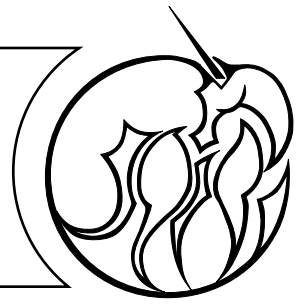


# { the avant-garde }

Katherine N. Crowley Fine Art & Design



PERIODIC JOURNAL VOLUME XII No.8 AUGUST 2019



{alaska: the last frontier}

by Katherine N. Crowley

My extended family and I recently took a vacation to Alaska. Our travel was arranged through the Alaska Railroad. Our trip began in Fairbanks in Alaska's interior and continued through Denali National Park, followed by Anchorage, a trip across the Kenai Peninsula, and a fjord tour departing from Seward. Unfortunately a series of landslides and a wild fire prevented us from taking the entire trip by train and we were detoured via motor coach along the Wrangell-Saint Elias Wilderness. Along the way I made a few watercolor sketches, took over 7,000 photographs, and experienced more stunning vistas than I would have thought possible. Everyone we met was wonderfully kind and I enjoyed going on an adventure with my family. The following pages provide a few perspectives of the land and landscape that is Alaska.

Above: *Alaska from the Motor Coach Window*, by Katherine N. Crowley, Crayola watercolor pencil on Canson paper, 2019



*Alaska Fireweed*, by Katherine N. Crowley, Crayola watercolor pencil on Canson paper, 2019



*Matt Fishing at Tanana Lakes*, by Katherine N. Crowley, Crayola watercolor pencil on Canson paper, 2019

As we made our way across the state, I met three photographers (and saw the work of another) who capture unique views of the landscape and the wildlife.

{dan poliak}

I met Dan Poliak in Denali National Park when he saw me with my camera and said, "You look like you know what you're doing. Would you mind taking my picture?". He said he was traveling alone, and selfies are too complicated with a long lens. He returned the favor and as the bus trip progressed we sought each other to exchange portrait duties when we stopped to take pictures. I finally asked him for his Instagram handle and he told me he is not a professional photographer but has gotten some really good shots on safari and now at Denali.

 @danpoliak



“ So we had incredible wildlife sightings in the park. First up, Caribou! Dads, Moms, and babies.

Next up: Moose!

Grizzlies! We saw thirteen of these guys all over the park. Mostly hunting for blueberries, but we saw one catch and eat a mountain squirrel. Nature!



“Birds of Denali! The one that looks like a fat sparrow is the Ptarmigan, the state bird of Alaska. Apparently it turns completely white in the winter.



“Denali Dall’s Sheep! They are all over the park but usually pretty far away and hard to see. When spotting them, the common refrain in our group was “Is that snow? Or sheep??” Here are some sheep.



“It was a bluebird day at Denali yesterday. We started out in the rain, and at mile 52 on the park road we were nearly turned back due to heavy mudslides. But we were one of the lucky few groups to be allowed past the blockade all the way to the end of the park road at mile 92. We were rewarded with crystal clear views of the mountain and amazing wildlife viewing. A superb experience.





{justin frechione}

I met Justin Frechione as I was perusing the Kantishna Gallery, which he owns with his mother Connie Engelbrecht, a ceramic tile carver. He noticed my Columbus Bluejackets hat, which I admittedly wore on purpose hoping to get some attention because one of our players is from Anchorage. It turns out Justin said he used to play hockey with Brandon Dubinski, who he says was a bit more passionate about the game than he was. I asked Justin if he was an artist and he pointed me to the photographs that had originally caught my attention from the street. He said he frequently goes into Denali National Park to shoot photos and had recently spent some time hanging out with some Dall's sheep.

I left the gallery that first night planning to return the next day. However, my confusion about the details of our itinerary led to an awkward phone call, Justin opening the gallery early to accommodate my travel schedule, followed by a circuitous adventure on the hotel shuttle, and me running at top speed through downtown Denali to make a hurried purchase of the two photographs you see at left.


Learn more about the Kantishna Gallery and the local artists represented there by visiting:

<https://kantishnagallery.com/>



{3xdiego}

I came across this photographer's work on the walls of the Denali Bluffs Hotel.

 @3xdiego

“An elegant stance by the infamous Dall Sheep... The agility that these wild animals act upon blows my mind!!! Yet alone the survival game from frozen winters to radiant summers!



“Hanging out with grizzlies in their wild habitat might seem risky to some. The language that's spoken within body language is something taken with time...



“This is my friend Moose, we spent a magical day together out in the bush. It's quite a treat observing the calming actions of wildlife that surrounds Denali National Park!





