



Carl Eugene "Gene" Sparkman, Jr.

February 19, 1941 - June 13, 2010

Carl Eugene "Gene" Sparkman, Jr., of Crownsville, MD died suddenly at his home Sunday, June 13th, 2010. He was 69.

Born on February 19, 1941 in Kansas City, Kansas, he was the son of the late, Carl Eugene Sparkman, Sr. and Nettie Marie Mack. Gene grew up in Great Bend Kansas and graduated from Great Bend High School. After high school he attended college briefly before enlisting in the Navy for 6 years. He served in the Vietnam War and after his discharge, continued his college education. He graduated from the Art Center College of Design in Los Angeles, CA. He moved to CT where he would make his mark as artist and teacher. His lifelong passion for art and the teaching of it was recognized by all who knew and loved him.

Mr. Sparkman predominantly taught drawing and painting the figure, and illustration. Some of the schools he taught at include the Art Students League of New York, NYC for 10 years; Western Connecticut State University, CT; Sacred Heart University, CT; University of Bridgeport, CT; Pratt Institute, NY; Fashion Institute of Technology, NY and briefly at Silvermine Art Guild, CT.

Gene Sparkman holds his MFA in Visual Arts from Vermont College, Montpelier, VT, and a BFA in Illustration from the Art Center College of Design, Los Angeles, CA. He is currently represented by the Geary Gallery in Darien, CT and the Whitehall Gallery in Annapolis, MD. Gene Sparkman's work is in many private, corporate and permanent public museum collections world-wide, such as the Butler Institute of American Art, Franklin Library, and the Smithsonian, among others. He was a former Board Member of the Pastel Society of America and elected Master Pastelist in 1984. Exhibitions and major awards in Salmagundi Club, NYC; Allied Artists of America, NYC; Pastel Society of America, NYC; Manchester Institute of the Arts, NH; Canton Art Institute, OH; Butler Institute of American Art, OH; New Britain Museum of American Art, CT; Society of Illustrators, NYC; Society of Illustrators, CA; Rameau Palais, Paris, France, etc. Gene Sparkman studied with such formidable masters of their genre as Joseph Henniger (CA), Harry Carmean (CA), John

Asaro (CA) and Rudolf Baranik (NYC).

He is listed in Marquis' Who's Who in American Art (1986) under his full name Carl Eugene Sparkman, Jr.

He is survived by his long time partner, Sher Sparkman of West Haven, CT; his daughter, Gretchen A. Sparkman of Huntingtown, MD; his brother, Dean Sparkman of Plymouth, MN; two granddaughters, Heidi and Aine Sparkman; step-mother, Laura Louise Sparkman of Hutchinson, KS, and a niece and nephew.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, August 14, 2010, in Great Bend, Kansas. The family requests that in lieu of flowers that memorial contributions be sent to Maryland Pastel Society, PO Box 54 Riderwood, MD, 21139.

Arrangements were provided by Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home, 814 Bestgate Road, Annapolis, MD 21401.

Tribute Wall



“ Carl Eugene "Gene" Sparkman, Jr.

October 26, 2023 at 06:42 PM



“ Carl Eugene "Gene" Sparkman, Jr.

January 28, 2023 at 12:44 PM



“ Carl Eugene "Gene" Sparkman, Jr.

January 28, 2023 at 08:03 AM



“ Sher; I pray you are well and our love and prayers come to you from His loving arms. May you embrace the many years of life He gave Gene. We think of you often and tried to reach you but it all failed. Robert & Joy###imported-begin###Dr. Robert G. & Joy Leonard###imported-end##

July 16, 2010 at 12:02 PM



“ Gretchen, Sharon & Family,
I was so sad to hear about Gene's passing - I am so sorry for your loss. My thoughts are with all of you. With love always, Catherine###imported-begin###Catherine M###imported-end##

