



F. R. Meisch Papers.

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## Francis Roman Meisch: A Life in Art and Architecture

by Lynn Ann Meisch

12/25/06

No biography is objective, and this one is no different because Francis Meisch was my father. This is an attempt to tell what I believe that he and others in his family feel was most important to him, and to answer questions that people have asked about him, mainly relating to his watercolors.

### **The Earlier Years**

Francis Meisch was born in St. Paul, Minnesota on October 9, 1915 (while the Great War in Europe raged) to Leona Wilwerding Meisch and Henry Anton Meisch, both descendants of Luxembourg immigrants to Rollingstone and Winona in southern Minnesota (with a distant Prussian ancestor thrown in the mix somewhere). His father moved to the Twin Cities after obtaining a degree in agriculture from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities, and discovering that no one back on the farm had the slightest interest in new fangled tools and ideas.

My father went to Roman Catholic grade school in St. Paul, then to St. Paul Central High School. According to my mother, he had very early showed an interest in two avocations that became life-long passions: stamp collecting and creating art. Much of my father's work prior to 1940 was done in pen and ink, drypoint, and etching, which required precise draftsmanship in the creation of tone and texture. He began exhibiting etchings and drypoints in 1937.

Architecture became his profession; despite the Depression, he received his B.A. in that field from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, in 1939, which is where he met my mother. Elaine Hanson Meisch (pure Swede) was one of the few women who managed to overcome the overt discrimination against women at that time and actually received her B.A. in Arts with a major in architecture. She was attracted to my father, she says, because of his skill, "It was love at first sight. I told people I was going to marry him." But first he received an M.A. in architecture from M.I.T. in 1940, and then became an Instructor in Architecture at North Dakota State College in Fargo 1940-41, as the Second World War consumed Europe and Asia, and the United States was drawn into the conflict with the attack on Pearl Harbor. He and my mother continued to see each other, and they were engaged on my mother's birthday (May 17th) and married on my father's birthday (October 9th) in 1942. This made it very easy to remember their anniversary.

In 1942, he went to work for Northwest Airlines on various war-related projects. Beginning in 1950, he worked over the years at a number of Twin Cities architectural firms, mainly in specifications. Although he was involved in such projects as the design of the new Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Terminal, the Hennepin County General Hospital, and the Minnesota Zoo, his great love was his watercolor painting. He stuck with architecture because of his children: Richard Alden Meisch (1943), Lynn Ann Meisch (1945), Lois Elaine Meisch (1948) and Robert Walter Meisch (1950). My mother actually wanted six kids, but they stopped at four, which was fine with all of us, and the family settled in Minneapolis, and later, Edina.

### **Watercolors**

As a child, some of my earliest memories are of my father painting, and working on his stamp collection (he had a world-class collection of Japanese stamps), and of sketching trips along the Mississippi River and around Minnesota. He gave us tiny sketch books and watercolors so that we could paint, too. My father's Midwest paintings have been among his most popular. This love of painting and artistic talent ran in his family on his mother's side; his uncle Walter Wilwerding was a well-known painter of wildlife. Visits to his Uncle Walter's home not only included the opportunity to admire his stunning oil paintings, but to stand in an elephant-foot wastebasket from one of Uncle Walter's African safaris.

Now, about the watercolors: He began exhibiting his watercolors in 1942. An enormous boost to his career came in 1943, when Juliana Force, then Director of the Whitney Museum in New York, came to the Twin Cities to judge a watercolor show and bought one of my father's paintings.

Although the 1950s and '60s were the heyday of abstract impression, my father was true to his own realistic vision, and to his difficult medium: transparent watercolors (called transparent because no opaque was added). As a slightly older child I remember visits to the State Fair Art Exhibition, where a lone realistic Meisch watercolor stood out among the many abstract paintings. My siblings and I joked loyally that perhaps some of the other paintings were hung upside down but it didn't really matter because you couldn't tell the difference.

Even if his style wasn't trendy, his talent was obvious. His watercolors appeared in hundreds of exhibitions, and are included in numerous permanent collections including those of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, and Minnesota Museum (see attached list of watercolor paintings in museums and other collections). He also won a long list of awards (see attached partial list of awards, current through the mid-1980s), and had 16 one-man shows. In 1972, he was an invited artist at the Minnesota State Fair, and in 1986, he was the first artist invited to do a one-man retrospective at the State Fair.

After my siblings and I managed to make it through the 1960s, and '70s and receive our college degrees, my parents had more money, time and energy to travel, especially to Europe, Mexico, Central, and South America, and my father's watercolors from these trips became part of his oeuvre. Sometimes he sketched on these trips but more often he took photographs and painted from them when he returned home. In 1974, my parents joined me for travel in northern South America, and my father's painting of the Puno, Peru, morning market won a major award.

Although his work has often been referred to as "magical realism," the term refers to South American fiction where fantastical and magical elements appear in otherwise realistic work (green hair on a heroine in an Isabel Allende novel, a character with a pig's tail in Gabriel Garcia Marquez). "Magical realism" is more applicable to the paintings of Marc Chagall, where cows and people fly around the sky. My father's watercolors are magical precisely because they are so realistically rendered: the buildings have the substance and structure born of an architect's knowledge, the natural world so alive that the leaves in the trees seem to move. I think in his own estimation they are his major achievement.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Francis R. Meisch  
Edina, Minnesota

Watercolor paintings in museums and other collections

Minneapolis Institute of Arts (3)  
Minnesota Museum (1)  
Sioux City Art Center (1)  
The Dayton Company, Minneapolis  
Sibley Hospital, Iowa  
Mutual Service Insurance Company  
First National Bank, Saint Paul  
Midland National Bank, Minneapolis (4)  
Marquette National Bank, Minneapolis  
Northwestern Hospital School of Nursing  
Robbinsdale First Bank  
Northern Natural Gas Company, Omaha (4)  
North Central Life Insurance Company (2)  
Gray Company (2)  
Arthur Anderson and Company (2)  
First National Bank, Minneapolis (6)  
Moorhead Federal Savings and Loan  
Gate City Savings and Loan  
Northwestern National Life Insurance Company  
Northern States Power Company, Minneapolis  
Abbey and Benjamin Grey Collection (2)  
Pillsbury Company (3)  
Ford Motor Company, Michigan (5)  
Paine Weber Jackson and Curtis Company  
Northwestern National Bank, Minneapolis (3)  
First National Bank, Mankato  
General Mills, Minneapolis  
Archer Daniels Midland Company  
Minnetonka State Bank  
Prudential Insurance Company  
Old Log Theatre (9)  
First National Bank, Sioux Falls  
Minnesota Historical Society (3)  
Honeywell Inc. (5)  
First National Bank, Alexandria (2)  
Minneapolis Electric Steel Casting Company (5)  
American Telephone and Telegraph, New York (3)  
Le Doyt Land Company (3)  
Westinghouse Electric Corporation  
Knollwood Clinic (4)  
Friedman and Koven, Chicago (5)  
Pittsburgh National Bank (3)  
American National Bank, Saint Paul (4)  
International Telephone and Telegraph  
Crocker Bank, San Francisco (3)  
American Institute of Architects Foundation, Washington, D.C (2)  
AMFAC (Marriot) Hotel, Minneapolis (6)  
Jostens (2)  
University of Minnesota Hospital  
Farm Credit Bank of Saint Paul

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Francis R. Meisch

Edina, Minnesota

Partial list of awards and recognition for watercolor painting

Minneapolis Institute of Arts Annual Twin Cities Artists Exhibition

First prize in watercolor 1944, 1949.

Honorable Mention in watercolor 1943, 1953.

The Joslyn Museum "The Midwest" Special Mention 1950.

Walker Art Center Third Biennial Meritorious Painting 1951.

Minnesota State Fair

Honorable Mention in watercolor 1954, 1970.

Popular Vote Second Place 1959.

