



Glenn C. Rudderow

Artist, Muse, Thinker, Determined

July 20, 1953-April 27, 2025

Dear Citizens,

Recently our region lost an iconic contributor and member – regional artist Glenn Rudderow.

Sometimes I struggle to get my memorial recollections about a member written because I know them in such a limited way. In this instance getting started has been difficult because I knew the departed so well for over 45 years.

I co-produced two documentary films about Glenn with New Jersey Network's Louis Presti. The first film was about multiple painters: "Bayshore Artists," and the second was "Reflections of a Bayshore Painter," where sole focus was on Glenn and his artistic ability. The latter I also scripted from countless taped interviews with him. These films premiered at the county college to a full house of 400 people, attesting to the extent to which Glenn was beloved. The 2005 "Reflections of a Bayshore Painter," won an EMMY.

My husband and I have collected Glenn's works since 1983. And because Glenn and his art are so deeply intertwined, you might say we live surrounded by Glenn. His wife Carol would laugh at that suggestion, especially with her knowledge of his resolute nature.

When I look at one of his paintings I hear his words resonate, telling the story behind each one: the techniques, the psychological impacts, the regional nature, the missing electric poles, and all the nuances of the piece. He also explained to me once that if subjects look at each other in a painting, versus looking out at the viewer, this changes the dynamics of the artist's intent and the appreciator's relationship with the piece.

We commissioned Rudderow to do a farmhouse painting for our living room. In it two cows look outward from the painting at the viewer. It gives the impression that the cows have stopped feeding to see who is coming up the farmhouse lane; you interact with them first. Next you contemplate the huge American Flag hung patriotically on the side of the house after 9-11, or possibly you notice the 4 contrails that streak above it. Glenn typically did small studies of his works on location before embarking on the full-sized painting. In this instance he explained that he didn't realize the clouds were actually contrails until after returning to the studio with the small study in hand. It was only then that he realized the profound symbolic effect that these wispy white streaks of condensation, coupled with the American flag, would mean in the aftermath of 9-11.

I could write countless words about this painting. When he unveiled it for me in his studio he played Kate Smith's "God Bless America." It was one of the original recordings. She first sang the song in 1938 and Glenn was a fan of music from the 40s, so it had that scratchy sound as if it were vinyl being played on an antique Victrola. His music preferences were typically tunes from before his birth.

Glenn would grin mischievously and snicker when he did something like playing the Kate Smith selection, and I would roar with laughter. His colleague and friend Pat Witt had many on-going jokes. He was a prankster.

He sometimes talked about odd coincidences or eerie prophetic occurrences that happened in conjunction with completing a painting. Once while working on a canvas of the historic Burcham farmhouse he dreamt about a highly dramatic stormy sky. The

next day when he was working on the painting the same extreme sky materialized in reality. When he unveiled the finished work to us, we were taken aback. Then he explained what had taken place and offered to change the sky. Naturally we decided to keep it as a portrayal of his actual experience onsite.

Each painting of the nearly 40 in our home evokes stories, ones that Glenn told us about them and others that develop from our own appreciation. Having written columns and introductions to Glenn's body of work at various points in time, one of the most striking things about his canvases is that you feel as if you are at the location being portrayed. His paintings are realistic but not photographic. They are much more potent than a photo because they give you the sense that you are there. He paints the ambience of a location, the feeling. He decides what to leave in and what to leave out, very much like Andrew Wyeth – abstract realism, magical realism, or simply realism. Once I asked if he would be offended if I compared his work to Wyeth's. He replied, "Not at all; I'm a fan."

Glenn by his own acknowledgement was a classical "regional painter." He spoke of his physical limitations as a possible reason for his geographical focus although occasionally he did venture to other areas, like Nova Scotia, to paint. He and I both knew the truth: he was a regional painter, not just because of physical limitations, but because he loved our Southern New Jersey Bayshore region, and because he was intimately familiar with it.

He and I talked about his exploration of the same location, multiple times, over many years. The Burcham Farm, East Point Lighthouse, Bivalve, Turkey Point and Caviar beckoned to him again and again. He said that viewing places in different lighting, seasons, and angles all gave deeper insight into their portrayals. He felt that as a painter becomes more intimate with a subject, he comes to know it better, and that by painting it again and again the artist's ability progresses as well.

His approach to painting, as with life, was one of tenacity and a stubborn spirit. His physical challenges demanded persistence. And he was just as tenacious about his resolve to paint. Glenn tackled all that he did with dogged determination. If I asked him if he had been painting he would respond, "How could I not? A painter is commanded to paint."

He was immersed in our region. We would discuss wetland issues, sea-level rise, sinking ground, flooding, oyster boats, sea captain homes, sunsets, ducks, Caviar, Greenwich, the Burcham sisters, diked farming, abandoned churches - anything that culturally delineated our area.

Above all else Glenn was an artist; it defined him. He knew it did, and anyone who knew him recognized that it did. He portrayed our landscape in new ways and got us to look more closely at it. His work played on our love of the region, but it also helped to develop it further by allowing us to see it in new ways through his eyes.

