

# Sina J. Gagnon

Colored Pencil  
Artist

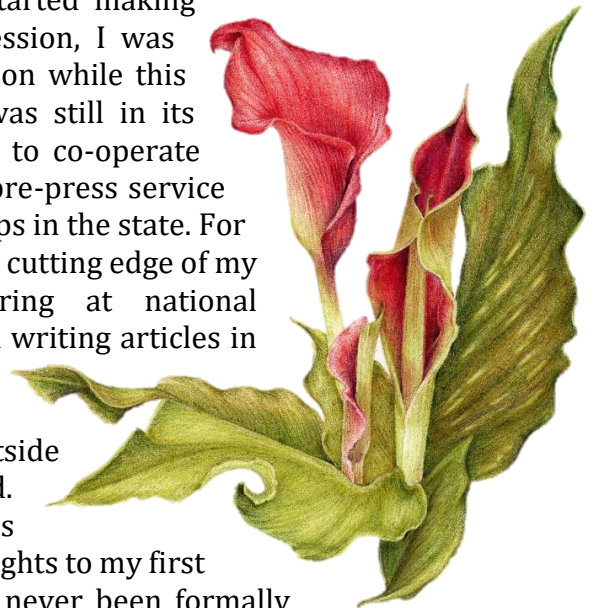


## Biography

Do you remember the drawing contest “Tippy the Turtle”? One of my earliest memories was drawing that turtle over and over again. I do believe I could still draw that image with my eyes closed.

I have always wanted to be an artist, but back in the 70’s, growing up in a single parent household, it was instilled in me to work in a conventional job setting. The compromise was to go into the graphics arts industry. Through the next couple of decades I worked at several area print shops doing pre-press setup in the pre-computer era. I became proficient in the now antiquated fields of paste-up, photo typesetting, line stats, film stripping and plate making. As computers started making their way into my profession, I was able to make the transition while this aspect of the industry was still in its infancy. I was privileged to co-operate and run one of the first pre-press service bureaus & color copy shops in the state. For several years I was on the cutting edge of my profession guest lecturing at national industry conventions and writing articles in trade magazines.

As the industry evolved and the need for outside service bureaus vanished. I retired from the graphics industry and turned my sights to my first love – Fine Arts. Having never been formally





trained in this facet of the arts, I took classes and workshops in several different mediums; watercolor, acrylic, sculpting - always searching for my niche. I found it not in an art class, but in the bottom drawer of my desk; a set of colored pencils I got when I was young. Why not? I gave them a chance.

It was with them that I found what I was missing. I like to call it “*The Zone*.” I’m sure you have experienced a version of it with something you are passionate about: the world around you melts away, you are in tune with your art, your reference materials are no longer needed, and the creativity just flows from your brain to your hand to the paper. My love of colored pencils was born right then and there.

I could not find any teachers specifically for my new found medium. In some circles, colored pencil was even shunned as a “Fine Art” medium. So, applying a lesson from my youth as a 4-H member; “*Learn by Doing*” I taught myself techniques in colored pencil. I joined several local art associations. I found that there was even a “*Colored Pencil Society of America*,” there is where I found validation for colored pencil as a fine art medium.

### *Accomplishments*

An artist’s accomplishments can be measured in many ways, while some are evident, some are from places that I least expected.

My very first accomplishment was my first sale, which was at an outdoor art show. The thought that someone picked my artwork out of the many available that day gave me the boost to create more. The next came when I got my first commission. Getting the commission was a milestone in itself, but the joy in the clients face when they saw the finished piece was the true achievement.

The most obvious accomplishment is competitions with other artists. In the ten years of competing I have been awarded fifty-nine ribbons. Just recently, in a field of dozens of extremely talented artists I was awarded my first “Best of Show.” I was truly humbled that the judges had picked my artwork out of the dozens of talented artists that day.

By far, the award I am most proud of is the “People’s Choice” award that I received at the 2011 Deerfield Fair. Being chosen by the public rather than art judges was, to me, more validating as an artist.

I have been a guest artist at several children’s art classes. These mentoring sessions prove to be very rewarding in that I





can pass on the love of my craft to a younger audience. I particularly enjoy visiting with the pre-school art classes where the children are totally unencumbered in their art. The kids also relate to my medium more readily as they too love to “color” and think it is great that I can color every day for a job.

A feeling of accomplishment can come from just one simple remark; while displaying at outdoor art shows I like to sit in front of my booth and work on a piece of art to show people what I do. One summer I was working on a butterfly piece when a mother and her two young sons stopped to watch me. One of the boys asked me how I learned to color like that. I explained that it took a lot of practice, to which the other boy responded “*you don't need any more practice - it's perfect!*” That really made my day.

In the spring of 2010 I was juried into the New Hampshire Art Association.

In January of 2010 I was named Artist of the Month by Mayor William Manzi for the City of Methuen, Massachusetts.

In May of 2017 my piece “Clockworks” was chosen for the Colored Pencil Society International Show in Bethesda, Maryland. It was one of one hundred twenty colored pencil pieces selected world-wide.

By allowing fine detail, the medium of colored pencils helps me express a high degree of realism that recreates my subjects just as they are in life.

The topics I like to draw can be categorized as: *Nature*: botanicals & animals and *Nostalgia*: pieces that trigger a memory of your past when you merely glimpse at it.

When I am not creating my next piece of art in my studio I can be found selling my work at art shows around New England.

***“Keep your pencils sharp!”***

