

January 22 through March 12, 2023

# *A Prairie Art Dialogue* paintings by **Randall Bennett** of Lawrence, Kansas

## Artist Statement

Much of my realistic art is narrative: grounded on a foundation of my own life experiences and observations. A close inspection of some of my work will reveal multiple levels of meaning. My usual practice is to make field sketches and record with a camera, then complete the piece in the studio. I work in most of the major art mediums.

The selection of media, style, and size of an art piece is dependent on my “feelings” or connection with the subject and what I wish to say. Generally, my work in a series is connected by a thread of subject rather than media or style. Some of my less realistic works show evidence of the artistic distillation of recognizable places and characteristics of landscape. These are formed from very basic elements using value and color along with gestural brushwork to suggest features of the subject as a further derivation of an ongoing process to create an empathetic perceptual relationship between the viewer and the memory or recognition of place.

For these works, I like to subordinate traditional artistic landscape forms in favor of a visceral creative manipulation that invites the viewer to address their personal identification of place while looking through unfamiliar perceptual filters. Unlike nature, the closer the viewer is to the object, the painting in question in this case, the more obscure the details become.

For my purely abstract works, I generally like to create a post-narrative assemblage of a minimalist distillation of natural disparate elements reformatted and manifested in abstract gestural brushstrokes, utilizing color and value as topical communication vehicles thus enhancing visual discourse.

My general practice is to immerse myself within my subject, landscapes in many cases, in order to translate and manifest my derivative perceptions into a single piece or series of artworks while at the same time leaving compositional elements loose but still, at varying levels, subjugated to the physicality of geologic, geographic, and environmental hierarchies.

As a professional artist, I do not limit myself to landscapes and Nature alone, but I do find deep satisfaction in continuing the work of “creating” that is going on all about us within the natural world.

I have been enjoying producing commercial art and fine art for over 45 years to date. My other related activities include designing and building museum exhibits. I have been involved in about 75 museums that contains something of my artwork or creative input, including murals, dioramas, sculpture, artifact reproductions, graphics, photographs, illustrations, exhibit text writing, artifact mounts, conservation education and more. Some of my museum work may be found on my website: [www.tallgrassmuseumservices.com](http://www.tallgrassmuseumservices.com)

As of late, I have been expanding my oeuvre into the digital world of creativity and exploring my own personal creative limitations with the goal of breaking down both self and



*Little Bluestem at Twilight* by Randall Bennett

culturally imposed boundaries in order to push my creative development past traditional artistic accretionary underpinnings, thus positing my future work in a form of creative ascendancy.

I hope you enjoy my artwork. Thank you.

Randall Bennett

## Biography

Randall Bennett is a professional fine and commercial artist as well as owner and director of Tall Grass Museum Services located in Lawrence, Kansas. While calling Kansas home, he and his wife, Helen, spent many years moving around the United States, gaining experience in a wide range of activities. This was in addition to the many years he spent as a child growing up overseas in countries including India, Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, Sri Lanka.

After earning his bachelor of architecture degree at Kansas State University, Bennett worked in the architectural profession for a number of years before returning to art school. After several years of intense study in industrial design, illustration, sculpture, and visualization, he took a job working in the museum exhibit fabrication industry and has stayed with it continuously.

Besides working on museum related jobs, Bennett stays busy with fine artwork in his adjacent studio. He currently has 6 self-published books of his artwork as well as 2 books of illustrated poetry. He is regularly trying different styles and mediums in order to push boundaries and improve as an artist. The success of his art endeavors is evident by many national artistic awards he's received. Additionally, he is a member of numerous art organizations including the Mid-America Pastel Society, Pastel Society of America, Missouri Valley Impressionist Society, National Oil and Acrylic Painters Society, National Watercolor Society, and International Guild of Realism. He is also a signature member of the Southern Watercolor Society and Artists for Conservation.

When taking a break from painting and sculpture projects, Bennett pursues hobbies such as making custom bamboo flutes and music composition on the piano.



Birger Sandzen  
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401 N. First Street, PO Box 348, Lindsborg, KS 67456

(785) 227-2220 sandzengallery@gmail.com www.sandzen.org

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