

The Texas AGGIE

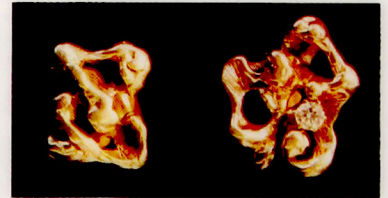
March 1980





"Frogleg Mirror"
Mixed Media, 16" x 8" x 3"

"Wedding Rings"
Gold with diamond



"Marsh Coon"
Watercolor, 12" x 16"

**Flaming Arrows
To Sensitive Works Of Art
In 10 Years**

**Art,
Wildlife and
Max Greiner Jr. '74**

By Jon Brooke '74

It was football season at Texas A&M University in 1970, and the campus was buzzing with spirit. It was traditional, then, for the dormitories to compete with each other in the production of a large canvas "spirit sign" which would hang outside on the brick wall of the four story dormitory. Our neighboring dorm made a sign that, in addition to

spirit, contained a phrase that implied that their spirit was better than our dormitory's spirit. Well, late that night I was studying near a window and a streak of light sailing through the sky caught my eye. I looked out the window in time to see a group of fellows running into my building's entrance with one individual clutching a bow. I then looked up at our rival's spirit sign to see it begin to flame, initiated by a single flaming arrow dan-

gling from its center. I recall saying to myself, "Now who would be crazy enough to do such a thing?" I left my room and followed the laughter of the entire dorm to the floor below mine. I walked into the open door of a room where four or five guys hung out of the window cheering on the blazing sign. There was no doubt in my mind that whoever lived in that room was responsible for the fiery attraction. On the wall

"Mountain Muleys"
Mule deer sculpture
Bronze, 18" x 14" x 10", 34 lbs.
Limited Edition of 24



"Autumn" Oil, 24" x 30"



"Gusher" Oil, 36" x 36"

hung two or three bows and a couple of quivers of arrows and a tusky, shoulder-mounted wild boar. In the corner of the room was a trash can from which peered the cape of a whitetail deer soaking in some sort of liquid. Strewn about the room were lanterns, backpacks, tents, and hiking boots. A partially finished abstract painting and a cardboard model of a building were on the desk. A small-framed, wirey figure turned from the window with the most guilty look you could imagine. He smiled, with a smile so big that, with a few more teeth, he could have run for President. "Howdy, I'm Max Greiner, Jr.!"

Today, at age 28, Max Greiner, Jr. and his wife Sherry live deep amongst the tall East Texas pines, five miles from the small town of Woodville. From a studio adjacent to their country home, Max creates art and spends many hours voluntarily working for conservation; activities which reflect the devotion of his life to the betterment and beauty of wildlife.

These days, Max is concentrating his efforts on oil painting and bronze sculpture.

Each year he plans to produce only one new wildlife bronze sculpture in a limited edition of twenty-four castings, to insure top quality and optimum collector value. Max devotes the time and skill to produce wildlife sculpture of workmanship and quality comparable to the best in the country. The controlled detail, gesture and anatomy are so precise that every rippling muscle and superficial vein are as natural as in the animals themselves. Thus far Max has completed two limited edition bronze treasures. His first, called "Autumn Fever," is a pair of whitetail deer in a pre-rutting display posture witnessed by only a few of the most observant hunters. The "California Tule" bull elk was his second creation, and it displays the

This article by Jon Brooke '74, D.V.M., a practicing veterinarian at Windsor Park Animal Hospital in Corpus Christi, appears here by permission of Outdoor Worlds of Texas, publisher of *Texas Hunters Directory*. It first appeared in the '79-'80 issue of that publication.

elegance and majesty typical of the breed. This special edition was originally created to raise funds for this endangered species. By limiting the quantity of each sculpture, they have already become collectors' items. Soon every wildlife art collector and critic will know the name of Max Greiner, Jr. and his first bronze sculptures will take their place among America's better representations of North American wildlife.