July 15, 2010 at 07:36 AM



“ Goodbye Gene. I'll remember you always -- every time I look at "The Working Cowhand" and the portrait you did of my son. Thanks for the memories.###imported-begin###Jill Eccleston###imported-end##

July 09, 2010 at 10:08 AM



“ Gene Sparkman...What a talent what a character,what a wrist... I walked into his classroom in 1986 looking for someone who could help me bring new light to my stale work. I was one of a few illustrators working in pastel at the time and I was looking for someone who knew the medium... Well he was the person. He was able to bring me back to my early roots as a student and give me new tools to draw with. When I think of the great artists who's shoulders I have stood upon, he is one of the first. We transitioned from teacher/student to friends and colleagues. That friendship followed the ebbs and flows of both of our lives. Thankfully in the end we were sharing thoughts and experiences once again... I am grateful. I even own 4 pieces of his work, including a large charcoal from his graduate studies that hangs over my bed. I will think of him every day. I will miss him and his profound points of view, as well our head to head debates over "Art and the eternal search for the Great Perhaps".
Thank you for allowing me to share my thought and love for you and Gene. there is so much more..... Lynne##imported-begin##Lynne Foster##imported-end##

June 30, 2010 at 10:55 AM



“ Dear Gretchen & Sher, words cannot express the sorrow I feel for your loss of Cousin Gene. We grew up almost as brothers and shared so many fond and memorable experiences together. His talent as a pastel artist was unmatched and his love for his family was never ending. He will be sorely missed by anyone that knew him. Peace be with you girls and the rest of the family as we say our farewells to cousin Gene. Tom & Suellen##imported-begin##Tom Sparkman##imported-end##

June 21, 2010 at 08:23 PM



“ My deepest sympathies go out to the family of Mr. Gene. In times like this may some measure of comfort be found in God's promise to "wipe every tear from their eyes and death will be no more...the former things have passed away." (Rev. 21:3,4)##imported-begin##Michael Charles##imported-end##

June 21, 2010 at 07:00 PM



“ Our sympathy to the family and friends of Gene Sparkman. We will remember him as the one who introduced us to the world of art and pastels.##imported-begin##Bob and Linda Bohacek##imported-end##

June 21, 2010 at 02:18 PM



“ Love to you Sher, to Gretchen and Ed and the girls. You all, and Gene, are a venry special part of our lives. Many blessings. Rave on, Gene. I'm sure we'll see you on the other side where we'll all laugh and love together again. Love you all.##imported-begin##Meg Reilly ##imported-end##

June 19, 2010 at 11:57 PM



“ Gene, not only has the art world lost a great talent, but the world in general. Paint a great rainbow over Great Bend on Aug. 14.##imported-begin##Clarence LeRoy & Terry Bashor (class of '59)##imported-end##

June 19, 2010 at 11:50 AM



“ Our deepest sympathies toward your loss. I feel lucky to have enjoyed several conversations with my cousin at his father's passing, and know that he was a kind and generous person who deeply loved his family.##imported-begin##Micheal B. Sparkman##imported-end##

June 18, 2010 at 10:51 PM



“ Mrs. Sparkman and family
Was shocked to read about Gene. I grew up across the street from him in Great Bend. He was always a good artist and good friend. May God be with you and your family.
Nell Ann##imported-begin##Nell Ann (Phillips) Arvites ##imported-end##

June 18, 2010 at 04:49 PM



“ I will miss you.##imported-begin##Trish Macolino##imported-end##

June 18, 2010 at 12:58 PM



“ I am so sorry for your loss. He truly was an accomplished artist and instructor. I wish I could have met him. Hold the memories in your hearts and minds and know he is smiling on you.
Colette##imported-begin##Colette Ostrowski##imported-end##

June 18, 2010 at 11:28 AM



“ My heartfelt sympathies to his family and all who loved him. He had a special place in my life as a mentor and friend. I will miss him##imported-begin##vivian##imported-end##

June 16, 2010 at 11:07 PM