Merit award in watercolor 1978, 1984, 1985.

Invited artist one man show 1972.

First Red River Annual Honorable Mention 1960.

Fifth Red River Annual Two purchase awards 1964.

Seventh Red River Annual Purchase award 1966.

American Watercolor Society Annual, 1964 Traveling Exhibition.

American Watercolor Society Annual, 1970 Traveling Exhibition.

Northwestern Bell Telephone Company calendars, 1965, 1966, 1973.

Sioux City Art Center Purchase prize 1977.

Sky 77 Award of Excellence in Painting.

Sky 80 Award of Merit in Painting.

Sky 81 Award of Merit in Painting.

Sky 82 Award of Excellence in Painting.

Sky 83 Award of Excellence in Painting.

Sky 84 The Grumbacher Art Award.

Watercolor USA Purchase award 1971.

Watercolor USA Western Museums Traveling Show 1979.

Watercolor USA Honor Society with signature privilege W.H.S. 1986.

Northstar Watercolor Society Annual Exhibition

Honorable Mention 1978.

Award of Excellence 1979, 1981, 1985.

Merit Award 1983.

Best of Show 1984.

Juried Show for Minnesota Artists - Traveling Show 1982.

Twin Cities Watercolor Society Show Award of Excellence 1983.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION UPDATE 1986-1990

Francis R. Meisch

Edina, Minnesota

- 1986 Phipps Center for the Arts: Exhibition of a River - Certificate Award.  
San Diego Watercolor International Exhibition.  
San Diego Art Institute National Exhibition.  
Minnesota State Fair Fine Arts Exhibition: 1 watercolor accepted in the  
juried exhibition and by invitation a retrospective exhibition of 9  
watercolors from a 40 year period of painting.
- 1987 Northstar Watercolor Society Members Exhibition at Norwest Bank, Saint  
Paul - Best of Show Award.  
Watercolor West XIX Annual Exhibition.  
National Watercolor - Oklahoma.  
Watercolor U.S.A., Springfield Art Museum.  
"Watercolor Now" Springfield Exhibition at Springfield Art Museum, an  
invitational exhibition for Watercolor U.S.A. Honor Society Members.  
Twin Cities Watercolor Society Members Spring Show.  
Twin Cities Watercolor Society Members Fall Show - First Award (Profess-  
ional Category).
- 1988 Bloomington Art Center Member's Show.  
Watercolor West XX Annual Exhibition - Honorable Mention.  
Northstar Watercolor Society Members Exhibition at Lakewood College.  
Minnesota State Fair Fine Arts Exhibition - First Award in Painting.  
"Minnesota Artists Look Back 1948-1988" an invitational show curated by  
Minnesota Museum of Art and first exhibited at the 1988 Minnesota State  
Fair Fine Arts Exhibition; then exhibited at Landmark Center, Saint Paul.
- 1989 Selected portion of "Minnesota Artists Look Back 1948-1988" was sent to  
Europe for exhibition at Saint Paul's sister city, Modena, Italy.  
Watercolor West XXI Annual Exhibition - "WW" Signature Membership Award.  
Minnesota State Fair Fine Arts Exhibition.  
Twin Cities Watercolor Society Members Fall Show - Best of Show Award.  
"Watercolor Now II" Houston Exhibition at Transco Energy Center Tower,  
an invitational exhibition for Watercolor U.S.A. Honor Society Members.
- 1990 Watercolor West XXII Annual Exhibition.  
Midwest Watercolor Society Annual Exhibition at Green Bay - "MWS"  
Signature Award, Green Bay Banc One Merit Award, and inclusion in the  
traveling exhibition.  
Twin Cities Watercolor Society Members Spring Show.  
Twin Cities Watercolor Society Members Fall Show.  
Watercolor "Tranquility" available in Courage Center's Annual Christmas  
Card Sale.

#### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Francis R. Meisch  
Edina, Minnesota

"Magic realism" is a term often applied to the watercolors of Francis Meisch. This is because his paintings evoke a strong feeling of déjà vu - the illusion of having previously viewed a scene. This sense of identity with a place, a time, or a mood, creates the magic. The realism is derived from his architectural education and teaching background and his technical control of the watercolor medium. While watercolor has the reputation of being a challenging and difficult medium, it has other qualities that are unique and set it apart from other methods of artistic expression. It has a fluidity and an immediacy which allows the artist to capture the mood of the moment and create memorable paintings.

Much of the artist's work prior to 1940, was with pen and ink, etching, and drypoint. These mediums of linear expression and design, involving the creation of tone and texture, required precision draftsmanship. He began exhibiting etchings and drypoints in 1937 and watercolors in 1942.

The strong sure sense of color and value reveal the artist's love of nature and an ever observing eye. The integrity of draftsmanship is apparent in every painting. Though his watercolors reflect the artist's extensive travels, the scenes of Minnesota remain the most sought after watercolors.

His work has received numerous local, regional, and national awards and recognition and is in private and public collections throughout the United States.

- F
1. Francis R. Meisch
  2. 5528 York Avenue South  
Edina, Minnesota 55410
  3. Retired as architect 1984  
Remained active as artist
  4. Master in Architecture  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
December 20, 1940.
  5. North Dakota State College  
Instructor in architecture  
1940-1941

Shanley VanTeylingen and Henningson  
Great Falls, Montana and Idaho Falls, Idaho  
August - November 1941

McNeil Construction Company  
Las Vegas, Nevada  
December 1941 - February 1942

Northwest Airlines Inc.  
Saint Paul, Minnesota  
February 1942 - December 1950

McEnary and Krafft  
Minneapolis, Minnesota  
December 1950 - August 1954

Thorshov and Cerny, Inc.  
later The Cerny Associates, Inc.  
Minneapolis, Minnesota  
August 1954 - January 1964

Haarstick Lundgren and Associates, Inc.  
Saint Paul, Minnesota  
January 1964 - August 1971

S. C. Smiley and Associates  
(Medical Facilities Associates)  
Minneapolis, Minnesota  
September 1972 - September 1974

Peterson, Clark and Associates, Inc.  
Minneapolis, Minnesota  
September 1974 - February 1984

6. AIA - Minneapolis Chapter  
Corporate Member April 10, 1945  
Chapter Board of Directors  
Regional Convention Program Committee Chairman 1954  
State Honor Awards Committee 1959  
AIA - AGC Joint Committee 1957 - 1964

Francis R. Meisch (continued)

Construction Specifications Institute  
Professional Member 1972 - 1982

7. Horton Art Scholarship U of M 1937

Commacini 1938-1939

Plumb Bob 1938-1939

School Medal of the American Institute of Architects 1939

Graduate Scholarship to M.I.T. 1939

Freehand Drawing Prize M.I.T. 1940

The Owens Illinois Glass Block Competitions of 1939-1940

With Keith Hibner Sixth Prize Competition No. 3

Third Prize Competition No. 4

Fourth Grand Prize

Andrew J. Haire Airport Award Certificate for Exceptional Achievement 1945

With Elaine Meisch Second Prize in Chicago Tribune Better Rooms for

Better Living Competition in 1947

8. Publications:

Author of feature article in New Pencil Points, November 1944,

"Architecture and Air Transportation"

Author of feature article in Pencil Points, November 1945,

"Air Terminals for Mass Air Travel"

Author of "Airports and Airport Buildings" for The United Educators, Inc.  
1945

Co-author with William Pedersen, Sr. of house planning book titled

"Our Home" 1946

Member of the committee on Airport Standards and chairman of the committee  
on Terminal Building Standards published by the Air Transport Association  
of America (ATA)

Artist Activities:

Started exhibiting etchings and drypoints in 1937 and watercolors in 1942

First sale of a watercolor was to Juliana Force, Director of the Whitney  
Museum of American Art.

Since that time watercolors have been exhibited in over two hundred local,  
regional and national exhibitions and sixteen one man shows. The  
watercolors have received many awards and are in numerous public,  
private and corporate collections and have had gallery representation  
from New York to Santa Fe.

