

# 27<sup>OR</sup> 29 STORIES?

PAGE N. PILAND  
PAINTING & ILLUSTRATING  
LIFE ON TEXAS.

This Catalogue Raisonné(CR) book is the comprehensive, annotated listing of all, or nearly all, of the known fine artworks by the Texas artist Page Newton Piland in all media as of 2022. The works are described, and photos presented, in such a way that they may be reliably identified by third parties.

**This is an on-going project started in 2021. Over 200 pages are complete in 2022. As this is being prepared about a living and still working artist, it is classified as a Catalogue Raisonné In Preparation.**

Early examples of catalogue raisonnés consisted of two distinct parts, a biography and the catalogue itself. Their modern counterpart is the catalogue and biography which may also contain personal views and stories or essays by the author or artist. That would be closer to this presentation.

This is presented as a catalogue raisonné but hopefully presents enough biographical information and personal recollections so as to cast a light on a Texas artist's early life and how it influences his later life and work. It offers a good description of early Austin and University of Texas life and their lifelong influences, too.

## Introduction

## Recent Work

## Early Work

## Date Biography, Artist's Notes

## Exhibitions, Shows, Bibliography

### Shown in this publication.

- Reproduction of each work
- Title and title variations
- Dimension/Size
- Date of the work
- Medium/Media
- Owners names are not shown in this publication
- Provenance (history of ownership) if known is not shown in this publication
- Exhibition history

- Condition of the work
- Bibliography/Literature/Exhibitions that illustrate the work
- Essays by the artist and editors
- Critical assessments and remarks
- Description of the work
- Signatures, Inscriptions and Monograms of the artist are not shown in this publication
- List of works attributed, lost, destroyed and fakes are not shown in this publication

## ABOUT TEXAS MEN'S PERSONALITIES, BEHAVIORS, OPINIONS, TALENTS, PREJUDICES &... EXCUSES.

This exercise was started to save my family and art associates the agony and irritation of having to figure out my art work left behind. Gathering images and history was boring so notes, memories, and stories were added. Because of this process, I encourage all artists to start a Catalogue Raisonné during their lifetimes.

Maybe, as the old saw says, artists should stick to what they know best. So please humor me as I am not a gifted writer. However, if any of these ramblings interest or encourage other artists, I will be happy. The work from all those years was for my own enjoyment and, yes, there were disappointments and many setbacks and hardships, but not so many as one might imagine. Additionally, and hopefully, this presentation offers in-sight into why Texas men behave as we do. Thanks are owed to Pat and David Piland for their patience and interest in my art "careers" and for putting up with the endless drama and goings-on.

I want to mention my beliefs as to how and from where, creativity and inspiration spring. Of course, many more complicated explanations of the origins of creativity are recognized and championed by more scholarly experts.

I believe that creativity begins in early childhood feelings and play. How quickly our thoughts and memories are filled with vast instructions, information, and facts so that early thoughts and ideas and play habits are just... lost. Have you ever watched children at play when they are comfortable and happy or even unhappy? This will often bring immense joy and inspiration to an observer. In later life, if one can access his or her own childhood feelings, memories, and behaviors, it may prove to be a secret pathway to unlocking, re-storing, or discovering creativity. I have also found that creativity or an idea often arrives when actually working or playing and "looking about" without plans, instructions, deadlines, or goals.

Having watched children discover secrets in some of my work makes me cherish those moments. At these times, I feel something meaningful has actually been accomplished through all that time spent on the projects. Seeing that "Aha" moment of discovery in children or recognition from an adult is pretty good, too. I remember being most happy when I found myself grinning like a fool or giggling like a child whilst working, playing, or discovering ideas and secrets in the project.

The large format painting *Barton Springs. After Closing Down Time.* includes personal history, ingrained Texas folklore and Austin history. I did the painting to enter in The 2008 Texas Hunting Art Prize Show.

That annual Exhibition was moved to Texas from London in 2006. This famous annual exhibition originated in 1981. The first winner in London was Richard Eurich for the representational, calm, scenic work *Weymoth Bay*. The first Texas winner of the \$50,000 prize was Francesca Fuchs for her 86 inch monochromatic painting of a stylized flower *Red Blue Daisy*. My work was a finalist in the show several times. The very last, closing down, show was in 2016 as Hunting PLC and other energy-related business were experiencing tough times.