A similar quality of perfection exists in Max's paintings. This very talented, young artist is capable of almost any painting technique and medium. His photographic realism possesses such clarity and three-dimensional precision you can feel as if you were part of the scene. His more creative impressionistic realism paintings are a favorite of mine. They capture the real beauty and mood of the forest and the animal. The uniqueness and credibility of Max's wildlife art is a direct result of his personal contact and specific knowledge of special characteristics of wildlife and the environment. Much of this knowledge was achieved



"Autumn Fever"
Whitetail deer sculpture
Bronze, 22" x 12" x 9", 17 lbs.
Limited Edition of 24

firsthand in the field, as we bow-hunted together on a Colorado mountain or canoed on peaceful and treacherous rivers such as the Rio Grande. Max often refers to the stiff lifeless "plastic" look given to most wildlife painted today. He is also disturbed by fantasy settings and fantasy animal characteristics. Max strives to give motion and life to his works by the controlled use of light, detail, and color. He is capable of achieving such characteristics in oil, acrylic, watercolor, charcoal, ink and bronze.

The creative versatility of Max is also expressed in his custom jewelry, close-up photography of wildlife, and in his creative writings about wildlife, hunting and conservation. One of his early jewelry designs was a massive gold ring in which the base was carved interlocking talons of a hawk and the stone was a taxidermist's bobcat eyeball.

Max grew up in the marshlands of Southeast Texas and as a child, his artistic ability and love for the outdoors developed. This young Eagle Scout spent countless afternoons hunting alligator gar, nutria, and rabbits with his bow and arrow, often sharing his interests with friends, family, and later with Sherry, his high school sweetheart. It was in our freshman year at TAMU, when Max was

majoring in Environmental Design and I in Wildlife Management, that we first met and later decided to become roommates. In achieving his bachelors degree in Environmental Design (Architecture), Max took many art design courses where he perfected his technique and developed his creative philosophy. While others spent elective credits taking extra structural engineering courses, Max tried to cram in more art and wildlife management electives. However, no one could say he burnt the midnight oil studying even though he maintained good grades. In fact, it was not uncommon to go into our room at 2:00 a.m. and find him fleshing out a deer hide or sharpening arrow heads to prepare for an upcoming bow hunt. It was Max that first interested me in archery and bowhunting. Max and I have escorted each other on countless canoe trips, camping and backpack excursions, bow hunting expeditions, and other wilderness endeavors. I recall one "survival" bowhunting weekend where we went camping with no food and ate only what we could harvest with our bow and arrow. I kept trying to con him into trading me some of his rattlesnake for a hindquarter of armadillo!

After college graduation in 1974, Max

and I went our separate ways but were never out of contact. I went on to Veterinary School at Texas A&M and Max took a job with a prominent architectural firm in Dallas (the Architects' Partnership, headed by Reagan W. George '58). Here his creativity was expressed in innovative architecture where he tried to incorporate and coordinate the natural environment into his designs. During this period of time, he married Sherry and spent a blissful honeymoon backpacking into Colorado wilderness bowhunting for elk. In 1976, he accepted a lucrative job in which he could combine his love for wildlife and archery with his artistic talent. The job was with the Jennings Compound Bow Organization in Los Angeles, California. While with Jennings, he produced the finest series of archery catalogues any company has ever issued. When Max was promoted to Director of Advertising and Promotion, he donated the proceeds from the sale of a series of eight big game prints, taken from his watercolor paintings, to the National Bowhunter Defense Fund. A combined love for wildlife art and a yearning to get back to Texas, prompted him to leave the L.A. rat-race and head back to the home of the armadillo. From that spring of 1978 to the present, Max and

Sherry have been in East Texas with the squirrels and deer as their nearest neighbors and where the closest thing in town to a steak comes chicken fried!

You'd think that a struggling young artist would spend twelve hours a day in his studio turning out creations to grace the homes and businesses of art lovers everywhere. However, as long as I have known Max, he has been an archer and a hunter. As a result, Max is very conscious of the hardships that face our wildlife population and the attacks of anti-hunting groups to abolish the sport. Max has always been a leader in the wildlife conservation effort. He quickly ascended the executive board of our college archery club, the Brazos Bowmen, to become the club's president in the 1973-74 year. After his tenure in 1974, Max took on the task of serving as the Bowhunting Vice-president of the Texas Field Archery Association. Later Max and several other dedicated Texas bowhunters formed the Lone Star Bowhunters Association of Texas and he served as its first Vice-president. Max is a concerned hunter and much opposed to anti-hunter emotionalistic tactics. He believes that in the long run the only way to save our sport is to educate the public