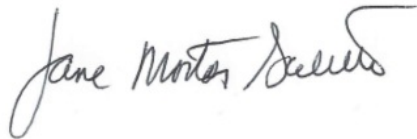
I would be remiss not to mention the great love and respect that he felt for his wife Carol. When they first got married, I can't remember anyone being as smitten as he was for her. He often said he envied Carol's ability as an artist: "She's a natural." He noted that his skills took him years to hone and he was continually modifying his approach, whereas he felt her facility in capturing animals in sketches was uncanny. He also marveled at her physical abilities for farm labors and horseback riding. When he spoke of Carol he beamed.

The trials of his illness weighed heavily on them in recent years. It will take some time and healing to remember their happier days. I've often thought how blessed we are that they found each other. She made him joyous and able to devote his life to his painting. Many thanks and condolences to Carol.

God's speed, Glenn. Thank you for what you gave to our community and to us. A part of you is still with us in your magnificent paintings. You and I will continually converse through your art works, but I shall forever miss you and our wonderful conversations.

Glenn's obituary appears below.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Jane Morton Galetto". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jane" being the most prominent.

Jane Morton Galetto
CU Maurice River Board President

Glenn C. Rudderow

Artist, Thinker, Determined
July 20, 1953-April 27, 2025

Glenn C. Rudderow, 71 well-known local artist, passed away on Sunday April 27, 2025.

He was born in Chicago in on July 20, 1953 and was the son of the late Leonard and Eva Schaffer Rudderow. Glenn lived most of his life in communities in Southern New Jersey where he captured the scenes of those communities on canvas.

A graduate of Bridgeton High School, Glenn studied painting with Pat Witt at the Barn Studio of Art in Millville and went on to study at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia from 1972 to 1976 where his work earned numerous awards.

From 1986 until 2002 he taught portrait painting, life painting and antique cast drawing at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Over his career, Glenn's work was exhibited regionally and nationally, including at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, The National Academy of Design, The American Watercolor Society and various other galleries.

He was proudly one of four artists featured in the New Jersey Network documentary entitled, Bayshore Artists, A Sense of Place released in October 2001. In November 2005, the New Jersey Network released the film, Reflections of a Bayshore Painter: Glenn Rudderow.

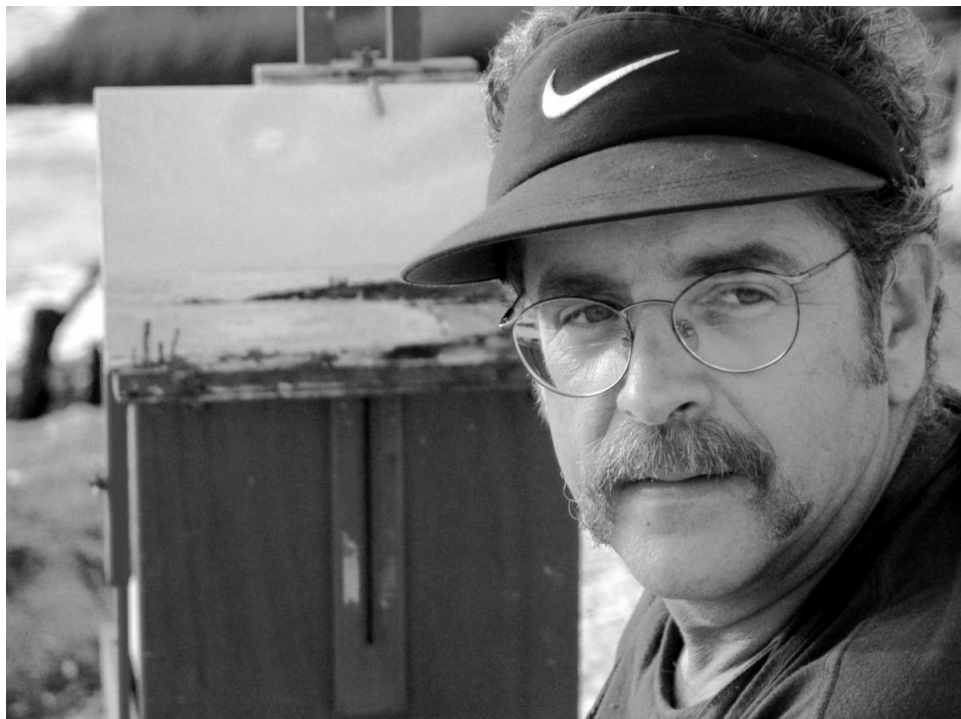
Glenn is survived by his wife of 30 years, Carol Conner, brothers Dan (wife, Grace, deceased) and Jim (wife, Bonnie) and numerous nieces and nephews.

A private celebration of life will be held in the future.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to The Barn Studio of Art, PO Box 29, Millville NJ 08332-0029.



In 2005 NJN Public Television and CU did a documentary film about Glenn Rudderow. It won and Emmy.



The documentary "Refleictions of a Bayshore Painter" [can be viewed on the CU website](#). Youtube page.



Glenn's paintings allowed us to explore our sense of place through his eyes and ours. He often included our mark on the landscape. Rudderow oil.

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