

There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle." — Albert Einstein



Dear Friends,

Five a.m. and already I am driven to my studio. A stream of Wildebeeste in their perpetual cycle of the Great Migration surges across my table and the ink almost scalds my fingers as the creatures struggle to emerge. Willing my pens to race across the paper in a torrent of dots reaching to the horizon, they take on a life of their own. It is a trail forever beckoning me onward on this journey of mine.

Continuously daring the odds, Wildebeeste evade predators in the grass, crocodiles in the rivers, and are forever subjected to the instinctive urge to keep moving. With white beards glowing in the sun, their black tails flaring behind them impart a feeling of grace to their awkward, head-bobbing gait. It is an odd metaphor for my life. Often reflecting each chapter in my life, my art has been the undercurrent of beauty that softened the roughest edges and given me refuge when I most needed it. And, when I have dared to allow each animal to choose its own time to be released, it has repeatedly been an unconscious expression of my emotions. Freed, those become my "jewels". Letting go, leaving room for that magic, has been a difficult lesson for someone accustomed to discipline and maintaining tight control.

Add to that a lesson from childhood when I received unexpected gifts which, in the mind of a child, made me feel special. Embarrassingly, it was not until years later I realized it was not me, but those giving me the gifts, who were in fact the special ones. A truly humbling lesson, it leaves me fumbling for words to express my gratitude for the Magic and Gifts so many of you have brought to my life. Forever indebted to you, I can only end with a simple "Thank You!"

Sherry

The Year Behind and the Year Ahead

The year 2016 was filled to the brim with annual favorites and unexpected mini- adventures. Giving a mighty jump-start to our engines the Dallas Safari Club Convention opened with a record-breaking crowd of 51,000 attendees. Our 19th year in this show, their steadfast patronage and encouragement has often given me the courage to reach new heights. Following quickly on its heels, the Safari Club International Convention in Las Vegas had us sprinting across the country with happy hearts. While smaller in attendance, it has an international preeminence in the world of hunting, guiding, travel and art. Collectors there have a chance to share their own stories of Africa.

Before turning for home, Chuck had a surprise in store for me. For years he has watched me yearning to turn toward the Grand Canyon as we made our annual trek to the SCI Convention, never with enough time for the side trip. You can imagine my delight



and wonder as we viewed the millennia sculpted into the rock through the bubble of a helicopter's windshield. Buzzing along the Colorado River and setting down for a champagne lunch with the walls towering above, left us feeling like insignificant gnats in an ancient time and place. Few places on earth have matched the impact of Africa on us, the Grand Canyon does.

Relishing unusually perfect weather, the crowds in May and October thronged the aisles of the Cottonwood Art Festival in Richardson, TX. Quickly spreading word about our decision to lead one more safari to Tanzania amplified the usual buzz and energy in our tent. Participating for the 32nd time in this select group of artists also gave me the opportunity to share my love of wildlife and art with the students of Richardson through their Visiting Artist program. Never having touched real feathers and furs before, many of those students were thrilled to discover they could capture those rich textures with simple paper and pen.

Adding spice to our calendar were delightful little highlights. Starting with a quick visit to Truth or Consequences, NM, I worked alongside the ladies of the local American Legion as they packed boxes for our troops. Recognized for packing and sending the largest number of boxes in the country (nearly 9,000), they are determined to let our troops know their sacrifice is never forgotten. Then, the glorious spring in the Texas Hill Country found us invited to the acclaimed Star S Ranch to observe Sable Antelope. Watching them as they coursed through the wildflowers proved to be the perfect inspiration for "Aristocrat".

There was also time to attend the TexArt workshop in Kerrville, TX. This extraordinary partnership between the SKB Foundation and the Society of Animal Artists provided a rarified atmosphere of talent and sharing. Coming away heartened and hammered by my mentors' guidance, I needed a break from the intensity of my drawing table while their lessons sank in. Escaping the Texas heat, we headed to Buffalo, NY, for a long-overdue family visit. Packed with Buffalo wings, sightseeing, and the impact of Niagara Falls, it was good for the soul to feel the power and splendor of something much greater than ourselves.