Member of the Minnesota Artists Association 1943-1966

Board of Directors 1949-1954 1959-1961

President 1952-1953

Member of Watercolor U.S.A. Honor Society since January 15, 1986

Member of the Old Watercolour Society's Club of London since 1967

Member of Northstar Watercolor Society since 1978

Member of Twin Cities Watercolor Society since 1983

Member of Midwest Watercolor Society since 1985

Member of Watercolor West since 1987

9. Illustration - "GUATEMALA GOTHIC" a 1979 transparent watercolor

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
FRANCIS R. MEISCH  
EDINA, MINNESOTA

Born in 1915, in Saint Paul, Minnesota, and educated there in parochial and public schools. He received a Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Minnesota where he studied art subjects under Elmer Young, Ivan Doseff, and S. Chatwood Burton.

He received a Master in Architecture degree from Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he studied art subjects under John L. Reid and Samuel Chamberlain. He taught architectural subjects, freehand drawing and watercolor in the Department of Architecture at North Dakota State College. He has practiced architecture in the Minneapolis - Saint Paul area since 1942. From 1942 to 1950, he was airport engineer and architect for Northwest Airlines and was involved in airport and terminal building planning for many major cities in the United States.

He began exhibiting etchings and drypoints in 1937 and watercolors in 1942. His first watercolor sale was to the late Juliana Force, Director of the Whitney Museum of American Art. Since that time his work has appeared in more than one hundred and seventy local, regional and national exhibitions and in sixteen one man shows. His work has received many awards and is represented in numerous public, private and commercial collections throughout the United States. His watercolors have appeared in the Ford Times, Northwestern Bell Telephone Company publications, and other publications.

He is a past president of the Minnesota Artists Association, a member of the Northstar Watercolor Society, and a member of the Old Watercolour Society's Club of London. He has made three trips to Europe to study watercolors in the museums and galleries and to gather material for art work. He has also traveled in the United States, Canada, Alaska, Columbia, Ecuador, Peru, and Guatamala in search of subject matter for his art work. In 1972, he was the invited artist at the Minnesota State Fair. His work is handled by the following galleries:

Suzanne Kohn Gallery, Saint Paul, Minnesota.  
Friends' Gallery, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis.  
Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska.  
Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, Lincoln, Nebraska.  
G. W. Einstein Company, Inc., New York, New York.  
Blair Galleries, Ltd., Sante Fe, New Mexico  
Sioux City Art Center, Sioux City, Iowa.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

FRANCIS R. MEISCH  
Edina, Minnesota

Born in 1915, in Saint Paul, Minnesota, and educated there in parochial and public schools. He received a Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Minnesota where he studied art subjects under Elmer Young, Ivan Doseff, and S. Chatwood Burton. He received a Master in Architecture degree from Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he studied art subjects under John L. Reid and Samuel Chamberlain. He taught architectural subjects, freehand drawing and watercolor in the Department of Architecture at North Dakota State College. He has practiced architecture in the Minneapolis - Saint Paul area since 1942. From 1942 to 1950, he was airport engineer and architect for Northwest Airlines and was involved in airport and terminal building planning in many major cities of the country. He began exhibiting etchings and drypoints in 1937 and watercolors in 1942. His first watercolor sale was to the late Juliana Force, Director of the Whitney Museum of American Art. Since that time his work has appeared in more than one hundred and fifty local, regional and national exhibitions and in sixteen one man shows. His work has received many awards and is represented in numerous public, private and commercial collections throughout the United States. His watercolors have appeared in the Ford Times, Northwestern Bell Telephone Company publications, and other publications. He is a past president of the Minnesota Artists Association and a member of the Old Watercolour Society's Club of London. He has made three European trips to study watercolors in the museums and galleries and to gather material for his art work. In 1972 he was the invited artist at the Minnesota State Fair. His watercolors are handled by the following galleries:

Suzanne Kohn Gallery, Saint Paul, Minnesota  
Lorraine Cote Studio Gallery, Minneapolis, Minnesota  
Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska  
Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, Lincoln, Nebraska  
Red River Art Center, Moorhead, Minnesota  
G. W. Einstein Company, Inc., New York, New York  
Sioux City Art Center, Sioux City, Iowa  
Civic Art Center, Rapid City, South Dakota

FRANCIS R. MEISCH, A.I.A.  
ARCHITECT

5528 YORK AVENUE SOUTH  
EDINA, MINNESOTA 55410

September 17, 1983

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Faviana Olivier  
Art Consultant  
P. O. Box 3463  
Manhattan Beach  
California 90266

Re: Watercolor - AMFAC Hotel Paintings  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Ms. Olivier:

In your August 17th letter you requested that I furnish you with some information as to how I work.

I believe that nothing ever really remains the same and unchanged and that is why paintings which capture a special mood and time that will never return are the gems of the art world.

My methods of painting watercolors and gathering reference material for paintings have also varied and changed through the years. Initially I did a lot of outdoor painting in watercolor on 20" by 30" sheets when the weather was appropriate (no winter work). When on business travels, I would take a camera with black and white film to record subjects of note. On vacation travels, I would use sketchbooks and work with pen and ink, pencil, or felt-tip pens. When good color film became available, I shot 2½" by 3½" color transparencies. When working on site with watercolors, I started using 15" by 20" size sheets and then to using smaller watercolor pads when traveling by air. In the middle 1970s I started using 35mm slides for my reference material. This method of photography was adaptable to cross country skiing and facilitated the collection of winter scenes.

My studio paintings have almost always been executed on 20" by 30" sheets of 300lb. Arches rough surface paper. If I felt that I was getting in a rut, I would switch to cold press or hot press paper or to painting on a few sheets of paper produced by another manufacturer. When painting on paper I always stretch the sheets on drawing boards. If I am working wet to wet, I may start with a very damp sheet in an aluminum tray and then stretch it on a drawing board as it starts to dry. I will continue to paint on it as it dries, putting in the items which require harder or crisper edges.

I generally make a careful pencil drawing on the watercolor paper prior to painting. The amount of drawing and the detail involved will vary with the subject matter. Cityscapes and architectural subjects usually require more preliminary drawing than do landscapes. An adequate drawing helps to simplify and speed up the painting process. Watercolor is a fast medium for painting and this requires that the sequence of operations must be thoroughly preplanned prior to the start of painting.

FRANCIS R. MEISCH, A.I.A.  
ARCHITECT  
5528 YORK AVENUE SOUTH  
EDINA, MINNESOTA 55410

September 17, 1983

Page 2

When painting, I usually apply the broad wet washes first and work from lighter to darker areas as the painting develops. If there are to be lots of highlighted intricate details in the painting, I may block out these areas prior to painting with a liquid mask or carve them out of the paper surface with a razor blade after the washes or brush strokes have dried.


For many years I have had an annual goal of painting a watercolor a week, but few have been the years when I was able to achieve this objective. I am also very critical about the work that I do and every so often have an analysis session after which I will destroy those paintings that do not measure up to the quality level that I want to maintain.

When someone asks me how long did it take to do that painting, the off-hand answer is 40 years and 25 hours. The length of time that it takes to do a watercolor is largely proportional to the amount of detail involved. Also, the amount of time spent on a painting has no bearing on whether it will be a good painting or a candidate for the wastebasket. Painting time on a 20" by 30" sheet will run between 4 to 50 hours and if the time for subject selection, developing a concept, and making the drawing on the watercolor paper is added - another 2 to 25 hours will be involved.

The five watercolors which I painted to fulfill your commission request (out of which two paintings were purchased) required 104 hours of time.

If there is something more that you need to know, please advise.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Francis', written in dark ink.

