confluence,  
Stood up, shocked by silence,  
As the saws shut down forever.

A hundred stark winters fade away  
Eau Claire lies ringed by shells  
Of motels, car washes, malls,  
Black paint on door windows  
Peels away, the many names replaced  
or gone.

I see Eau Claire one summer night  
Walking down the hill from the hospital  
Lit up like a toy town,  
Resting by the old river.  
Earlier, raking leaves around the garage,  
I had found snow,  
Then something like sawdust.

Later, I walked with my daughters  
On the rusty railroad bridge.  
There was a high wind from the  
northwest,  
Scattered showers.  
“Why are you holding our hands  
so tight?”<sup>12</sup>

“Eau Claire Wisconsin” captures the change that has befallen so many American cities. More poignantly, the composition prompts Andy to imagine some future that may await his young daughters. In the poem’s final and tender stanza, he holds their hands tight.

## THE CONFLUENCE

The Chippewa is not a safe river. After heavy winter snow an early spring thaw can cause its banks to overflow, sweeping away whole trees as it charges downstream. Even in the dog days of summer, deeper currents pull strong. Heading west from campus, the Chippewa flows some 60 miles to the Mississippi, but before leaving the city it is joined by the Eau Claire River. This junction, the confluence mentioned in Andy’s poem, is a fitting metaphor to conclude this essay.

A regional history of indigenous people identifies land along the Chippewa, where UW-Eau Claire is now located, as a tribal meeting ground for the Dakota, Ho-Chunk, Menomonee, Ojibwe, and Potawatomi Nations. Long known as a river town, in the late nineteenth century, the city became a booming lumber town, one of the largest in the world. Industry barons built grand homes near the river, erected splendid churches and civic buildings, and the city center flourished. When that season of prosperity neared its end in the 1930s, “Sawdust City” filled the void. The Gillette Safety Tire Company and Eau Claire Normal School, both established in 1916, expanded to meet that need.

At the height of WWII, the tire plant operated around the clock employing some 6,300 workers, 63% of them women. In 1940, The United States Rubber Company gained a controlling interest in the business and in 1961 renamed it Uniroyal. Meanwhile, in 1971 Eau Claire State University became the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Some 10,000 students filled the dorms on upper and lower campus as well as student rentals about town. Until 1986, the legal drinking age in Wisconsin was 19 and on weekends thirsty undergraduates filled Water Street bars to capacity, the Joynt and Camaraderie being art crowd favorites. Many faculty lived adjacent to campus in the city’s Third Ward and in the long arc along the ward’s east side, hikers and joggers enjoyed Putnam Park. The lumber town had become a factory town and a college town.



When Uniroyal closed in 1992, entrepreneurs Bill Cigan and Jack Kaiser purchased the sprawling plant. Newly christened Banbury Place, the old tire factory became homebase for dozens of start-up businesses, entrepreneurs, artisans, and artists. In 2000 Barbara Shafer leased studio space at Banbury and three years later Andy and Barbara moved to a south- and west-facing corner studio on the third floor of Building 13. With UW-Eau Claire sited on the Chippeewa and Banbury Place perched high above the Eau Claire River, Andy has lived out his calling as artist, art professor, and mentor at this confluence.

A second confluence, already intimated, is Andy and Barbara Shafer's life together. To know the Shafers is to witness their regard for each other. Each of the two rooms of the Banbury studio they coinhabit is crowded with their art, completed and in progress. While they maintain a good measure of aesthetic independence, they are in regular conversation with each other about their work. The house they share near campus is no different. Like many artists' homes, it is filled with art, books, and curiosities and is a regular gathering place for friends. For Andy and Barbara, and the community to which they belong, life is a great matrix of relationship and affection.

A third confluence naturally follows: Andy and Barbara have, for decades, been prominent figures in the Eau Claire community. They are, to my mind, what writer Wendell Berry calls *stickers*, "those who settle, and love the life they have made and the place they have made it in."<sup>13</sup> Over many years, they've taught dozens of classes in the UW-Eau Claire Art Department and instructed hundreds of students. They helped build the art collection and exhibition program at the L. E. Phillips Memorial Library. First constructed in 1976 and hugging the Eau



Barbara Shafer  
*Stuck Together*  
 Oil on canvas, 2020

Claire River, the Phillips library is a cultural anchor for the city. Smart city planning continued to add new life to downtown Eau Claire. The Pablo Center for the Arts opened in 2018 and in 2022 the Phillips Library was greatly expanded. At the confluence of the Eau Claire and Chippewa rivers, these institutions represent a vital town and gown collaboration.

