

"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it."

William Arthur Ward

Dear Friends,

The words simply aren't flowing right now, so I will let the thoughts run free until they begin to crystallize, splashing across the page in abundance. There are too many delightful connections to recount and too many new creatures encountered this year for my mind to be quiet as I write this. Afterward, when my mind has calmed, I will pick the pearls from out of the molten gold that filled 2014.

This has been a year of several very high "Ups" and one very unexpected "Down". To some, what might appear to be a repetitious series of travel and shows becomes to us sparkling punctuation points to our lives. You put the magic into my pens. In a medium as meticulous as mine there are not supposed to be any surprises. But, just when the demons are wrestling within me to make a piece worthy of you, I will be stunned by what has begun to flow through my fingers.

My "Down" happened when I took an absent-minded misstep, plummeting out of the attic to the concrete floor 9ft below. Talk about a quick reminder of my mortality! The black eyes, bruised ribs and torn ear mended quickly while my two months in a wheelchair with a broken ankle and dislocated shoulder seemed endless. Thankfully, Chuck devotedly tended to my every need (this is the longest he has ever gone without a dance) to speed me toward recovery. And my drawing table welcomed me every day, soothing my restless spirit with the promise of emerging works as I submitted to my confinement.



A toast to YOU from Botswana's Boteti River

Rather than discourage me, this accident has goaded me forward with my art, deepening my need to repay this huge debt. Over the years my newsletters have shared a common theme woven throughout them... gratitude for your patronage and a deep obligation to create the artwork with the talent with which I have been blessed. Seeded deep in my soul, that commitment is more insistent today than ever before. You are there beside me as each new creature emerges.



Kudu sketch from my Botswana Journal

With great humility,

Sherry

The Year Behind and the Year Ahead

Dodging the severe weather hitting the U.S., 2014 was off to a running start. The 43,000 attendees of the Dallas Safari Club Convention set an attendance record and those at the Safari Club International Convention in Las Vegas were determined to jump-start the year with their enthusiasm. Keeping our booth filled throughout both shows, the excitement was tangible as we exchanged hugs and shared adventures. What better way to begin 2014 than by reuniting with so many of our far-flung friends?!

In addition to the two shows, I was asked to speak to the Austin Woods and Waters group about how my life as an Outdoorswoman, Wing-shooter, and committed Conservationist are the foundation of my art. It is always stimulating to be able to share this story with others in the hopes of encouraging them to follow their own dreams. Resonating wherever I speak, our past, our present, and our dreams are inextricably intertwined, waiting for us to set them free.

Our long-anticipated safari to Botswana was filled with beauty and new discoveries. While the weather was perfect, the game viewing was much less intense than expected. But, watching families of Elephants cavorting in the Boteti and Chobe Rivers, looking all the world like Disney cartoons as they snorkeled along, became a daily delight. Having huge Bull Elephants swim directly toward us, ivory gleaming above the water, and then rising to their full height above our truck was a thrill not to be forgotten. The leisurely pace gave me more time to savor the magnificent skies reflected around me on the glazed waterways of the Okavango Delta. And, sketching Elephants and Hippos in the river beneath the viewing deck at the Chobe Game Lodge, glass of champagne in hand, may have spawned a new ritual for my daily journal entries.

In March my Turkey, "Something To Strut About", was featured on the cover of Safari Club International's "Safari" magazine. My most technically difficult piece, ever, it is also proving to be one of my most popular, with calls coming in from around the globe to order it. For those of you who have not seen the complete article about my work in the March/April 2014 issue, SCI has granted permission to reprint it on my website under the "What's New" tab. It is the most insightful ever written about my journey and my work.

The Spring and Fall Cottonwood Art Festivals in Richardson, TX continued to buoy us along, especially after having to cancel the Ruidoso Art Festival due to my fall. One of the top outdoor festivals in the country, our tent stays humming as collectors stop by to chat. And members of past safaris linger to relive the memories and bond we shared. The joyful buzz emanating from our little booth is to be treasured.