{robert c. watkins}

We took the train to Seward on the Kenai Peninsula to take a fjord tour, where I met Bob Watkins. When he boarded the catamaran I noticed that most of the crew knew who he was and welcomed him back. He had a huge lens attached to his camera body and he settled in at one of the tables with the lens as his companion. My family members called it the “Louisville Slugger”. As we set off on our excursion the captain came over the loud-speaker to announce wildlife sightings. A sea otter was doing the back stroke off the starboard side; then sea lions were spotted on the nearby rocks. Bob just sat there. I approached him and said that his lens was garnering a lot of attention from my family. I commented that he looked like he was on board with a purpose, “who or what are you here to see?” He replied, “Orcas”. This was his 30th trip on the tour boat and he had set a goal for himself to capture orcas feeding. He had recently made some pictures of orcas breaching, which was a five year commitment. He shoots for pleasure and shares his images freely.



@bob.watkins

<http://www.robertcwatkins.com/>

Humpback whales



“The transient orca pod was hunting. These two bull orca were trying to herd prey to the other orcas who had set a trap for them. Intelligence!!



“ Well, today was special!



“ It was a beautiful day at Northwestern Glacier



## {happy little trees}

by Katherine N. Crowley

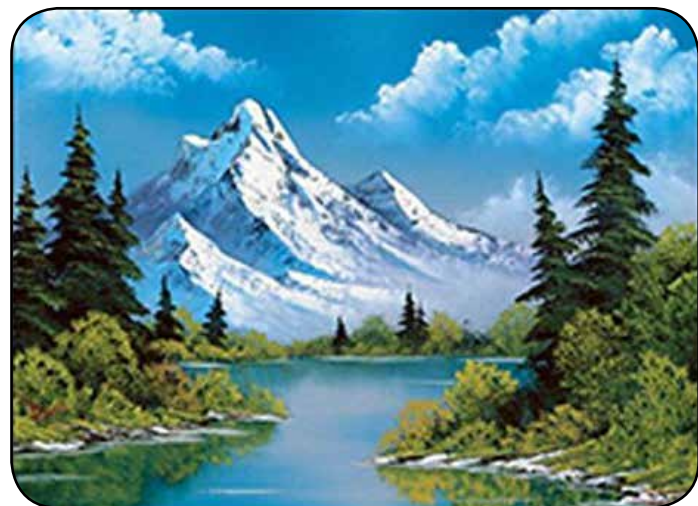
As we toured around Fairbanks, I felt something familiar about the trees. The black spruce trees in the area are tall, straight, thin, dark, and scrubby. They basically look like bottle brushes stuck into the landscape and have a remarkable resemblance to the “happy little trees” that Bob Ross famously inserted into his paintings using phthalo green and a stiff fan brush. Like many people, I watched a lot of Bob Ross’s *The Joy of Painting* television show. During an episode where he was painting the Northern Lights, I distinctly remember him talking about the years he spent living in Alaska. Following a quick Wikipedia search I learned that while enlisted in the Air Force, MSgt. Ross was stationed at Eielson Air Force Base, just a few miles outside of Fairbanks. I had always thought that Bob Ross’s depiction of majestic mountains shrouded in mist, ringed with trees and towering above a glass-like lake were imaginary scenes, I realized that his work is based in personal experience. “These are the happy little tree”, I thought, “they’re real”.

The Smithsonian Museum of American History recently announced the acquisition of four Bob Ross paintings and a selection of his personal items. The items include a 1994 painting titled *Blue Ridge Falls*, a 1988 canvas titled *On a Clear Day*, a converted stepladder used as an easel during *The Joy of Painting*’s first season, handwritten notebooks, and fan letters written to the popular TV personality. “These letters help reveal the significant impact Ross had on diverse individuals and communities, helping them to express and feel better about themselves,” say Eric Jentsch, the museum’s entertainment and sports curator.

Back in 1994, talk show host Phil Donahue asked Ross to “say out loud your work will never hang in a museum.”

“Well, maybe it will,” Ross replied, before adding, “But probably not [at] the Smithsonian.

From the top: Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve, @alaskanps via Instagram; Bob Ross at work on his television program, *The Joy of Painting*, which ran for 11 years; one of Bob Ross’s instructional paintings.



{all around the town}

- The Columbus College of Art and Design, Beeler Gallery* (<http://www.beelergallery.org/>)  
"Season Two: Follow the Mud", October 10-March 15, 2020
- The Columbus Cultural Arts Center* (<http://www.culturalartscenteronline.org/>)  
"Pasos de Arte 2019", August 9 - September 14
- The Columbus Museum of Art* (<http://www.columbusmuseum.org/>)  
"In a New Light: Alice Schille and the American Watercolor Movement", June 14-September 29  
"Jim Hodges", Through September 22  
"Greater Columbus 2019", Through September 29  
"Rodin: Muses, Sirens, Lovers", July 12-December 8
- COSI* (<http://www.cosi.org/>)  
"Unseen Oceans", October 19-February 2, 2020
- Dublin Arts Council* (<http://www.dublinarts.org/>)  
"Cypress Bark and Sandstone, Studies in Burnt Orange", August 6- September 13
- The High Road Gallery and Studios* (<http://www.highroadgallery.com/>)  
"Works of Heart", August 2-September 28
- McConnell Arts Center* (<http://www.mcconnellarts.org/>)  
"Yani Sheng: Netsuke Dreams", Through October 20  
"MAC Student Show", Through October 20
- OSU Urban Arts Space* (<http://www.uas.osu.edu/>)  
"Impermanent Durations: On Painting and Time (part 4)", August 6-September 21  
"Self Reflection", August 23-September 14
- The Pizzuti Collection* (<http://www.pizzuticollection.org/>)  
"Jim Hodges", Through September 22  
"Evan Gruzis: Drop Shadow", Through September 22
- Ohio Historical Society* (<http://www.ohiohistory.org/>)  
"World War I Display", Through November 11
- The Riffe Gallery* (<http://www.oac.ohio.gov/Riffe-Gallery/Exhibitions/>)  
"Natural Expressions", July 25-October 19
- The Wexner Center* (<http://www.wexarts.org/>)  
"HERE: Ann Hamilton, Jenny Holzer, Maya Lin", September 21-December 29

