

ARTIST OF THE YEAR 2001: ANDRE BLANCHET



Andre was painting an original watercolor late one night and was attaching the mat to the painting and somehow a spot of coffee appeared on the mat. Tired and upset, he tried to cover up the coffee stain by carrying the original art over the inner mat to the outer mat. His wife, Rosella urged him to do the other side thereby creating a unique and pleasing 3-dimensional effect. Andre took three of these unusual paintings to the art show along with his regular matted art to see if customers liked them as much as he and his wife liked them. Well, they loved them! After six months, it became apparent the customers demand exceeded Andre's limited time to produce all originals. Something had to be done!

A PRINT / ORIGINAL WAS CREATED !

Andre and his charming wife put their heads together and decided to make prints of Andre's original paintings, attach the mat and Andre would hand paint original art to the extensions on both sides of the mat to continue the design. The customer response has been more than satisfying and for the last 10 years, Andre has made this his trade mark. The combination of a print and original art on the mat has been an excellent marketing tool.

Each hand painted mat is slightly different because it is original and not machine made. Andre has had a solid and successful career for more than half a century starting by attending the Art Students League and Pratt Institute in New York. Having moved to the California Desert, his primary concentration has been on creating sensitive watercolor desert and southwest themes. Andre has won many, many, awards and had his paintings published in several periodicals, books, magazine covers and honored by several art festivals to be the Poster Artist.

Andre passed away in 2010.