New Works



"The Old Gladiator"

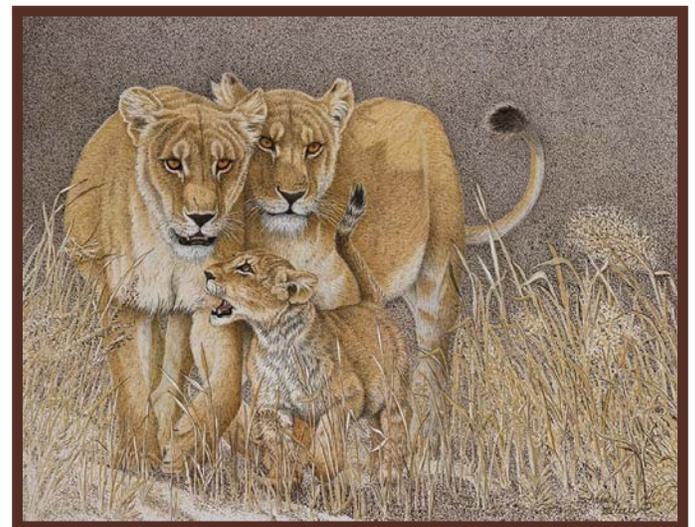
Many attendees of the DSC and SCI shows saw me working on this portrait of a battered old Cape Buffalo Bull. Sighted in the Serengeti while the drought lay heavy across the savannah, he was the chosen warrior to lead the herd to water. Trusted with the safety of the cows and calves,

he cautiously threaded the gauntlet of lions obscured by the clumps of grasses. The more I observe this imposing species the more I respect it. I hope I have honored his gallant character with my pens.

The first rays of sunrise let me sketch this pair of Grey Crowned Cranes as they began their courtship dance atop an acacia tree in the Ndutu area of the Serengeti. Feathers flared, the two would touch beaks, dance, and come together again in another kiss. Life-long mates, the rays from the rising sun turned their golden crowns into spun gold as they consummated their bond. Mixing the inks to capture these indescribably exquisite creatures put my pens to the test as feather after feather was layered in. Both the dance, and the piece it inspired, became a work of love.



"Let Me Call You Sweetheart"



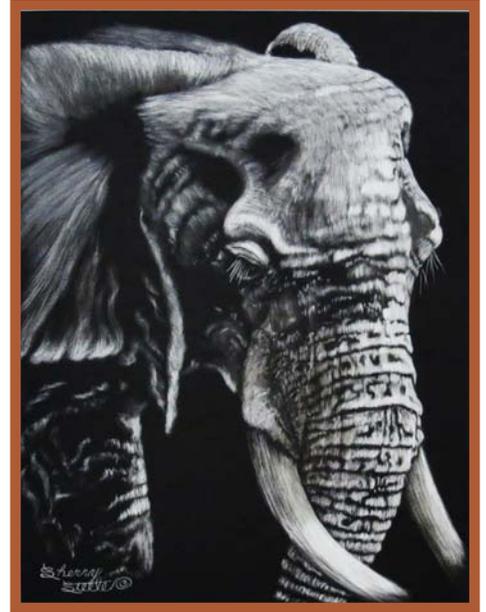
"Pride and Joy"

"Welcome home Mom". It had been a successful hunt in the Ngorongora Crater as the Matriarch and her sister returned to the pride in the soft morning light. Hidden in the deep grasses, one cub simply couldn't wait any longer to greet them. Always tinged with a bit of anxiety until all are accounted for, it was a moment to celebrate the rituals of reunion. Bonds renewed, their full bellies meant nourishment for their young babes and a buffer for the future of the pride.

Safari 2015

Finding it impossible to resist, we will be sharing the lure of Africa one more time with a group of my collectors and friends. While the rising difficulties of travel, combined with the gradually waning of our own energy, have multiplied, we still take such great pleasure from sharing “our” Africa with others that we felt compelled to do it one more time. I can already feel the powerful yearning for Africa wash over me as I write this, inexorably drawing me back to the source of its mysteries.