Francis R. Meisch

FRANCIS R. MEISCH, A.I.A.  
ARCHITECT  
5528 YORK AVENUE SOUTH  
EDINA, MINNESOTA 55410

MINNESOTA SCENES IN WATERCOLOR

NINE MILE CREEK	1983	\$ 1,500
FARM BUILDINGS	1982	1,500
CREEKSIDE	1983	1,000
THE WOODS IN WINTER	1983	2,000
MINNESOTA VALLEY	1981	1,500
SLIDING HILL	1981	1,500
BOTTOM LAND	1983	1,500
FALLEN TREE	1983	1,200
MINNEHAHA CREEK	1982	1,500
SIBLEY HOUSE	1982	1,500
TREE SHADOWS	1982	1,500
BOATYARD	1975	800
WOODLAND CARPET	1981	2,000
MINNESOTA LANDSCAPE	1981	1,500
FALL FOREST	1981	1,500
BEAR	1972	800
APRIL	1972	800
KEN'S SLEIGH	1980	1,000
LICHENS	1971	650

FRANCIS R. MEISCH, A.I.A.  
ARCHITECT  
5528 YORK AVENUE SOUTH  
EDINA, MINNESOTA 55410

WATERCOLORS OF NON-MINNESOTA SCENES

RETURN TO THE LAND	(Colorado)	1981	\$ 1,500
SPRING RUN-OFF	(Colorado)	1981	1,500
TREASURES OF TURKEY	(Istambul)	1981	2,500
MARINER'S CHAPEL	(Santorini)	1981	1,800
PORTRAIT OF A STUMP	(Colorado)	1981	1,500
SULEYMANIYE MOSQUE	(Istambul)	1982	1,500
MILLS OF MYKONOS	(Greek Island)	1982	1,500
BANNAEK RESIDENCE	(Montana)	1981	1,500
MOUNTAIN VALLEY HOME	(Colorado)	1983	1,500
CORINTHIAN COLUMNS	(Athens)	1983	1,500
MYKONOS REFLECTIONS	(Greek Island)	1982	1,500
SANTA CATALINA	(Peru)	1981	1,500
MORNING MARKET	(Peru)	1979	2,000
HARD ROCK MINE	(Montana)	1981	1,500
ORE-VILLE	(Montana)	1981	1,500
DRIFTING SAND	(Colorado)	1981	1,000
A QUIET PLACE	(Yosemite)	1979	1,500
KINGS RIVER SOUTH FORK	(California)	1980	1,500
SHADOWS	(Arizona)	1979	1,500

# AMERICAN WATERCOLOR SOCIETY

THIS IS THE AGE OF WATERCOLOR. BE ASSURED OF THIS, NOT ONLY BY THE HIGH QUALITY OF THE AMERICAN WATERCOLOR SOCIETY TRAVELING EXHIBITION, BUT BY THE UNPRECEDENTED GROWTH OF THE MEDIUM DURING THE SECOND HALF OF THIS CENTURY.

WATERCOLOR HAS CAPTURED THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND BROUGHT BEFORE THEIR EYES SOME OF THE MOST EXCITING EXPERIMENTAL PAINTINGS, FROM ABSTRACT, FIGURATIVE, AND IMPRESSIONISTIC TO ULTRA-REALISTIC.

WATERCOLOR IS THE MEDIUM OF TODAY. NO LONGER IS IT REGARDED AS SECOND COUSIN TO OIL. MORE AND MORE ARTISTS ARE REALIZING THIS AND ARE MAKING WATERCOLOR THEIR PRIMARY MEDIUM AND CONTINUE TO RAISE IT TO STILL HIGHER STANDARDS. NOT ONLY ARE THERE NOW CONTROLLED ACCIDENTAL RESULTS, OR THE EXPLOSIVE EXPRESSION THAT CAN BE CAPTURED ONLY BY SUCH A FLUID MEDIUM AS WATERCOLOR, BUT OVER THE YEARS AN ENTIRE MECHANICS IN THE EXECUTION OF WATERCOLOR HAS BEEN DEVELOPED AND FURTHER AIDED BY THE NEWER ACRYLIC PIGMENTS.

FROM THE ONCE AND STILL-POPULAR SLAM BANG, ONE-SHOT FRESH WATER-COLOR ISSUES NEW CONCEPTS OF PROVOCATIVE EXECUTION SUCH AS THE SPONGED OUT, SPATTERED OVER, SCRAPED WITH RAZOR BLADES AND KNIVES, MONOPRINTS, LABYRINTHINE PAINTINGS OF COLORED TISSUES PASTED UP WITH GLUE AND PAINT, ALL EXECUTED ON VARIOUS SURFACES SUCH AS RICE PAPER, TISSUE PAPER, CRUMPLED PAPER, FOAMCORE, OR ANY OTHER SURFACE THAT WOULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH THE GENDERING OF NEW IDEAS IN THE ADVANCEMENT OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION.

THE AFOREMENTIONED ARE ONLY A FEW OF THE NECESSARY TOOLS OF TODAY'S ARTISTS. THESE ARTISTS ARE THE MASTERS OF THEIR CRAFT, AND FROM THEIR MINDS AND HANDS FLOW THE VERSATILE CREATIVE PAINTINGS SEEN HERE IN THIS CURRENT EXHIBITION.

THE SOCIETY HAS SENT OUT EVERY YEAR SINCE 1955 ONE HUNDRED WATERCOLORS TO FILL A FULL YEAR OF BOOKINGS IN GALLERIES AND ART CENTERS ACROSS THE NATION. SPECIALLY SELECTED FROM THE PARENT ANNUAL EXHIBITION IN NEW YORK, A GROUP OF FIFTY PAINTINGS TRAVELS ON A WELL-PLANNED ITINERARY. IT VISITS ABOUT FIFTEEN LOCATIONS, AVERAGING THREE WEEKS TO A STOP, WITH TIME BETWEEN ONLY FOR PREPARATION AND TRAVEL. THE CIRCUITS LAST A LITTLE OVER A YEAR, AND HAVE TAKEN THE SHOWS, AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER, TO EVERY ONE OF THE FIFTY STATES.

NO PICTURE IS EVER SENT ON TOUR A SECOND YEAR. THUS, GALLERIES CAN CONFIDENTLY EXPECT A BRAND NEW SHOW EACH YEAR. IN FACT, MANY OF THEM HAVE SHOWN THE EXHIBITIONS EVERY YEAR SINCE THEIR INCEPTION, OFTEN REPORTING THAT THEY ARE THE MOST POPULAR SHOWS OF THE YEAR. MANY OF THE PAINTINGS IN THE TRAVELING SHOWS WON PRIZES IN THE PARENT EXHIBITION IN NEW YORK. ALL THE PICTURES ARE FOR SALE, AND A GREAT MANY SALES ARE MADE ON THESE TOURS, SOMETIMES COMPARATIVELY MORE THAN AT THE REGULAR EXHIBITION. THIS IS IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT PURCHASERS CANNOT TAKE POSSESSION OF THEIR PAINTINGS UNTIL THEY HAVE COMPLETED THEIR CIRCUIT.

THE AMERICAN WATERCOLOR SOCIETY TAKES JUSTIFIABLE PRIDE IN ITS HISTORY, WHICH IS NOW WELL INTO ITS SECOND CENTURY - A PERIOD IN WHICH THE RANGE OF WATERCOLOR HAS BEEN IMMEASURABLY EXTENDED AND THE MEDIUM HAS DEFINITELY COME INTO ITS OWN.

AMERICAN WATERCOLOR SOCIETY

Watercolor, the American medium, in the same spirit as the country where it developed to its present degree of imminence, is vital, innovative and imaginative. The American Watercolor Society's national traveling exhibition of fifty selected works from the AWS Annual in New York firmly attests to the excitement of contemporary American watercolor.

The American Watercolor Society, or as it is known internationally, AWS, defines watercolor as "a painting on paper in a watersoluble medium, unvarnished", and this astute definition holds for today's 20th Century watercolorists.

