



January Featured Artist

Drew Stuart

Wood Carver and Ceramic Artist

Drew Stuart, wood carver and ceramic artist, challenges himself to take an idea and transform it into a finished piece of art. When he begins working on a piece, he has not only conceptualized the construction process but the finished product as well. His sense of whimsy and humor comes through in many of his pieces.

Over the years, Drew branched out to oil and acrylic painting and working with paper maché and clay. Originally he took clay classes at ArtCenter Manatee to create three-dimensional models in clay to help in planning his wood carvings. Drew discovered that he enjoyed working with clay and this has now become his medium of choice. Drew's work is shown and displayed in the Artists' Market at ArtCenter Manatee.

In 1976, Drew entered the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) Bicentennial Contest where teachers were asked to express what the bicentennial meant to them using any medium. His wooden marionette captured first place. He has studied with Miroslav Trejtnar and Zdar Sorm who traveled from Prague, Czechoslovakia to teach an intensive course on carving European marionettes.

In 2015 Drew entered his first juried art show at ArtCenter Manatee where his 'Guests at a Wedding" received an Honorable Mention. Since then other pieces of his work have been accepted in juried shows at the ArtCenter. Drew's work is shown and sold in the Artists' Market since

Drew has been featured in the *Observer* for the wooden Santas he carved from the base of the family Christmas tree beginning in 1996. Each Santa represents a major event of the past year. His carvings now record twenty-five years of family history. Most recently he has been featured in the *Sarasota Herald Tribune* and the *Observer* for his work as a member of the Creative Art Association of Lakewood Ranch.

Drew relocated from New Jersey to Florida in 2004 after 36 years as an elementary classroom teacher. Less than a year after moving, he was back in the classroom at Saint Stephen's Episcopal School in Bradenton. After seven years as a fifth grade reading and science teacher, Drew retired for the second and final time.

Drew is a member of ArtCenter Manatee and the Creative Art Association of Lakewood Ranch, Fl. He resides in Lakewood Ranch.