{performing arts}

- CAPA* (<http://www.capa.com/>)  
"Dear Evan Hansen", September 17-22, Ohio Theater  
"Vince Gill", September 15, Palace Theater  
"The Dancing Wheels Company", September 20, Lincoln Theater  
"Menopause: The Musical", September 20-21, Southern Theater  
"The Indigo Girls", September 20, McCoy Center
- CATCO* (<http://www.catco.org/>)  
"My Way: A Musical Tribute to Frank Sinatra", August 8-September 21, Studio Three, The Riffe Center
- Columbus Symphony Orchestra* (<http://www.columbussymphony.com/>) all performances at *The Ohio Theater* unless otherwise noted  
"Masterworks Series: Twisted 3", September 26-29  
"Masterworks Series: American Festival", October 11-12

{and beyond}

- The Akron Art Museum* (<http://www.akronartmuseum.org/>)  
"Dread & Delight: Fairy Tales in an Anxious World", Through September 22
- The Museum of Fine Arts Boston* (<http://www.mfa.org/>)  
"Make Believe" fantasy images from 5 contemporary photographers, Through January 20, 2020
- ICA Boston* (<http://www.icaboston.org/>)  
"Less Is a Bore: Maximalist Art & Design", Through September 22
- The Cincinnati Art Museum* (<http://www.cincinnatiartmuseum.org/>)  
"Kimono: Refashioning Contemporary Style", Through September 15
- Contemporary Arts Center* (<http://www.contemporaryartscenter.org/>)  
"Saya Woolfalk: A Cabinet of Anticipation", Through October 27
- The Cleveland Museum of Art* (<http://www.clevelandart.org/>)  
"Water: Edward Burtynsky", Through September 22
- The Art Institute of Chicago* (<http://www.artic.edu/>)  
"Expressive Ink: Paintings by Yang Yanping and Zeng Shanjing", Through November 10
- Dayton Art Institute* (<http://www.daytonartinstitute.org/>)  
"Monet and Impressionism", Through September 22
- Detroit Institute of Art* (<http://www.dia.org/>)  
"Humble and Human: Impressionist Era Treasures", Through October 13
- Indianapolis Museum of Art* (<http://www.imamuseum.org/>)  
"Outside In: The Art and Craft of William S. Rice", Through December 1
- Los Angeles County Museum of Art* (<http://www.lacma.org/>)  
"Beyond Line: The Art of Korean Writing", Through September 29
- Minneapolis Institute of Art* (<http://www.artsmia.org/>)  
"Graciela Iturbide's Mexico", Through December 15
- Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC* (<http://www.metmuseum.org/>)  
5th Ave: "Ragnar Kjartansson: Death Is Elsewhere", Through Sept 2  
The Met Breuer: "Phenomenal Nature | Mrinalini Mukherjee", Through September 29
- Museum of Modern Art, New York* (<http://www.moma.org/>)  
"Gina Beavers: The Life I Deserve", Through September 2  
"Simone Fattal: Work and Days", Through September 2
- New Orleans Museum of Art* (<http://www.noma.org/>)  
"Bondye: Between and Beyond", Through October 13
- Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh* (<http://www.cmoa.org/>)  
"Crossroads: Carnegie Museum of Art's Collection, 1945-Now", Ongoing
- The Warhol, Pittsburgh* (<http://www.warhol.org/>)  
"The Chelsea Girls Exploded", Through January 12, 2020
- San Francisco Museum of Modern Art* (<http://www.sfmoma.org/>)  
"Andy Warhol—From A to B and Back Again", Through September 2
- The Toledo Museum of Art* (<http://www.toledomuseum.org/>)  
"Life is a Highway: Art & American Car Culture", June 15-September 15
- The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.* (<http://www.nga.gov/>)  
"Oliver Lee Jackson: Recent Paintings", Through September 15
- The Smithsonian American Art Museum & The Renwick Gallery, Washington, D.C.* (<https://americanart.si.edu/>)  
"Ginny Ruffner: Reforestation of the Imagination", Through January 5

Click here to Visit,  
Friend & Follow