Contemporary American watercolors are representative of a tremendous array of techniques, styles and ranges existing within the broad spectrum of what constitutes the aqueous medium. In addition to transparent watercolor, there are acrylics, caseins, temperas and gouaches, inks, and a mixture of these elements to prove the versatility of the medium and contribute to the greatness of watercolor in the 1980's.

The Society was founded in 1866 for the advancement of watercolor painting. Legendary American artists such as Winslow Homer, Henry Ward Ranger, John LaFarge, Louis Comfort Tiffany, Thomas Moran, Childe Hassam, Edward Hopper, Charles Burchfield, Georgia O'Keeffe, Andrew Wyeth and others of equal magnitude have been its members, and AWS continues in the dedicated purpose of advancing watercolor, the American medium.

The Society has sent out every year since 1955 a show of watercolors to fill a full year of bookings in galleries and art centers across the nation. Specially selected from the parent Annual Ex-

hibition in New York, a group of fifty paintings travels on a well-planned itinerary. It visits about fifteen locations, averaging three weeks to a stop, with time between only for preparation and travel. The circuits last a little over a year, and have taken the shows, at one time or another, to every one of the fifty states.

No picture is ever sent on tour a second year. Thus galleries can confidently expect a brand new show each year, in fact some of them have shown the exhibition every year since their inception, often reporting that they are the most popular shows of the year. Many of the paintings in the Traveling Shows won prizes in the parent exhibition in New York before embarking on their tours. All the pictures are for sale, and quite a few sales are made from the show, sometimes comparatively more than at the regular exhibition. This in spite of the fact that purchasers cannot take possession of their paintings until after they have completed their circuits.

The American Watercolor Society takes justifiable pride in its history, which is now well into its second century - a period in which the range of watercolor painting has been immeasurably extended and the medium definitely come into its own.

# # #

# AMERICAN WATERCOLOR SOCIETY

115th ANNUAL EXHIBITION • April 2-May 2, 1982

NATIONAL ACADEMY GALLERIES  
1083 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, 10028

RETURN TO THE LAND \$1500.00 BERKELEY

THIS PROSPECTUS CONTAINS ALL THE NECESSARY INFORMATION  
PLEASE READ IT CAREFULLY AND KEEP IT FOR REFERENCE

## ★ SLIDE SUBMISSION ONLY ★

1

### DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION JAN. 22, 1982

All submissions by members, associate members and nonmembers, must be by 35mm slide only AND ARE SUBJECT TO JURY ACTION. Slide must carry name of artist, title, dimension (including frame). Indicate top of painting. NO GLASS SLIDES.

Accepted slides will be kept in the permanent collection of the AWS. Label for accepted work will be sent to artist for attachment to painting for shipping. Slides declined will be returned to the artist.

ALL SECTIONS OF LABEL MUST BE CLEARLY FILLED IN AND ACCOMPANY YOUR SLIDE. INFORMATION ON YOUR LABEL AS TO PRICE, TITLE, ETC., IS FINAL AND NOT SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

### 2 MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES

Members and associates may submit one 35mm slide **accompanied by the complete, filled-in label**, to William D. Gorman, 43 West 33rd Street, Bayonne, N.J. 07002.

### 3 NONMEMBERS

Nonmembers may submit one 35mm slide **accompanied by the complete, filled-in label and \$10.00 handling fee** (please make checks payable to the AMERICAN WATERCOLOR SOCIETY.) Mail together to William D. Gorman, 43 West 33rd Street, Bayonne, N.J. 07002.

### 4 WORKS ELIGIBLE

Aquamedia on paper, unvarnished. ABSOLUTELY NO COLLAGE AND NO PASTELS. If these are sent in, they will not be hung.

### 5 FRAMING

All paintings must be sturdily framed. If frame is over 28 × 36, plastic glazing must be used. No screw eyes or wire on wood frames. Metal sectional frames must have hangers in place but covered with tape to prevent damage.

### 6 DELIVERY OF ACCEPTED WORK MARCH 1, 1982

All accepted work must be delivered, uncrated, to 3 E. 89th St., NEW YORK CITY 10028 by the artist or his agent, on receiving day, **Monday, March 1, 9 AM to 2 PM**. Accepted work shipped to New York agents must be received by agents by Monday, Feb. 22; **work sent by express or mailed directly to the gallery will not be accepted**. The following New York firm attends to such business: Berkeley Express, 144 Chambers St., New York, NY 10007.

### 7 DATES

Private Evening Reception—Thursday, April 1 from 8 PM to 11 PM. All members, associate members, exhibitors and friends, are cordially invited. Exhibition open to the public—Friday, April 2 through Sunday, May 2 from 12 noon to 5 PM daily **except Mondays**.

### 8 RETURN OF EXHIBITS

All work must be removed by the artist or his accredited agent from 3 East 89th Street, New York, N.Y. between 9 AM and 2 PM Thursday, May 6. All work not so removed will be stored with Berkeley Express at the artist's risk and expense. Traveling exhibits will be returned from New York at the end of circuit at the artist's expense.

### 9 LIABILITY

Neither the AWS nor the National Academy of Design will be responsible for loss or damage to any work of art submitted, and all work is submitted and received subject to this condition. All accepted work will remain as placed by the Hanging Committee, and no work may be withdrawn before the close of the exhibition. Sending a work of art to this exhibition shall imply an agreement on the part of the sender with the conditions set forth above.

### 10 SALES

A contribution of 20% will be requested on sales. All paintings are considered for sale unless listed as NFS (Not For Sale). Paintings marked POR (Price On Request) will be considered NFS.

### 11 TRAVELING EXHIBITION

One exhibition of 50 paintings will be selected by the Jury of Awards for nationwide circuit. To be eligible, paintings must be sturdily framed and have plastic (plexiglas) glazing. Please indicate permission. AWS insurance will cover up to \$1,000 per painting—additional insurance is the responsibility of the artist. Paintings sold while on exhibit will be fully insured. The circuit takes approximately one year. Upon completion of the tour you will be notified when to pick up your painting.

Those selected for the Traveling Exhibition will be listed in the exhibition catalog.

# ANNUAL WATERCOLOR SOCIETY

ANNUAL EXHIBITION • April 2-May 2, 1982

5,000.00 IN CASH AWARDS AND NINE MEDALS

## LECTION:

Dale Meyers  
Tom Nicholas\*  
Alexander Ross

## JURY OF AWARDS:

Edmond J. FitzGerald  
William Strosahl  
Robert Vickrey

\*Invited Juror

## DIRECTORS

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*Treasurer*  
LUIS LLORENTE  
*Asst. Corr. Secretary*

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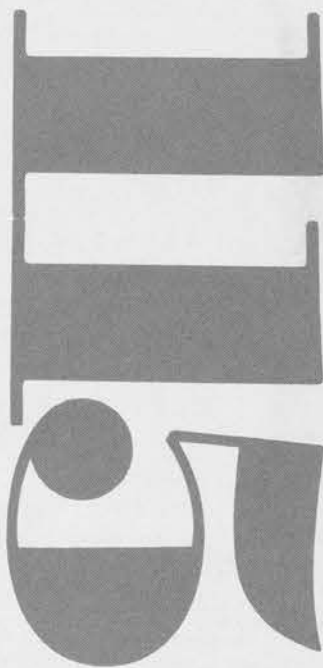
*National Vice-Presidents:*  
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*East*  
EDMOND J. FITZGERALD  
*Middle West*  
ROBERT E. WOOD  
*Far West*

DALE MEYERS  
*Active Hon. President*

## MEMBERSHIP:

on each of the  
ay 1 & 2.  
5 West 10th Street,  
weekend, April 10

Any artist who has exhibited in 3 AWS annuals within the past 10 years may be considered for membership. Write Serge Hollerbach, 304 W. 75th St., New York, N.Y. 10023, for details. NO APPLICATIONS FOR CURRENT YEAR ACCEPTED AFTER JANUARY 1, 1982.



