

PowWow #14

PowWow #14 is by Joyce Worley Katz, created for the monthly assembly of Apa V, Dec. 3 1994. Thanks to Arnie for doing the onerous chores. This is Mailing Number Fourteen, and I'm starting this later than I ever have before. But I don't want to give up my unbroken string, and I don't want to miss my chance to discuss the Topic of the Month, which is

Art

The Eye Of The Beholder

This is my favorite topic yet for Apa V. But because it's so dear, I've been daunted. I've debated with myself for the past month about just what aspect of Art to discuss. Should it be Art Widner or Art Rapp, two great fans? Should it be the Art of the Deal--though that seems like Aileen's topic. That lead me down a sidepath in which I tried to think of what Willis would do, and came up with silly stuff like The Fart of the Seal, the Start of the Squeal, the Wart on My Heel.

I was able to waste a considerable amount of time doing that, until sanity took over. Then I decided to write about the Art of Mailing Comments, and actually break down and do some. It seemed to me that was a good thing to do: perhaps that's why I didn't get around to it.

Today being tree trim day, I thought a lot about the Art of Christmas, but that boiled down to a set of rules about Proper Decorating Habits.

I thought about a well researched piece about the Art of Fandom, in which I printed examples of the more famous fan artists, and pointed out the characteristics of each one's styles. I really wish I had done that. I'm sure it would have become a benchmark in fandom, to be reprinted again and again. I'd like all of you to pretend that's what I did.

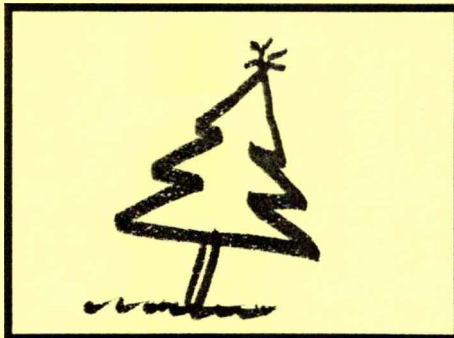
I didn't know much about art until I got to Junior High. That's

when I first saw reproductions of great masterpieces in a book. I didn't know anything about it, but I knew what I liked. (That's an original statement, you know. I made it up myself.)

Personally, I seem to have little artistic talent. I can neither draw nor sing, yet art and music are my two great loves.

I flirted, for awhile, with the notion that if I found The Right Pen, I could draw. I went through rapidographs and techno-pens and every other kind of wand I could find. I also tinkered with the notion of painting everything black, then just erasing until I had a picture. I've made some good messes over the years, but no art.

I've enjoyed, over the years, watching the evolution of popular art. It interests me that, just like everything else, there is fashion to art. The cool abstractions of the



40's, the oriental-styles of the 50's, the mod 60's, the pop 70's. Psychedelic art, and magic realism art, and imaginative art. Right now there's a tremendous resurgence in sentimental art,

harking back to the 1880's and 1890's styles. The cute kittens and lacy boxes and ornamented hearts...I like this stuff very much and feel happy when I see it. (Do our tastes in art--that is, the art we respond to emotionally--go back to our crib days?)

Overall, I suppose my favorite pictures are landscapes. And if you toss in a cow or two, it's all the better.

When you scratch our surface veneers, most of us are pretty much what we were raised to be. I might admire and be intellectually stimulated by some modern abstraction. But my favorite pieces in the house are watercolors of lakes and mountains and home-country.

And my most sentimental piece of art is (ghod help me) a painting on velvet of a wagon stopped by the campfire on the trail. It hung in my mother's house for all my childhood years. I found it in a ragbag of discarded things after she died, and it's on my office bulletin board now.

Art is akin to love. To be art, it has to evoke something inside you. If it doesn't, it hardly matters how clean the line, how sharp the image.

In a different lifepath, I might have wished to work in an art gallery. In the current one, I am happy to be surrounded by things to look at that make me feel good.

(And thanks to MarcCram for the title of this piece.)