about scientific wildlife management. He also believes that education begins with cleaning up our own ranks. It was for this reason that he accepted the voluntary position as the Texas chairman for the National Bowhunter Education Program in 1974. It is through this program that Max initiated the bowhunter education courses now taught throughout the state. When he made his move to California, Max's conservation efforts snowballed even more. He was appointed by the National Field Archery Association as the Public Relations Chairman for the Bowhunting and Conservation Division. Later he also became the chairman of the American Wildlife Education Foundation, a group dedicated to educating young people about wildlife management. With the help of a team of outstanding professional wildlife biologists and educators, Max produced a beautiful set of wildlife education posters that contain easily understood facts about conservation. Today, the poster sets are being distributed in schools and youth groups across the nation. For the prominent positions and the hard work that goes into these jobs, Max receives no compensation other than the satisfaction of knowing he is fighting for wildlife and

the sport he loves.

On his return to Texas, Max was re-elected to the board of the Lone Star Bowhunters Association and now spreads his conservation efforts and hunting tips throughout the state and in many articles published in national archery and sporting magazines. All who know Max can testify that his sincere interest in wildlife extends far beyond his canvas and bronze. Of the many hunters and artists whom I have personally known, I have never met another Max Greiner, Jr. In addition, he has taken the deliberate steps to insure the finest quality in his art work, with the optimum investment gain for the art collector. Every stroke of the brush or carve of the knife reflects a portion of his life. It is very difficult to convey the dedication of this man without actually meeting Max and seeing his art and witnessing his enthusiasm for hunting and conservation.

Wildlife art is not a whim or popularity demand for him. Max Greiner, Jr. will be creating wildlife art and promoting wildlife conservation the rest of his life because it *is* his life.

Max: More Than Meets The Eye

In reading Jon Brooke's article, one comes to know Max Greiner Jr. as a complex, talented individual with a deep-seated love of wildlife. However, Max Greiner Jr.'s interests and talents go even beyond Jon's articulate description.

He moves comfortably between the disciplines of architecture, painting, sculpture, jewelry design, photography, advertising and writing. In each area, Max proceeds from conservative design solutions to interpretations that are imaginative and, often, unusual. He uses traditional methods to achieve the financial freedom to explore new creative avenues, without an over-riding concern for commercial success. This freedom is important to him.

It was during the early 1970s, when Max was earning one of the first Bachelor of Environmental Design degrees awarded at A&M, that he experienced an "intellectual awakening" and explored new channels of creative expression. During that period, he created a new, different, and most unusual art form he dubbed "Kitsch-Surrealism." This outlandish art form combines such familiar items as plastic wood, styrofoam brick, fake flowers and imitation jewelry

(kitsch) with contrasting materials in an irrational, noncontextual (surrealistic) arrangement. These concoctions poke fun at the Kitsch in our society. His "Frog Leg Mirror" shown with Jon's article is an example of this art. He mounted two very real bullfrog legs to a cheaply antiqued plastic hand mirror surrounded with fake jewels and backed with coarse raccoon fur. This effort rivals his "Coon Leg Jewelry Box" which uses real raccoon legs.

Kitsch-Surrealism is only one facet of Max's art. He ranges through Realism, Impressionistic Realism, Pop Art and Abstract Expressionism. His representational subject matter is varied, but primarily consists of landscapes, people and wildlife. While he utilizes almost every media available, he is presently concentrating on oil painting, bronze sculpture, and jewelry in gold and silver.

Max credits A&M's Environmental Design program with opening doors "to me that I did not realize existed. The built-in flexibility of the A&M architecture program gave me the opportunity to explore and grow as a total creative person, rather than forcing me in a narrow, predetermined 'slot' . . . I learned at A&M

not to automatically assume I could not do something. This realization caused me to explore many creative areas."

This Aggie artist is part of a strong Texas A&M family. Max's father, Max G. Greiner '51, lettered in football four years at Aggieland ('47 thru '50), and was co-captain in 1950, the year he earned All-Southwest Conference at tackle. Max Sr., his wife, and son Mike now live in Irving where he is chairman of the board of Irving Savings Association. Max Jr.'s other brother Mark is a junior majoring in finance at A&M and he has a younger sister.

Articles on Max Greiner Jr. and his art have appeared in national magazines including Bowhunter and Bow & Arrow as well as in The Texas Hunters Hotline magazine.

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