1982 • 1982 • 1982 • 1982 • 1982 • 1982 • 1982



Francis R. Meisch  
5528 York Ave. So.  
Edina, MN 55410

MAIL

Rochester Art Center  
Upstairs Gallery

Drawings by  
Gregory Bitz  
October 6-28, 1979

PRICE LIST

1. Untitled	\$ 175.00
2. "This big country up here, but we are willing to share it."	NFS
3. "Blue me."	180.00
4. "Lost in the woods on the way to Reykjavik."	175.00
5. "All we seemed to do at first was look around and ask questions."	175.00
6. "O.K., move along, children, autumn's a' coming."	240.00
7. "The Lovers."	NFS
8. "These objects have adopted well to this high mountain habitat."	240.00
9. Untitled	175.00
10. "Egyptian vultures go virtually unnoticed by the doctor and his assistant, the oriental botanist."	175.00
11. "Small Jim, the Jim family and the real estate agent in front of the new home."	175.00
12. "Artists conception of the moon's surface."	175.00
13. "Get back in your closet, you big clown."	240.00
14. "Helianthus, Ilex Opaca, Monotropa, Mycena galericulata, and some other stuff, (vines primarily)."	200.00
15. "The Garden fairly early in the morning."	240.00
16. "A little visit to the spaceman's burial ground."	200.00
17. "This would be the perfect evening to begin a new adventure."	175.00
18. "A brief history of the World."	NFS
19. "Winter stories began to appear."	180.00
20. "The dog becomes fascinated by the volcano display." (left out in the yard, (no doubt) by a careless science student.)	180.00
21. "Living in the country."	180.00
22. "Being eaten is sometimes not so bad."	180.00
23. "Getting ready for grandmother's visit."	180.00

Minnesota artist Francis R. Meisch comes from a family of artists and architectural draftsmen. He developed his special interest in watercolor through a combined fascination with landscapes and architecture. As an architecture student at the University of Minnesota Meisch studied watercolor and did occasional outdoor sketches during the summer to teach himself how to paint clouds, trees, grass and shrubbery for architectural renderings. Meisch began exhibiting etchings and drypoint in 1937 while still a college student, but when he taught architecture at North Dakota State University in the early 1940s he was assigned to teach watercolor to architecture students, initiating fifty years of continuous involvement in this medium.

Meisch is a master of transparent (as opposed to opaque) watercolor, which means that the whites in his paintings result from the paper showing through rather than from a super-imposed layer of white paint. His realistic, representational style is evocative of the bite of a January Minnesota morning, the quiet of the Bayeux cathedral, and of childhood memories of an old barn or the smell of a meadow after a summer rainstorm. Meisch's subject matter is drawn from his early work on his grandmother's farm and from his travels in the United States, Canada, Europe, Mexico, Guatemala and South America.

In 1938 one of his first watercolors was exhibited in the annual Twin Cities Artists' show at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. During a 1946 exhibition Meisch's watercolor of the Nicholas Meisch homestead in the Speltz Valley near Rollingstone, Minnesota, was sold, much to his father's dismay. One of the early paintings included in this exhibition is a similar view of the homestead painted as a gift to his father to replace the original. Meisch continues to exhibit in major watercolor shows around the country and is represented in several museum collections.

Meisch said, "My paintings have gotten gutsier over the years. In terms of technique I've moved from broad brushing to developing greater detail. I like to be challenged by my subject matter, which accounts for the variety in my work. I try not to get in a rut where each watercolor looks like a duplicate of an earlier one, so recently I've tried my hand at portraits."

# BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Francis R. Meisch

Edina, Minnesota

"Magic realism" is a term often applied to the watercolors of Francis Meisch. This is because his paintings evoke a strong feeling of déjà vu - the illusion of having previously viewed a scene. This sense of identity with a place, a time, or a mood, creates the magic. The realism is derived from his architectural education and teaching background and his technical control of the watercolor medium. While watercolor has the reputation of being a challenging and difficult medium, it has other qualities that are unique and set it apart from other methods of artistic expression. It has a fluidity and an immediacy which allows the artist to capture the mood of the moment and create memorable paintings.

Much of the artist's work prior to 1940, was with pen and ink, etching, and drypoint. These mediums of linear expression and design, involving the creation of tone and texture, required precision draftsmanship. He began exhibiting etchings and drypoints in 1937 and watercolors in 1942.

The strong sure sense of color and value reveal the artist's love of nature and an ever observing eye. The integrity of draftsmanship is apparent in every painting. Though his watercolors reflect the artist's extensive travels, the scenes of Minnesota remain the most sought after watercolors.

His work has received numerous local, regional, and national awards and recognition and is in private and public collections throughout the United States.

PRESS RELEASE - August 22, 1991



FRANCIS R. MEISCH  
"A Half Century of Watercolors" Sept. 15 - Oct. 23, 1991  
at Suzanne Kohn Gallery, International Design Center  
100 2nd Avenue North, Minneapolis, MN 55401

Suzanne  
Kohn  
Gallery  
699-0477

1690 Grand  
Avenue  
St. Paul,  
MN 55105

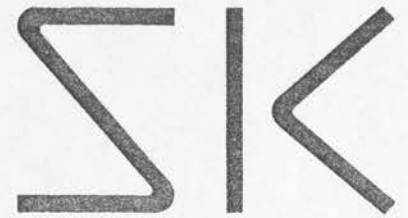
Contact: Suzanne Kohn, (612) 699-0477

Francis R. Meisch, well-known Minneapolis artist, will be exhibiting a collection of his watercolors painted over the last 50 years. The show opens Sunday afternoon, September 15, 1991 at the SUZANNE KOHN GALLERY, INTERNATIONAL DESIGN CENTER, 100 2nd AVENUE NORTH, MINNEAPOLIS from 2 to 4 PM. The show continues through October 23, 1991.

Francis R. Meisch comes from a family of artists and architectural draftsmen. He developed his special interest in watercolor through a combined fascination with landscapes and architecture. As an architecture student at the University of Minnesota Meisch studied watercolor and did occasional outdoor sketches during the summer to teach himself how to paint clouds, trees, grass and shrubbery for architectural renderings. Meisch began exhibiting etchings and drypoint in 1937 while still a college student, but when he taught architecture at North Dakota State University in the early 1940s he was assigned to teach watercolor to architecture students, initiating fifty years of continuous involvement in this medium.

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FRANCIS R. MEISCH      continued

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Suzanne  
Kohn  
Gallery  
699-0477

1690 Grand  
Avenue  
St. Paul,  
MN 55105

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Edina, Minnesota

Suzanne  
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St. Paul,  
MN 55105

"A HALF CENTURY OF WATERCOLORS" September 15, 1991 to October 23, 1991  
Opening: Sunday, September 15 from 2 - 4 PM  
Suzanne Kohn Gallery, International Design  
Center, 100 2nd Ave. N., Minneapolis, MN

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FRANCIS R. MEISCH

"A Half Century of Watercolors"

September 15 - October 23, 1991



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## Parishioner Profile:

# Francis Meisch has a Decorated Past and Bright Future

By Ann Miller

For Francis Meisch, architect, artist, philatelist, and usher at Christ the King Saturday evening liturgy, life is an adventure. Francis was educated in parochial and public schools in St. Paul. When he was a teenager, Francis spent three summers working on his grandmother's farm in Winona County. On the farm, he learned never to be afraid of hard work. During those summers on the farm, Francis acquired his love of landscape.

