

The Juggler, Mixed-media collage drawing on paper, 14" x 11"



TEXAS TALENT: JERRY SKIBELL

The "Unknown Artist" you need to know

by STACEY MARCUS
photography by HOLGER OBENAU

JERRY SKIBELL HAS BEEN creating art since the third grade, when his teacher would routinely ask the budding artist to draw murals on walls covered in butcher paper for his classmates to color in. A year later, his fourth grade teacher took his pastel drawing of a rooster home to hang over her breakfast table. He imagines that, if she is still alive, she is enjoying her morning coffee with the rooster watching. As long as he can remember, Skibell has been inspired by the magic to create.

Over the years, his calling has led him to create over 6,000 works of art and fill more than 150 sketch pads with doodles, drawings and dreams. "Whenever I go on a trip I take my sketchbook along with my 'art box' filled with oil pastels, pencils, a razor blade, a gum eraser, odorless turpentine and Q-tips," says Skibell. He is drawn to art like a moth to a ray of light, happily lost in the creative process and enjoying the trip.

Skibell wrote brilliantly about his creative journey in an essay entitled, "Memoirs of an Unknown Artist," where he describes how he begins his creative process with a few bold strokes over a white field of paper, takes a step back and studies the direction he is headed. "God knows I have been to this place a thousand times," he says of the familiar

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voyage. He calls himself an unknown artist, but what he doesn't seem to realize is that he has been expressing his stories for decades.

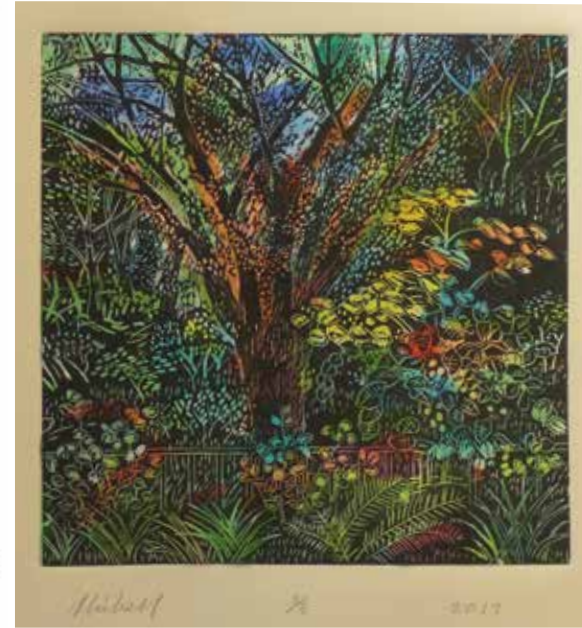
Skibell, who has been developing commercial real estate for over four decades, got his bachelor's degree in studio art from the University of Texas in Austin and logged a year of graduate school, focusing on graphic design. He has exhibited in numerous galleries in Texas and Santa Fe, New Mexico, and served as a gallery artist at SMINK, Inc. in Dallas, Works on Paper Gallery in

Santa Fe, and Montserrat Contemporary in New York. His works have been selected in many juried competitions, including TCU Art School Competition and the Annual International Exhibition organized by University of Texas at Tyler. Twice he has been selected by the Craighead Green Gallery for its Annual New Talent Show. His work graces homes and offices of individual and corporate collectors.

At 74 years young, Skibell continues to draw every day. If you are looking for him, you will probably find him in his