A new addition to our schedule will wrap up 2016 with a bow. For the first time we will be part of the Armadillo Christmas Bazaar, a beloved Austin tradition. With a combination of the music and art that defines the unique personality of this city, I am proud to be part of the Armadillo family. And, did you happen to notice my comment about leading another safari to Africa? We just had to return one more time while health permitted, which brings me back to you. The chance to see many of you in the upcoming shows may help keep my feet firmly planted on the ground until I will once again be free to run among the stars of the African sky.

New Works



"Bedazzled"

A flash of iridescent blues cuts through the air; turquoise, royal blue, and deep purple. It is an inconceivable combination of colors on the wing. Punctuating the East African landscape with its fluorescent prism of colors and harsh call, the Lilac Breasted Roller is a dazzling sight. Symbolic of their bond as lifetime mates both male and female wear the same luminous plumage. Creating radiant new inks and color combinations to capture this bejeweled creature pushed me past old boundaries.



"A Glance and Gone"

A glimpse through the branches and he was gone in a whisper. Set among the vivid green acacia leaves of spring in Botswana, this magnificent Bull was not at all pleased with our intrusion. With spiraling horns and ears lined with the color of an African sunset, the Greater Kudu is a personal favorite.



"Caution - Impala Crossing"

Watch out, here comes another safari truck! It was a ballet of Impala unfolding around us. Caught between the need to rejoin the herd and the desire to turn around, the Does and their young were poised in the tall grasses at the edge of the road. Confusion reigned as individuals rocketed across the track in wild acrobatic leaps. It's a teaching moment for their calves to be vigilant in the midst of turmoil. To our delight, we were in the center of the action and the cause of it.



“Truce”

The intimidation factor. One thing more imposing than their dark, hulking shapes is the malevolent glare of Cape Buffalo. Always quick to take exception to any intruder, the approach of a family of Ground Hornbills set the stage for a quick assessment of intent.....on all sides. Cautiously skirting the Cape’s “comfort zone”, the Hornbills’ brilliant crimson facial skin punctuated the golden grasses as their little hunting party proceeded past the Bulls’ hostile presence.



“Taste of Gold”

Following this lioness as she rose from the shade, her intent was clear as she strode toward the nearby waterhole. Halting across from her just as she settled by the varnished surface for her first sip, her reflection turned the water into liquid gold. Capturing the glazed surface of water with thousands of pen strokes was the challenge. Surprisingly, struggling between the strokes and the smudging of inks, the water finally took on the fractured look of ripples. That was where the mastery of the medium fell away and the magic began.



“Ripple Effect”

Overpowering thirst has finally broken the deadlock. The unbroken drought lies heavy across the Serengeti as tightly bunched families of Zebra await their chance at the waterhole. Filling the dust-laden air with barks and squeals, each stallion chooses the moment to drive his family forward into the water. In search of untainted water, each wave of mares and foals surges deeper into the pool. Reflections of their freshly washed black and white stripes flash as they return to the river bank. The pure power of Scratchbord captured the tension and the beauty of the moment.



“Aristocrat”

Without question, Sable Antelope are the royalty of the Antelope family. Just sighting their stunning markings and gracefully arched horns moving through the bush will leave you breathless. First observing them in the wild in Krommjietshoek, South Africa, I could only sketch a wary herd from a distance. Not until a recent invitation to the renowned Star S Ranch in the Texas Hill Country was I finally able to add the necessary details for this splendid Bull.

“The good you do today people will often forget tomorrow. Do good anyway.” Mother Theresa

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Sherry Steele 2017 COLLECTOR'S NEWSLETTER

Upcoming Shows:

- Dec. 14 – 24, **Armadillo Christmas Bazaar**
2016 Palmer Auditorium, Austin, TX
- Jan. 5 – 8, **Dallas Safari Club Show**
2017 Dallas Convention Center, Dallas, TX
Booth #3113
- Feb. 1 – 4, **Safari Club International Show**
2017 Mandalay Bay Convention Center
Las Vegas, NV Booth #5752
- May 6 -7, **Cottonwood Spring Art Festival**
2017 Beltline near Coit Rd., Richardson, TX
- Oct 7-8, **Cottonwood Fall Art Festival**
2017 Beltline near Coit Rd., Richardson, TX
- Dec. 13 -24, **Armadillo Christmas Bazaar**
2017 Palmer Auditorium, Austin, TX