In the closing chapter of John Hildebrand's book, *Long Way Round: Through the Heartland by River*, Eau Claire writer and good friend of the Shafers, asks, "So Where is Eden?"

Since the space we carve out for our lives is mostly about time rather than geography, and since most lives follow a similar trajectory, it's reasonable to suppose that any place can qualify as Eden. Pick a spot on a map. People, not scenery, are the important part of the equation—family, friends, a team to root for—and people are where you find them.<sup>14</sup>

In an age marked by vicious and often senseless division, in a time when human kindness falters, and imagination is fleeting, we celebrate Anders C. Shafer. His life and work exist at the confluence of making and metaphor, poetry and community.

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Edward Lucie-Smith, *Late Modern: The Visual Arts Since 1945* (New York: Praeger, 1969). I cite this work because it was the primary text for a 100-level art survey course taught by UW-Eau Claire art faculty Steven Katrosits.
- 2 Robert Hughes, *The Shock of the New* (New York: Knopf Doubleday, 1981). The publication of this book was paired with an eight-part documentary television series produced by the BBC and then broadcast widely via PBS in the U.S.
- 3 Howard Singerman, *Art Subjects: Making Artists in the American University* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).
- 4 Eleanor Heartney, *Postmodernism* (London: Tate, 2008), 7.
- 5 Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community, and Everyday Life* (New York: Basic Books, 2002). See also Daniel H. Pink, *A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future* (New York: River Head, 2006).
- 6 Anders C. Shafer, *The Fantastic Journey of Pieter Bruegel* (New York: Dutton Juvenile, 2002). The book received mention in the *New York Times*, "Children's Books: Bookshelf" (August 11, 2002).
- 7 Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), 60.
- 8 Anders C. Shafer, *Poems, Written and Painted* (Eau Claire, WI: Inner Peace Press, 2024), 7.
- 9 Scott Cairns, "The Poetic Operation of Language," Lumen Center research seminar, May 15, 2025.
- 10 Walt Whitman, *Walt Whitman: Poetry and Prose* (New York: Library of America, 1982), 174.
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# LEGACY



WHEN ZOOK AND SHAFER ENVISIONED THIS RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBIT, THE ARTIST EXPRESSED HIS DESIRE TO HAVE FORMER STUDENTS SHOW THEIR WORK BESIDE HIS. FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF THOSE ARTISTS.

### CAMERON ANDERSON

Class of 1975  
Madison, Wisconsin  
liminalmaker.com

Cameron completed a B.F.A. from UW-Eau Claire in 1975 and an M.F.A. from Cranbrook Academy of the Arts in 1977. He is an artist and a writer, a maker of things and texts. From the outside his career path may seem to tell a different tale. Beginning with a two-year stint teaching art at Notre Dame High School in East Detroit, his lifelong paid employment has been almost entirely in the non-profit sector. Anderson is the co-editor of *God in the Modern Wing: Viewing Art with Eyes of Faith* (IVP Academic, 2021). Cam currently works for the SL Brown Foundation both as the Senior Foundation Advisor and as the Distinguished Fellow for Art at the Lumen Center, an initiative devoted to research, scholarship, and publication. He and his wife, Cynthia, have lived in Madison, Wisconsin since 1986.

### REBECCA CROWELL

Dixon, New Mexico  
Class of 1982  
rebeccacrowell.com

Rebecca—B.F.A. from UW-Eau Claire in 1982 and M.F.A. from Arizona State University in 1985—is known for her complex, layered, organic abstractions created with oil paint mixed with cold wax medium. These techniques are detailed in the comprehensive book she co-authored, *Cold Wax Medium: Techniques, Concepts & Conversations* (Squeegee Press, 2017) which is a resource for artists worldwide. A fully revised second edition will be published this year. International travel includes annual residencies at The Ballinglen Arts Foundation on the rugged west coast of

Ireland since 2012, and other residency and workshop teaching experiences in Spain, Greece, Portugal, Sweden, France, England, Mexico, Canada, and New Zealand. Since moving from Wisconsin to Northern New Mexico in 2021, the dramatic local landscape has strongly impacted her abstract vocabulary of colors, shapes, and textures. Crowell exhibits regularly in galleries across the U.S. and her work is included in hundreds of private, public, and corporate art collections. She lives with her husband Don and their dog Sofi in a restored adobe home in Dixon, New Mexico.