One winner was Winter Street Studios artist Kevin Peterson with his emotional painting *Fire*. Artists in Texas quickly learned that only 2D works of a realistic nature and abstract work were being recognized. Nudity, political, religious work, 3D work was excluded. Yes, we complained, but for the chance to win the big money, we kept entering. The event openings were a big deal and included extravagant entertainment, lavish food and drink for the Hunting PLC guests who were in town for the annual Offshore Technology Conference. We were instructed to stand by our paintings to answer any questions the Hunting guests might have.

This gave me an excuse to keep doing representational work not unlike my old professors' early Texas Representational, Regionalist work. The Barton Springs painting is about my memories and experiences growing up in Austin with that wonderful spring-fed swimming pool/hole which was always there and always a friend. We hung out there in the dog days of summer and visited in the dead of winter. A group of my "homies" and I always met there on Christmas afternoon and plunged right in. The water was frigid in summer and ice cold in winter. And, yes, we were often there at, and after, closing down time.

The work envisions what the pool will look like on down the line many, many years in the future. It will still be there. The concrete walkways and stairs will be worn out and broken. The spring-fed pool will still be calm and clear and COLD. The metal diving board bolts and remnants will be rusted and bent but will still be there. The secret salamanders and night critters and birds and owls and frogs and raccoons will still be there hidden in the trees and grass. I will be there, still, hidden and celebrating my secret spring.

I do love Barton Springs and I do love this painting.



*Barton Springs. After Closing Down Time.*

72" x 72". 2007-08.

- Oil on canvas.
- Exhibited in The Texas 2008 Hunting Art Prize Show in Houston.
- Stored in Page Piland Storage Unit in Bellaire, Texas in 2021.
- Piland Catalogue Raisonné and book - 27 or 29 *Stories* discusses the work in detail.
- See photo of the work in that book written by the artist in Bellaire, Texas. 2022.
- Signed by the artist on the back of canvas and on the stretcher bars.

This oil-on-canvas painting recalls the historic Wooldridge Park in downtown Austin near the Governor's Mansion and the Austin Public Library. It was across the street from the City Hall of that era.

I suppose I first saw and played in the park in the sunken "valley" when taking art lessons at the library at about six years old. The library was fascinating in itself. It had enormous doors into the different rooms that we could not budge. And the stacks were on different levels inside that building on the hill. It is now The Austin History Center with great stories and old photos from newspaper clippings and historical papers. I visited the library as I researched the Austin series of paintings like the unfinished painting of the old First Baptist Church. (Wonder if I will ever have the courage to complete that painting.)

Anywho, the park was named after an important Austin benefactor. As Boy Scouts we played there after the meetings on Tuesday nights at the Baptist Church. Our favorite game was capture the flag! What fun we had. The old gazebo grandstand hosted many political rallies throughout Austin's history. It was lit in part by the famous "moonlight towers" mounted on super tall metal stands about Austin. I spent a lot of time working on the painting envisioning the scene taking place around midnight of the very last political rally, ever. The crowds are gone, the grandstand is littered with brochures and bunting remnants and the bowl or valley is flooded. The partially submerged folding chairs look like tombstones. As the mean, mean 2008 Presidential election raged I could not see how another political campaign could ever be tolerated again. Boy, was I mistaken. The adult political folks played a really mean, for keeps, game of capture the flag. What role models for the kids... Yikes!



*Last Rally At Wooldridge Park.*  
60" x 60". 2007-2008.

- Oil on canvas. • Made in Piland home in Bellaire, Texas. • In Piland collection.
- Piland C.R. book - 27 or 29 *Stories* discusses the work in detail.
- See photos of the work in that book written by the artist, Page Newton Piland, in Bellaire, TX. 2022.
- Signed by the artist on the back of canvas and the stretcher bars.

This homage painting was done in about 2013-14. The painting was a finalist in one of the Texas Art Prize Hunting Shows. It was all about my older brother Ted and some of his early favorite happy times.

We spent many sweet years as campers, and later as staff members, at the old scout camp Tom Wooten located on Bull Creek just outside Austin. Later the camp was moved to be near Bastrop State Park. Some of our best times were spent at the swimming pool by the creek. It was little beat up and crooked and leaky even way back then. We never noticed.

The lifeguards were our heroes. Later Ted became Head Lifeguard during summers and between semesters at Sam Houston State College where he studied Printing Management. He was short and ordinary until he went off to college. I guess he worked out lifting weights while in school because he came back a muscle-man with quite the physique. This was absolutely necessary and most appropriate for the camp Head Lifeguard position.

