

Clark Hulings

Clark Hulings was born in 1922 in Florida, where his father was manager of a plant that produced a gas for fumigating orange trees. His mother died of tuberculosis when he was an infant, and he and his sister were sent to live with his maternal grandparents in Potsdam, New York for the next three years, while his father went to work in Valencia, Spain. While in Spain Hulings father married the daughter of the British Consul in Valencia and the two children joined them there.

In 1928 the Hulings family returned to the United States and settled in Westfield, New Jersey. Hulings was in the first grade when he painted a recognizable pastel portrait of his stepmother. At the age of twelve, his father arranged art lessons with, Sigismund Ivanowski, a portrait and landscape painter who had served as Court Painter to Tsar Nicholas II. By the time Hulings graduated from high school in 1940, the tuberculosis that had killed his mother had left him in fragile health, and he was unable to enter college. However, he did continue a limited schedule with Ivanowski, as well as with George Bridgman, the celebrated drawing teacher, at the Art Student s League in New York City.

In the fall of 1941, Hulings was well enough to enroll at Haverford College where he majored in Physics. After his graduation in 1944, he was appointed to work on the Manhattan Project in Los Alamos, New Mexico, but his recurring ill health prevented his acceptance into the program. Instead, he remained in Santa Fe to recuperate, supporting himself by painting pastel portraits of children. In the spring of 1945, he had a one-man show of his landscapes at the New Mexico Museum of Fine Art.

Later that year he took a job at the Gates Rubber Company in Denver, Colorado. But every week he spent his day off in the mountains painting landscapes and his evenings in drawing classes at Denver University. In 1946, he moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where his parents then lived, and was was invited to mount a one-man show of his work at the galleries of the Louisiana Art Commission. He included several portraits of family members and the show launched him on a successful career as a portrait painter. But Hulings continued to paint landscapes and also became interested in illustration and design, which led him back to The Art Student s League for three years beginning in 1948 - this time as a student of Frank Reilly, noted illustrator and teacher. In 1951 he gained employment doing wash drawings for a newspaper mat agency that specialized in supermarket ads. He gradually moved up to paperback book covers and magazine illustrations.

By 1955 Hulings illustration career was firmly established. But the lure of landscape painting sent him to Europe, first for four months, and later for almost three years. Over the course of his travels he studied figure painting in Florence, abstract design in Düsseldorf and roamed from the Arctic Circle to Southern Egypt. Hulings returned to New York City in the fall of 1960 and resumed his illustration career to recoup finances. But he planned his work schedule to include serious easel painting. Within two years this new pursuit had become sufficiently profitable for him to devote all of his attention to it. He was admitted to The Grand Central Art Galleries, which represented him for the next eight years and held one-man shows of his work in 1965 and 1967.

Hulings began placing paintings in competitive shows of realistic art and won several prizes, including The Council of American Artists award at the Hudson Valley Art Association for Restaurante Vicente, and the gold medal given by The Allied Artists of America for Onteniente. In 1973 he garnered the Prix de West at the initial show of The National Academy of Western Art (NAWA) in Oklahoma City for his painting Grand Canyon - Kaibab Trail. He went on to win three silver and two gold medals for both oil and watercolor at subsequent competitions at NAWA. In 1976 A Collection of Oil Paintings by Clark Hulings was published by The Lowell Press as a catalog to accompany a one-man show at the Cowboy Hall of Fame under the auspices of NAWA. He was presented with the Hall s Trustees Gold Medal for his distinguished contribution to American art . Two years later he was honored with a comprehensive retrospective of his work in Midland, Texas.

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