### DAVID KNOWLTON

Santa Fe, New Mexico  
Attended 1971-74  
davidknowltonfineart.com

David, born and raised in Wisconsin, began painting at a young age. After studying art at UW-Eau Claire, he moved to Santa Fe where he produced idealized, highly detailed drawings and paintings of architecture, trains, bridges, and machinery. Upon his return to Wisconsin, he worked as Scene Shop Foreman in the University Theatre where the need for simplification and speed in designing, constructing, and painting sets and backdrops led to a loosening of his painting style. Although his paintings are representational, he places great emphasis on the abstract elements, color relationships, the large shapes and patterns cast by shadows and the edges surrounding objects. Five years ago, he returned to Santa Fe where he paints and hangs out with his grandkids. Knowlton's work can be found in numerous corporate and public collections as well as private collections in the United States and Europe.

### BARRY KRAMMES

Class of 1973  
Richmond, Texas  
barrykrammes.com

Barry, a native of Eau Claire, received his B.F.A. in printmaking and drawing from UW-Eau Claire in 1973, and his M.F.A. in two-dimensional studies from the UW-Madison in 1983. Krammes was em-

ployed as a professor of visual art at Biola University in La Mirada, CA, from 1983-2018. For many years, Barry also served as Chair of the Department of Art and Director of the Green Art Gallery. Under his leadership the department grew from 30 to approximately 140 art majors and came to be recognized as a respected creative body within the Los Angeles arts community. Krammes fully embraced the assemblage process following graduate school and has been working three-dimensionally ever since. His assemblages have been featured in solo and group exhibitions, regionally and nationally, most often at university art galleries and can be found in private collections throughout the U.S. and Canada. In 2019, he and his wife, Beth, moved to Texas, where two of the couple's three children live. Barry notes, "It's easier to get into exhibitions in Houston than it was in Los Angeles." Even in the humidity and heat of Texas summer days, you can find Krammes working in his garage studio.

### MARY O'LEARY

Class of 1979  
Madison, Wisconsin  
meboleary@gmail.com

Mary's work reflects her experiences with nature, interactions with people, and enjoyment of textiles. But artmaking has ebbed and flowed in her life. After completing her B.F.A. in painting and art education at UW-Eau Claire in 1979, she began an M.F.A. at UW-Madison while also launching a futon business with a partner. Their business prospered and she left graduate school to manage it. Ten years later, Mary and her husband, Ken started a family, moved across country, living in California, New Mexico, and Minnesota. Eventually they settled in Calumet County, Wisconsin to raise their three children. That is when cows entered the picture—literally and figuratively. Ken became the owner/manager of two large dairy farms and the open dairy farm stalls became Mary's spot to do life drawings. In due course, her drawing pads filled with charcoal sketches of cows. In Calumet County, Mary joined an art co-op which became a vibrant community

for creativity, collaboration, and mentorship. Now retired and having returned to Madison, the culture of the UW-Eau Claire art department and its supportive environment, the futon business, and family life in rural Wisconsin continue to inspire as Mary works out visual puzzles in her drawings and paintings.

#### ANDREW RITCHIE

Class of 1996  
Eau Claire, Wisconsin  
andrewritchie.org

Andrew began his career in art by illustrating books for horror role-playing games while attending college. The Ruth Foster gallery was a special place during his time at UW-Eau Claire, he fondly remembers the work discovered at the fall faculty show freshman year and has many wonderful memories of exhibits and talks experienced in the space. After receiving a B.F.A. in illustration from UW-Eau Claire, for several years Andrew worked for White Wolf Publishing. He went on to draw more dead stuff and the like for comic books, rock bands, and garage kit monster models. The focus of his current work is to visually describe form: to draw the shape of a thing, rather than the thing. Andrew is currently an empty nester with his wife in Midwestern Wisconsin, where they share a little pink house with a cat and a young shepherd.