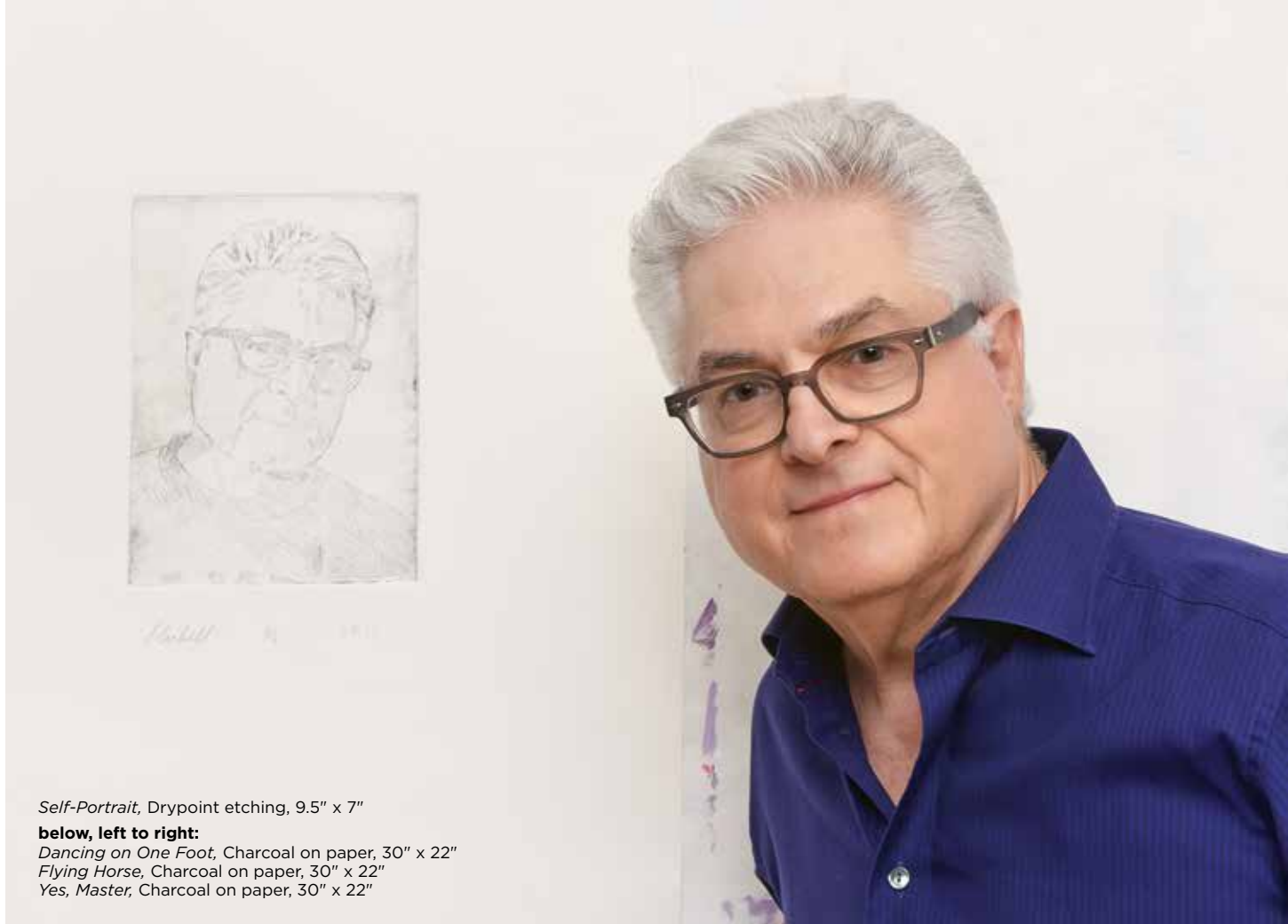
home studio or soaking up the beauty of his backyard, where a creek beckons him to create. "I am not comparing myself to Claude Monet, but I do love to paint the wilderness in my backyard," he muses.

Along with landscapes, he enjoys painting and drawing florals, collages, abstracts and faces. "When I was younger I constantly drew faces, and some of the same characters still keep coming up today," says Skibell. He says he has drawn a face of a guy floating in the ocean with a ship in the background at least a hundred times.



clockwise from above:
Late Fall, Charcoal on paper, 12" x 9"
My Backyard Series: The Big Tree, Linocut print with painted Chine collé, 12" x 11"
Van Gogh Flowers with Yellow Wall, Gouache over drypoint etching, 9" x 9"

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Self-Portrait, Drypoint etching, 9.5" x 7"

below, left to right:
Dancing on One Foot, Charcoal on paper, 30" x 22"
Flying Horse, Charcoal on paper, 30" x 22"
Yes, Master, Charcoal on paper, 30" x 22"



"When I was younger I didn't want anyone to know I was an artist, but now I want everyone to know!" he exclaims. *

Stacey Marcus is a Boston-based freelance lifestyle, luxury and travel writer. Her works have appeared in *Art New England*, *Boston*, *Boston Common Magazine*, *Coastal Design Magazine*, *Charleston Style & Design*,

Modern Luxury Chicago, *Ocean Home Magazine*, *Playboy.com*, *RD.com* and many others. A lover of big words and little white dogs, Stacey's biggest joys are found in life's simple moments.

Skibell enjoys experimenting in his work and often begins with a cutout piece of paper sprayed with numerous colors to be used in a collage painting. Some of Skibell's methods are truly unique and have been developed exclusively by him.

In 2001, Skibell spent time in Santa Fe, where he bought a Whelan etching press for his Dallas studio. He made friends with its originator, Mel Whelan, and spent days with a master printer, who taught

him how to make Solarplate etchings with his new press. Skibell has become an avid printmaker, and he works very confidently, creating dry point etchings, Solarplate etchings, lino prints and monotypes. Naturally, Skibell enhances his printmaking by utilizing his flair for the experimental, just as he does with his paintings and drawings.

Skibell had an elevator installed in his home, so he will always be able to access his studio.

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