

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON**

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS D. GIBSON BYRD

D. Gibson Byrd, emeritus professor of art died on April 16, 2002 after a long struggle with Parkinson's disease. He joined the faculty of the Department of Art in 1955, and taught art education and art studio courses until his retirement in 1985. He was department chair from 1967-69. Byrd received his Master of Fine Arts from Iowa University in 1950. In 1991 he moved to Carlsbad, California, where he continued to be a productive and impassioned painter despite his illness. His figurative paintings often explored social issues, at times reflected his Shawnee Indian heritage, and probed the psychological underpinnings of modern life. His later paintings of Wisconsin landscapes brought to life the rich flavors of rural scenes. One landscape, a 10 foot-square oil painting commissioned by Dane County, Wisconsin, in 1988, greeted visitors to the Madison area airport for many years.

Professor Byrd's work was exhibited frequently in competitive, invitational and solo exhibitions throughout the United States. His paintings are part of the public collection at many institutions including the Madison Art Center, Milwaukee Art Museum, the Butler Institute of American Art, over half a dozen UW System campuses, and in many private collections. His passions for painting remained undiminished throughout his battle with Parkinson's disease. He was deeply respected by his colleagues and his students for his kindness, respectful nature and for his candid critiques and strong encouragement.

He was born on February 1, 1923 in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the son of the late Decator Franklin Byrd and Bertha Irene Gibson. He was part of the first graduating class from Will Rogers High School, Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1941. He became a staff sergeant in the Army Air Corps in 1942 and served in the armed forces until 1954. During World War II he served as a B-17 engineer and top gunner in the 8th Air Force stationed in England and he flew numerous missions over northern Europe. In 1949 he earned his bachelor's degree in art from Tulsa University and married Benita Springer of Tulsa, Oklahoma. The same year he moved to Iowa City, Iowa to continue his art studies. After his graduation he taught art at Tulsa Central High School and the Philbrook Art Center, Tulsa. In 1952 he became the director of the Kalamazoo Art Center, (Michigan) and taught extension courses for the University of Michigan.

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