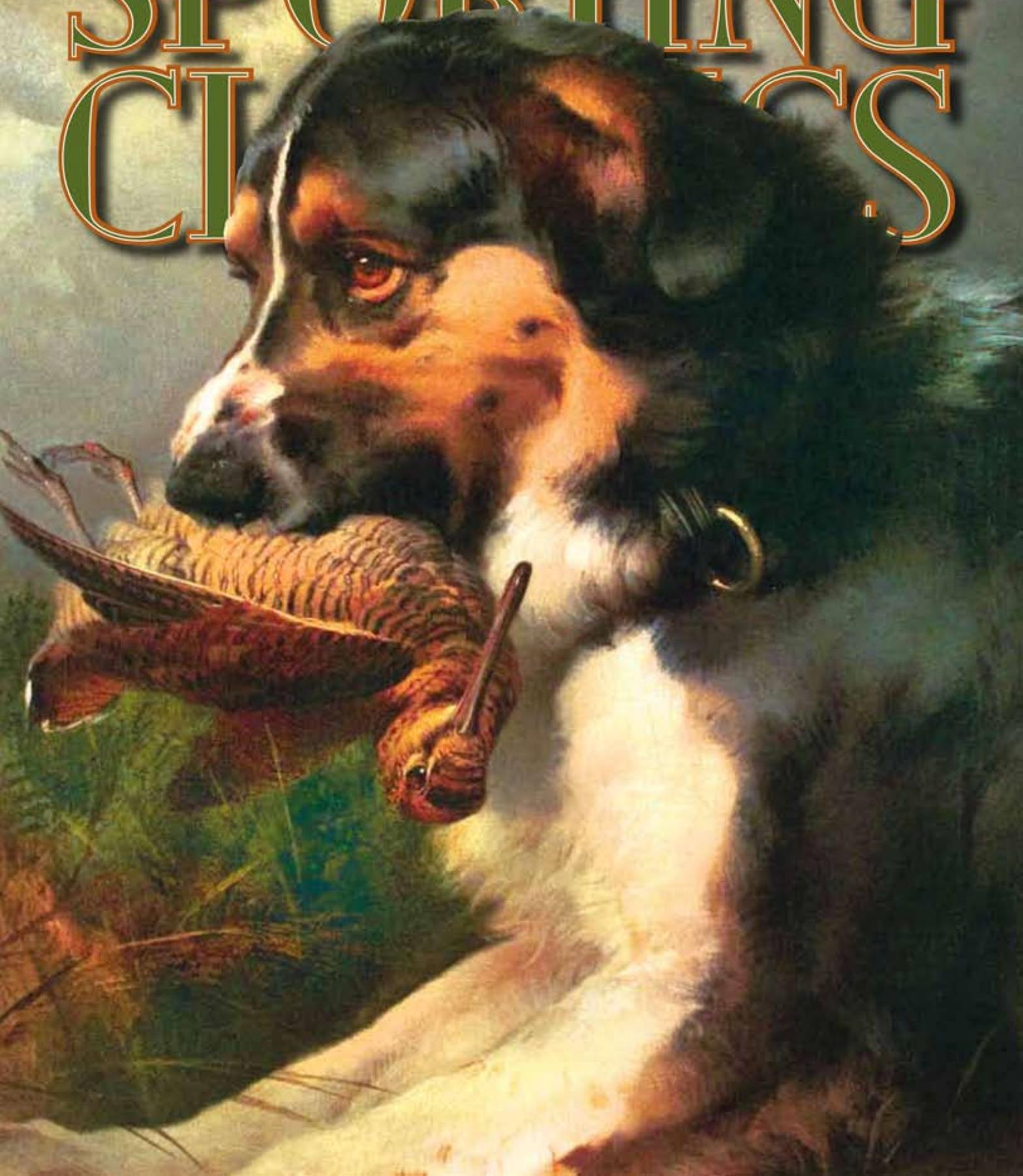


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SPORTING CLUBS





A Woman's Place

By Susan L. Ebert

Jan Martin McGuire's love of Africa shapes not just her paintings, but her entire life.

I felt it in my DNA the moment I stepped off the plane," Jan Martin McGuire tells me as we visit in her art-and-artifact-appointed home in the woodsy Osage Hills of Oklahoma. "The color . . . the light . . . I felt as though I were home."

McGuire speaks of Africa — a place she first visited in 1997, and to which she's returned for a total of 17 times. As an artist, Africa is her muse: Although she has traveled extensively throughout

North and South America, it's her depictions of African wildlife for which she is the most renowned, having been chosen the 2008 Safari Club International Foundation Artist of the Year and having works exhibited in the Smithsonian Museum and the Natural History Museum of London, among notable others.

A daughter of the American Southwest, McGuire spent her first 12 years in the Colorado Rockies, at which time her father,

an oil and gas lawyer, moved the family to Oklahoma. When not out-of-doors, the young Jan busied herself by drawing animals. She attended classes at the local art museum and studied fine art at the University of Tulsa for a while, until butting heads with a professor who refused to grade any painting that he could tell what it was. The focus on modern/abstract art sent her bolting for the door to slake her unquenchable thirst for the wonders of the natural world. She hasn't slowed down since.

"It's not necessary to have a college degree to be an artist, anyway," she says. "Plus, I think the word 'talent' is greatly overused. Many people are more talented than I am, but to me it's about putting in the brush time to develop one's craft."

Which McGuire has done, clocking more than 30 years to date in the pursuit of perfecting her craft, having attended her first Robert Bateman workshop in 1981, and by painting alongside such wildlife art luminaries as John Seerey-Lester and Carl Brenders.