#### TIM SEELEY

Class of 1999  
Chicago, Illinois  
timseeleycreative.com

Tim is one of those “slash” people . . . a writer-slash-artist. He has drawn a number of different comic book series including G.I. JOE, HALLOWEEN, WILDCATS, and EXSANGUINE. His writing work includes *The New York Times*’ bestselling HACK/SLASH, NIGHTWING, BATMAN ETERNAL, MONEY SHOT, and critically acclaimed REVIVAL. He has also done consultation work for Cacao Barry, artist Hebru Brantley, and DreamWorks Animation, and is an adjunct professor at

Columbia College Chicago. He resides in Chicago, Illinois with his wife and daughter, and works at home where he is never far from his ‘80s action figure collection.

#### MARC ZAPCHENK

Class of 1986  
Shoreview, Minnesota  
marczapchenk.com

Marc is an artist, illustrator, and designer. He studied graphic design and painting at UW-Eau Claire from 1982-1986 and received an M.A. from the University of Minnesota in 1993. Marc is interested in the musical qualities of art and thinks of his paintings as melodies. He plays with colors, textures, and shapes in the same way a musician plays with rhythms and notes on an instrument. One of his favorite pursuits is to listen to live music, but these experiences are ephemeral—the moment is with us, then it is gone. A painting, however, can stay with us and be revisited over time. His hope and goal is to capture some of the energy of live music in his art—a nearly impossible task since painting’s inherent nature is static. A notable achievement in Marc’s career was his design of a commemorative manhole cover to honor singer/songwriter Bob Dylan. His Yin Yang Guitars cast metal design can be seen on the sidewalk in front of Fitger’s Brewhouse on Bob Dylan Way in Duluth, Minnesota.

#### FRANKLIN ZETZMAN

Appleton, Wisconsin  
Class of 1977  
frank.zetzman@gmail.com

Frank was born in Fall Creek, Wisconsin in 1953. He received a B.F.A. from UW-Eau Claire, emphasizing sculpture and drawing in 1977 and in 1986 an M.F.A. in ceramic sculpture and lithography from UW-Madison. He taught in the UW System for more than 35 years, primarily at UW-Fox Cities, retiring as Professor Emeritus from UW-Oshkosh in 2020. He has artwork in university and private collections, and has lived with his wife and artist, Lynn Zetzman in Appleton, Wisconsin since 1988. As a practicing guitarist and sitarist

his work in this exhibit features reliefs of the Spanish composer/guitarist Francisco Tarrega and the Indian composer/sitarist Ravi Shankar. These plates were wheel-thrown, modeled on red clay, painted with black and white slips, and then glazed.

#### LYNN ZETZMAN

Appleton, Wisconsin  
Class of 1978  
lynnzetzman@gmail.com

While attending UW-Eau Claire in the 1970s Lynn’s eyes were opened to so many ideas and ways of making visual artworks. She was influenced by teachers, other students, and the impressive visiting artist program that brought top notch artists to Eau Claire and the Foster Gallery. Art Department field trips alongside jazz concerts at The Joynt on Water Street and Women’s Studies, Native American Studies, History, Philosophy, Theater, English, and the Sciences broadened her education immeasurably. Lynn completed her B.F.A. in Studio Arts and Art History from UW-Eau Claire 1978 and in the early ‘80s returned to Eau Claire to earn a K-12 teaching credential. In the early ‘90s, she completed an M.T.S. at St. Norbert College. Lynn taught K-12 Art over four decades in six Wisconsin communities as well as a stint teaching Art Methods at Lawrence University. Extensive travel helped her learn and grow as has teaching. She has written numerous proposals and been awarded grants that helped fund travel, Fulbright and Fulbright Hays scholarships among them. Extensive travel informed her practice adding new materials, techniques, and images to her visual story telling arsenal. Before retirement Lynn was the Director of the Aylward Gallery, UW-Oshkosh Fox Cities Campus for four years.

GENEROUS SUPPORT  
FOR THIS PROJECT  
WAS PROVIDED BY:

The James R. Larson and Vicki Lord Larson Fund  
through the UW-Eau Claire Foundation  
Mary O'Leary and Kenneth Buelow  
UW-Eau Claire Art + Design Department, Ned Gannon CHAIR  
The Ruth Foster Art Gallery, Amanda Bulger DIRECTOR

CATALOG BY:

Cameron J. Anderson EDITOR  
Kate Austin COPY EDITOR  
Ned Bustard DESIGNER

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