I now take at least three of these small Scratchboard ORIGINALS to each show. A fun way for me to test the composition for upcoming Pen & Ink works, it is a great way for you to add a Sherry Steele Original to your collection.



“Ultimatum”

You have had your warning and dared to defy it. Now, it is time to face the consequences. From an encounter on the Boteti River in Botswana where we had disturbed his afternoon swim, this Bull had had enough of us. Almost close enough to touch as he made his annoyance clear, it was not a moment to be forgotten. The many layers of inks I used let me capture the details of his body without losing the power of his presence. You can almost reach out and feel the texture of his crenelated hide.

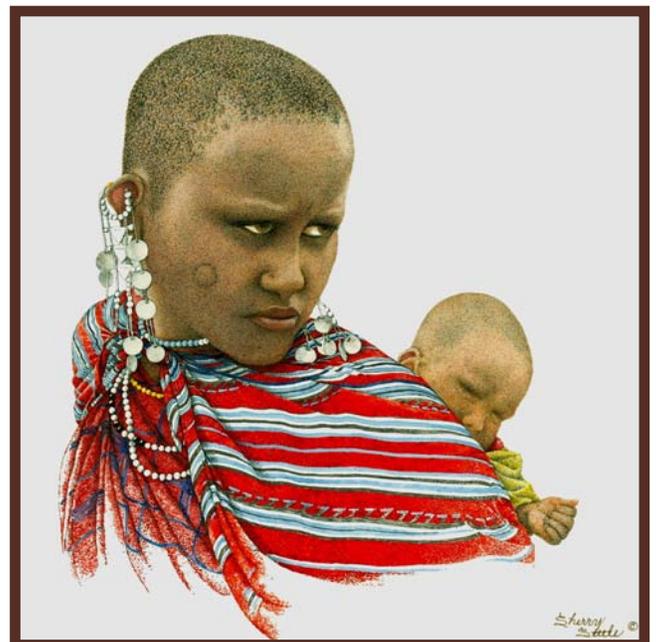


“Bona Fide Legend”

Finished as we go to press is the newest in my series of Longhorn artwork. Triggered by the invitation to speak at the dedication of the final two pieces in the University of Texas Longhorn Art Series, it was a powerful reminder of how much I love this species. It is still his inherent intelligence that sets him apart.

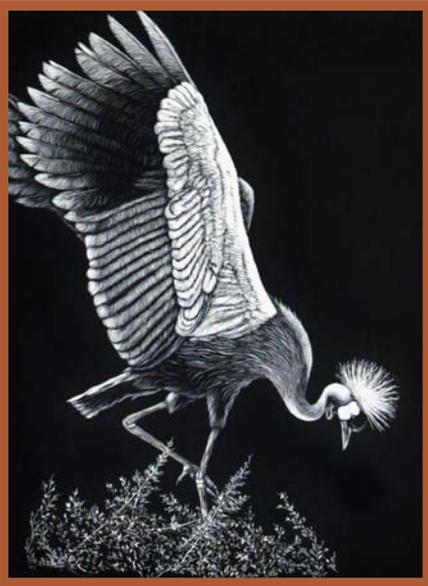
“What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the Lives of others.”

Mac Anderson



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"A Dance To Dazzle"

Sherry Steele 2015 COLLECTOR'S NEWSLETTER

Planned Shows for 2015

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| Jan. 15- 18 | Dallas Safari Club Show
Booths 2715,2716,& 2717
Kay Bailey Hutchinson Conv.Center
Dallas, TX |
| Feb. 4-7 | Safari Club International
Booths 4153 & 4155
Mandalay Bay Convention Center
Las Vegas, NV |
| May 2-3 | Cottonwood Spring Art Festival
Beltline near Coit
Richardson, TX |
| Oct 3-4 | Cottonwood Fall Art Festival
Beltline near Coit
Richardson, TX |

As you can see, we have cut back on our number of shows. Please check my website and Facebook page (Sherry Steele Wildlife Artist) for additions. Learn more about the stunning piece to the right, and more than 70 of Sherry's other prints available on her website.



"Something To Strut About"