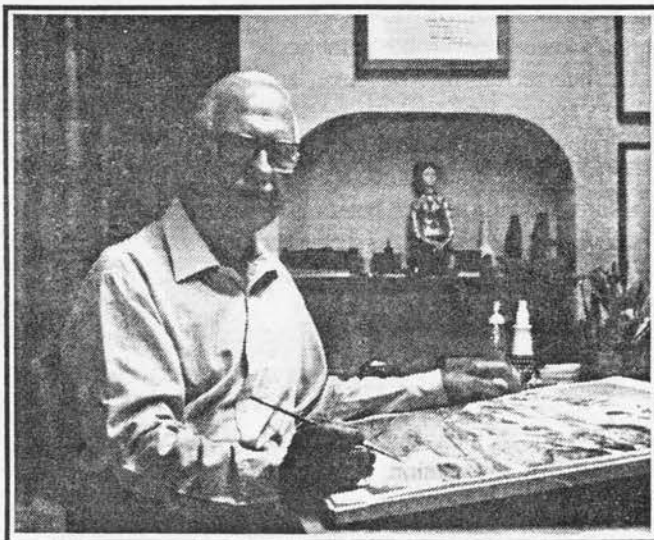
This love is evident in the strength and colors of his watercolor painting. Francis drew his way through grade school, high school, and the University. When he started high school, he knew he wanted to be an architect. His grandfather had made him a drafting table, drawing board and a T-square when he was eleven. His parents gave him drafting tools and supplied as needed.

When there was no architectural drafting class at St. Paul Central High School, Francis took mechanical drawing. His mechanical drawing teacher identified Francis's interest in architecture and became his first mentor. The teacher was an architect who had turned to teaching in the depression. He taught Francis drafting, how to do measured drawings of existing buildings, how to make blueprints, and the importance of research in architectural libraries. He had Francis doing his first outdoor sketching in pencil and pen and ink.

In the fall of 1933, Francis began his architectural studies at the University of Minnesota.

Disenchanted with his first year at the University, Francis wondered if working as an apprentice in an architect's office was another way to becoming an architect. However, it was the depression and work was hard to find.

Then he found his first job in an architect's office. The pay was \$1.00 a week. That paid his street car fare. Francis said though the pay was low, the experience was tremendous. Four months later he found a job in another architect's office. The pay—\$30.00 a month. Here he did drafting, perspective drawings, pen and ink renderings, answered the telephone, interviewed material salesmen, and ran the office while the architect was searching for work.



Francis Meisch found his first job in an architect's office for the pay of \$1.00 a week.

Francis returned to the University. His required engineering and architectural courses included a watercolor course taught by Elmer Young, AWS. Francis elected to study etching under S. Chatwood Burton. Francis's artist uncle Walter Wilwerding gave him all the copper plates and tools needed for that course.

Working evenings, weekends, and summer provided money for tuition, books, supplies, and his social life. Francis's skills were utilized by Elwin Berg, architect, William Pedersen Sr., architectural engineer, surveyor, and House Plan book publisher, and Dr. Lorenz Straub, Head of the Hydraulics Department and acting Dean of the University's new Institute of Technology. After Francis's graduation from the University of Minnesota, he received a graduate scholarship to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for the 1939-40 school year.

With a Master's degree in Architecture, Francis became an Instructor in Architecture at North Dakota State College. He taught Freehand Drawing for Freshmen and Watercolor for Sophomores plus courses in history and design. After nine months of teaching, Francis secured work on Defense Projects that took him to Great Falls, West Yellowstone, Idaho Falls, and Las Vegas. Francis's work reflects his love for the mountains and the west.

In February, 1942, Francis returned to the Twin Cities to work as a Plant Engineer for Northwest Airlines. He soon became the Assistant Chief Plant Engineer, Airport Engineer, and upon his registration Architect. For Francis there was never a dull moment! On May 17th that year he became engaged to Elaine Hanson, an interior designer, whom, he had first met at the University School of Architect some six years before. They were married on his birthday that October.

With the end of the war, Francis's involvement in the airline's postwar planning kept him traveling more and more. While at Northwest Francis received job offers from other airlines but he turned them down. He was unwilling to move his family to New York. Tired of living out of a suitcase, he resigned his position with Northwest in 1950. He wanted a life with his family and to be able to go to the theater and symphony with Elaine. Attending the University of Minnesota became a family tradition. Francis's father graduated from the University in 1906. Francis graduated in March, 1939 and Elaine in June, 1939. Their son Richard was a University of MN graduate in June, 1970. Their son Robert graduated in March, 1975. Lynn graduated from Reed College. Lois attended the University but graduated from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design.

Francis and Elaine support two churches. Elaine is an Episcopalian. When their youngest son was in high school, Elaine went back to work as an interior designer. One of her clients was Univac and did all their marketing centers in North America and Europe.

*Continued on next page*

## Francis Meisch,

Continued from page 4

When the bottom fell out of architecture in 1971, Elaine's work as well as that of Francis was affected. Elaine accepted the challenge of establishing an Interior Design and Sales course for Dakota County Area Vocational Technical School. Twelve years later she retired from teaching.

Francis became a full time watercolor artist. He was the invited artist to exhibit at the 1972 Minnesota State Fair. Elaine brought home the paycheck while Francis headed for Montana in an old Dodge Dart. There he roamed the old mining camps and ghost towns. He photographed, sketched, and painted a watercolor every day.

He planned to go back after that trip but he and Elaine went to Europe three times before he got back to Montana.

The Meischs love to travel. They have traveled extensively in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Guatemala, Europe, and South America. Francis first watercolor sale in the

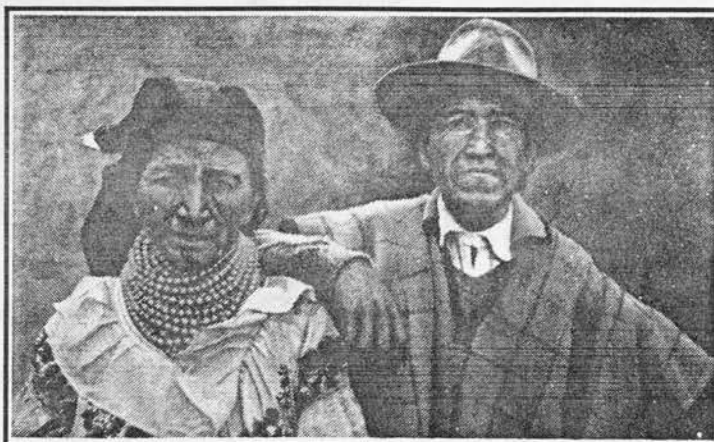
1940's was to Juliana Force, the director of the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Francis's artist uncle had told him to master the medium and not get lured into working with tempera, guache, acrylic or oils. He took his uncle's advice.

During his career

Francis painted two watercolors of the Sibley House. One of these he sold and the other he and Elaine used for a Christmas card. Francis did a winter scene of the Normandale Japanese Garden in watercolor and he donated it to the Normandale Japanese Garden & Japanese American Citizens League. Prints of this watercolor are available for donations toward the maintenance of the Garden.

A tour of the Meisch house is like touring a small art gallery. His studio is upstairs in a tastefully decorated home. His large, bright



One of Francis Meisch's stunning paintings.

studio has a drafting table, large watercolor work table, file cabinets, three floor to bookcases, and a large flat file for artwork and paper.

Francis and Elaine are proud of their four children who have each in their own way made career choices that are not ordinary and who, like their father, see life as a great adventure.

## Sunday Forum Sparsely Attended; Provided Good Message

By Jeannine Neumann

The November 8th Sunday Forum was sponsored by the CTK Worship Board, presented by Moya McGinn Conway and Leah Rosch. It was held in the auditorium (Old Chapel) to explain the many movements that have been added to the Mass. It was a beautiful presentation that was poorly attended and would have helped many parishioners to a better understanding of the "modern" liturgical movements.

Why do we use our bodies when we worship? We use our whole body to express "unity"...to encounter God and to fully participate as an assembly as proclaimed by Vatican II. The bodily gestures are the physical being of prayer and lets the assembly become fully involved in the service of the Mass.