Many stories emerged about Ted who was well liked by all and was indeed fearless. (Maybe reckless might be a better term). "Rat's" exploits were reported far and wide and way too often and with too much detail. Some too risqué to write down. Nevertheless, he became the camp hero as that pool position almost always guaranteed.

I bet those wonderful summer days and nights were his favorite times. He was also a leader in the Tonkawa Order of The Arrow Lodge(OA) #99. Ted really did the Lodge's hard work while I was off indian dancing. We both loved the OA and were honored with the highest rank of Vigil. Our younger brothers, David and John, followed later and became members of the Lodge and Indian dancers, too! Sadly, Ted had a rare form of cancer that finally did him in. He treaded water way past all odds. He loved his nickname "Rat"! (Yet another untold story).

I like a challenge, so I did the oil and acrylic painting on unprimed canvas. The actual pool area was painted and airbrushed over a gesso-primed shape with oil paints and varnishes. I loved painting images of the moon and in this painting the moon is pristine. It is very detailed and glows. "After" images will appear if you stare at it and then look at another dark, deep part of the pool. We dearly loved hanging out by that old pool late at night. Many a plan was made as we sat about the pool and the creek and stared into the night and sometimes the dawn, too.

In this painting I am seeing the old pool as finally closed down and emptying out at the end of the last summer. Ted's diving board is broken and washed to the shallow end. The walkways and pool walls are broken, scarred, and cracked. The moon probably did not come out the night of this imagined vigil. However, the moon is reflected, still, in that old pool by that old creek in that old camp... in my mind.

*Vigil For The Old Lifeguard.*

72" x 48". 2014.

- Oil and acrylic on canvas. • Made in Piland's Spring Street Studio. • Exhibited in the Texas Hunting Art Show.
- Stored in Page Piland home or storage in Bellaire, Texas in 2022.
- Piland C.R. book - 27 or 29 Stories discusses the work in detail.
- See photo of the work in that book written by the artist, Page Newton Piland, in Bellaire, Texas. 2021.
- Signed by the artist on the back of the canvas and the stretcher bars.



The large format painting *Riding Out Another Texas Storm* includes personal history and more ingrained Texas folklore. Texans grow up with daily exposure to extreme and often sudden weather changes. Hard rain and lightening storms are quickly followed by scorching heat followed by intense cold followed by wonderful days and nights of clear, cool, dry weather. In central Texas we were lucky enough to be close by and constant companions to wonderful lakes, rivers, streams, creeks, swimming holes, fishing holes, grottos, public swimming pools and secret springs.

This painting reflects the weather and Texans' resiliency, grit and resolution. And family. My parents worked all their lives to support us kids with hardships of every kind. My mom and stepdad sold the family home long after the kids were grown. They scraped together enough funds to purchase a long mobile home. The plan was to tow it to Florida and live the life of ease on those sunny shores. They got as far as a hill in Pflugerville, about two miles out of Austin, and spent the rest of their lives there. They seemed happy.

The painting frames the whole family as re-united, growing up together, and happy in that old trailer. Shown are "Ms. Caffey" and Howard at the breakfast table window. In another window is Jessie Lee, my older stepsister, and two younger half-brothers, David and John. Next to the front window is pictured my older brother, Ted. Of course, I am in the front window.

Lord, that family did ride out many a Texas storm. Some family "storms" are way too painful to remember, much less write down. And, did you ever notice how we seem to, subconsciously, try to rebuild our original family? (That doesn't work.) And do you know the Texas term, "Walk away"? As in, "She just walked away one day."

The home and impending storm are pictured alongside a calm lake/stream/river with the yellow fish just showing a fin before going deep again. The home seems to be "taking off" like a big yellow plane. The lead figure seems to be the pilot who is trying to take everyone along on his journey. What fun... and agony.

The 72 x 68 inch oil-on-canvas was included in the very last Texas Hunting Art Prize show as a finalist in 2016.

The wonderful photo was taken by Pat Piland of the work with a young woman in a yellow dress standing beside it. The artist is just off camera.

And so it goes...



### *Riding Out Another Texas Storm.*

72" x 68" x 2". 2014.

- Oil on canvas. • Made and exhibited in Piland's Spring Street Studio and the final Hunting Art Prize Show in 2016 in Houston.
- Stored in Page Piland Storage Unit in Bellaire, Texas in 2021.
- Piland C.R. - *27 or 29 Stories* discusses the work in detail.
- See photo of the work in that book written by the artist in Bellaire, Texas. 2022.
- Signed by the artist on the back and on the stretcher bars.