Drawing on a lifetime of artistic endeavor, coupled with a



Jan Martin McGuire and her husband James, a professional photographer, often find themselves surrounded by elephants. On these pages is her dramatic painting, Tears of a Giant.

burning desire to experience the colors, textures, scents, sounds and emotions of wild places and creatures, McGuire's evocative paintings seem to capture the souls of individual animals, connecting viewers through her brushwork to what she has experienced and absorbed in the field. And it's the souls themselves of these animals that have touched McGuire's heart, leading her to purpose her art for conservation — specifically, to help fund anti-poaching efforts to protect elephants and rhinos.

In 2012 poachers (now quite often Africa-based, Asian-run crime syndicates) killed an estimated 35,000 elephants in what U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Richard G. Ruggiero says "is likely the greatest percentage loss of elephants in history."

The despicable crime of rhinoceros poaching is also on a horrific rise, with demand for rhino horn from Vietnam now outpacing that from China. At the dawn of the 20th century, a half-million or more rhinoceros roamed Africa. Today, according to savetherhino.org, white rhinos and black rhinos number 20,405 and 5,055, respectively. Poachers have killed more than 2,000 rhinos since 2007 — 668 in 2012 alone.

Jan Martin McGuire's passion for these majestic creatures impels her to create art that can aid in reversing their perilous plummet into extinction.



Ever Vigilant showcases the artist's determination to paint animals that are anatomically correct, yet true to her artistic vision.

For example, following the wounding of Kruger National Park game ranger Andrew Desmet, who was gut-shot as he attempted to arrest poachers in a joint operation with SANParks and the South African National Defence Force in May of this year, she sent Desmet a print of *Dust Devil*, a painting of a charging black rhino that had garnered the President's Award at the Society of Animal Artists 50th anniversary at the San Diego Museum of Natural History in 2010. (Desmet is expected to recover.)

She was further inspired to create another rhino painting, *Tears of a Giant*, as a fundraiser for the SANParks Honorary Rangers, a network of volunteers with a passion to help support South African National Parks.

Through the Dallas Safari Club, previous art donations from McGuire and her wildlife photographer husband James Gary Hines — who, since their marriage in 2001 unabashedly shares her zeal for Africa and its creatures — have raised \$69,000 to help protect the black rhinos of North Luangwa Park in Zambia.

The couple is forging new alliances here at home, as well. In an innovative departure from the traditional art world where painters sell to galleries and galleries sell to clients, McGuire, Hines and a handful of others formed a collaborative group,

the Gallery of Artists. The group comprises an eclectic assortment of wildlife artists — a sculptor, an etcher, a watercolorist, an oil painter, a pencil artist, a pyrographer — along with McGuire, who works in acrylics, and Hines, whose breathtaking images are printed onto a smooth white canvas with

archival ink and then framed as fine art.

The Gallery of Artists — not being beholden to any brick-and-mortar gallery — hosts events at different venues around the country; most recently, the fabled Ward Museum in Salisbury, Maryland, in an exhibition titled "Artistic Expressions of Nature," which runs until September 8.

"We're just a group of nature artists putting on our own shows in museum settings," says McGuire, "and teaching people that art can be bought."

But actually — and as one gets to know McGuire better, it becomes expected — it's far more than that. The Gallery of Artists sets up their exhibitions so a portion of the proceeds go to the museum and a portion to conservation: in the case of the Ward Museum exhibit, the chosen conservation group is the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore's Fund for the Environment.

The next Gallery of Artists exhibition will benefit both the Irving Arts Center in Irving, Texas, where the event will be held September 13 -15, and the Dallas Ecological Foundation. Founded in 1981, the non-profit Foundation serves a dual mission of conservation and outdoor education, and is a vanguard for outdoor education in public schools.

Says DEF's Scot McClure: "We started the Outdoor Adventures Education Program in 1999, and by 2008 had grown the program to include twenty public schools. Today, Outdoor Adventures curriculum is in 160 schools in six different states."

Through these thoughtful alliances with museums and a conservation groups, the Gallery of Artists enhances the buying experience for its clientele: Not only can you purchase a remarkable piece of art, you can be assured that part of the sale goes to the museum and part to a conservation project.

Africa gives you what it wants to give you," says McGuire. "People coming to Africa with expectations of trying to find or see something on any specific day are quite often disappointed. Learning to be open to it is really the key; I find each day brings new gifts."

We're sitting in her studio, awash in field guides, natural history books, videos

and wildlife photos, a burnt-sienna-washed canvas at the ready on her easel. She's begun prepping her canvases with the sienna wash to better coax the highlights and shadows she sees in her mind's eye from the base mid-tone. Skins and skulls lay amongst the books on her shelves – reference to help ensure her paintings are anatomically correct as well as true to her artistic vision.

She and James will be returning to Africa after the Irving Arts Center Gallery of Artists exhibition in mid-

September (her 18th trip and his 11th), this time for about three weeks. They'll be leading an international artists' retreat at Tarangire National Park in Tanzania, sponsored by the African Wildlife Trust, dedicated to the awareness and communication of the poaching crisis.

We can hardly wait to see what visual treasures from the heart of Africa – and from theirs – she will create this time.

Note: To see more originals and prints, visit www.janmartinmcguire.com.



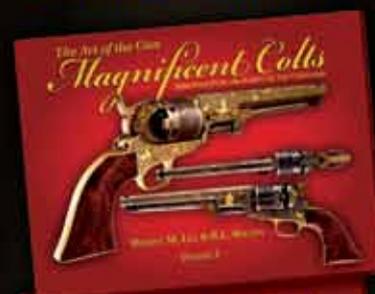
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