

Donald Rusty

D.L. "Rusty" Rust was born in Erie, Pennsylvania in 1932. He began drawing and painting at a very early age and has never had the desire to be anything but a serious artist. His early work was directly influenced by his grandfather, Emil Rust, Gil Elvgren, Bob Toombs, and Norman Rockwell. However, he feels there has been no one single influence in his wildlife art and insists that all wildlife artists have affected his style.

For many years, Rusty's paintings concentrated on circus and portrait subjects; but recently, wildlife subjects have intrigued him more and more. His portraits include such prominent individuals as: Emmett Kelly Sr., Emmett Kelly Jr., Merle Evans (Ringling band leader), Norman Rockwell, and Molly Rockwell. In fact, D.L. Rust and Norman Rockwell used to correspond regularly and in one letter Rockwell emphasized that Rusty's artwork "is very good indeed."

Rusty's paintings hang in the Ringling Museum of the Circus, Sarasota, Florida; the Norman Rockwell Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and the National Portrait Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

He has illustrated books for Valkyrie Press, A.S. Barnes & Co., and World of Yesterday Publications; and has provided illustrations for Reader's Digest and other magazines. His artwork has also appeared on collector's plates, appointment books, wall calendars, porcelain mugs, playing cards and jigsaw puzzles.

Rusty's ability to capture nature lies between fantasy and reality. Realism is his style, but he wants to take the collector's imagination one step further. He is an artist sensitive to nature and its surroundings. The beauty of his artistic documentation is distinctly his own. Rusty takes us not just to a creative visual, but to a place and a story.

Rusty has produced more than 15,000 paintings and has 2,000 originals registered by owners with the National Museum and Gallery Registration Association (an NMGRA record!).

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