Why is there liturgical dancing? In days of old, the dance was a great part of most religious services...different passages in the Psalms mention "with dancing" as a way of expressing ones love of God. This was to go "beyond the verbal" of worship. Dancing is

used only on special occasions to highlight different liturgical seasons.

Why do we use the "outstretched arms" when we pray The Our Father? Again, it is a sign of openness, to open oneself to God...to be accepting.

Why do we kneel, or not kneel as often in the new church? Kneeling is a form of penance, as in penitential rites and penitential liturgies; when we are "moved to fall to our knees"! In standing, we are resurrected, without shame, full of joy. Resurrection is a praise to God and resurrection in Greek means "standing up".

Why do we make the sign of the cross on ourselves? To be claimed for Christ, in the sign of the cross...to belong to the Lord. An old custom that nobody questions and everyone does...a form of participation...an act of uninhibited motion and silent reverry.

What is the "alleluia gesture"? It began at CTK when signing for the deaf was a part of each Sunday at the 11:00 mass...a beautiful gesture in American sign language that simply means "alleluia." Doing the "alleluia"

gives even the deaf a 'voice in song' and lets the congregation become one...it is a gesture that has caught on especially with the young people because it fills the heart with much joy.

What is the meaning of the hand gesture of "Oh God, Hear Us"? The hands go to the heart, that we lay before God, then lift them up in pray. A beautiful motion that shows involvement in Mass participation.

All the new motions and the many songs have been questioned by several as possibly not being the absolute in the Catholic religion....being a part of the action is being in the right religion....being active in the assembly is participating in the Mass. However, if you are uncomfortable with the motion or unable to participate for whatever reason, it is your choice and you should not be kept from Mass for that reason alone.

Come and some day these new actions will become as familiar to all as have the old ones such as genuflecting, beating the breast (mea culpa, mea culpa), bowing and crossing the forehead, the lips, the heart; actions that we do today without a second thought!

## PRIVATE SHOWINGS

### FRANCIS MEISCH

When Frank Meisch retired as an architect almost three years ago, he experienced none of the emotional upheaval that many people face when they find themselves without an office to report to each day. Meisch merely began devoting his time to what had been a sideline for almost 50 years—his art. That's not to say, however, that his art was ever less important to him than his architecture.

"Architecture bought houses and put four kids through college," he says. "By and large, it was the economic base that gave me the freedom to do what I want to do now. Being a weekend watercolorist gave me the freedom that I wouldn't have had as a full-time artist, because I didn't have to depend on it as an income. I could paint what I wanted the way I wanted and not worry about an audience."



Meisch's manner is that of a man who hasn't spent much time worrying about anything. As he sits in the comfortable studio on the second floor of his home near Minnehaha Creek in Edina, Minnesota, his serene manner belies the vibrancy of his work in paintings like *Morning Market*, which portrays activity in a small South American town called Puma. "I like a gutsy watercolor," he says. "I like to be challenged."

Meisch's challenge takes the form of "magic realism," a phrase often associated with his work. "I try to capture moods," he says. "I'm creating illusions.

After all, when you look at one of my watercolors, if there's depth there, that's an illusion. You get a certain feeling from looking at it, a certain mood."

A native of St. Paul, Meisch received a Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Minnesota and, later, a master's in architecture from MIT, which he attended on a scholarship. Although he went on to teach architecture at North Dakota State College and work as an architect for almost 50 years, Meisch never lost interest in his painting.

"Early in my work, I would look for subjects that were typical of the region—grain elevators, main streets in small towns, old barns, sheds," he says. While designing aircraft buildings for Northwest Airlines, he was able to broaden his scope, however. He traveled almost two-thirds of each year for his job, and found time to visit many museums that he wouldn't otherwise have been able to see. Those travels, which included several trips to Europe as well as journeys to Alaska, Canada, Columbia, Ecuador,



Santorini

*"When you look at one of my watercolors, you get a certain feeling, a certain mood."*

Peru, Guatemala, Mexico, and most of the United States, provided fodder for his art.

Meisch credits at least a portion of his talent to genetics: one uncle was an artist, another an architect, and one side of his family farmed the land in southern Minnesota. "I acquired a real love of the countryside during the time I spent on the farm," he says. The affection is evident in his work.

Although he's been at it for many years now, Meisch still recalls his first sale. It was to the late Juliana Force, then director of the Whitney Museum of American Art. "I decided that if a museum director was interested in my paintings, I'd better stick to it," he says.

And stick to it he has. Meisch's work has appeared in 200 exhibitions and sixteen one-man shows, as well as in several publications. It is also represented in many public, private, and corporate collections throughout the country. Not bad for a weekend painter.

—Vicki Stavig





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Gallery  
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International  
Design  
Center  
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Minneapolis, MN 55401

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## FRANCIS R. MEISCH

*A Half Century of Watercolors*

September 15 - October 23, 1991

Opening: Sunday, Sept. 15, 2:00 - 4:00 PM

You are cordially invited to attend the  
opening at International Design Center on  
Sunday afternoon, September 15, 1991 from  
2:00 to 4:00 PM. The artist will be present.

Tel: (612) 341-3441

Hours: Monday - Saturday

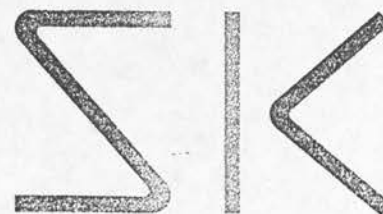
9:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Thursday 9:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Sunday 12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m.

"Harbor View," 19½" x 28", 1989  
watercolor





# BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

FRANCIS R. MEISCH  
Edina, Minnesota

Suzanne  
Kohn  
Gallery  
699-0477

1690 Grand  
Avenue  
St. Paul,  
MN 55105

"A HALF CENTURY OF WATERCOLORS" September 15, 1991 to October 23, 1991  
Opening: Sunday, September 15 from 2 - 4 PM  
Suzanne Kohn Gallery, International Design  
Center, 100 2nd Ave. N., Minneapolis, MN

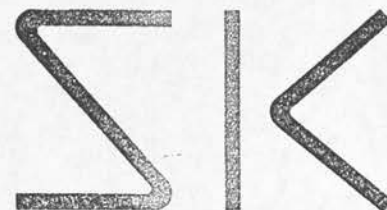
MAGIC REALISM is a term often applied to the watercolors of Francis Meisch. This is because his paintings evoke a strong feeling of *déjà vu* - the illusion of having previously viewed a scene. This sense of identity with a place, a time, or a mood, creates the magic. The realism is derived from his architectural education and teaching background and his technical control of the watercolor medium. While watercolor has the reputation of being a challenging and difficult medium, it has other qualities that are unique and set it apart from other methods of artistic expression. It has a fluidity and an immediacy which allows the artist to capture the mood of the moment and create memorable paintings.

Much of the artist's work prior to 1940, was with pen and ink, etching, and drypoint. These mediums of linear expression and design, involving the creation of tone and texture, required precision draftsmanship. He began exhibiting etchings and drypoints in 1937 and watercolors in 1942

The strong sure sense of color and value reveal the artist's love of nature and an ever-observing eye. The integrity of draftsmanship is apparent in every painting. Though his watercolors reflect the artist's extensive travels, the scenes of Minnesota remain the most sought after watercolors.

His work has received numerous local, regional, and national awards and recognition - and is in private and public collections throughout the United States.

FRANCIS R. MEISCH      continued



near Rollingstone, Minnesota, was sold, much to his father's dismay. One of the early paintings included in this exhibition is a similar view of the homestead painted as a gift to his father to replace the original. Meisch continues to exhibit in major watercolor shows around the country and is represented in several museum collections.

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Francis Meisch speaking of his work: "My paintings have gotten gutsier over the years. In terms of technique I've moved from broad brushing to developing greater detail. I like to be challenged by my subject matter, which accounts for the variety in my work. I try not to get in a rut where each watercolor looks like a duplicate of an earlier one, so recently I've tried my hand at portraits."



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