

Artist Name: The Gentle Giant

Thank you for being interested in this PCAP exhibition and for viewing my work.

I am a self taught artist. Before coming to prison, I didn't think I could draw a straight line with a ruler. I was encouraged by a penpal to explore art. I started with portraits, and my first attempt was a miserable failure. Instead of being discouraged, I began doing research and talked with other artists. Armed with this knowledge, I tried again. The likeness was not perfect, but I was thrilled with the result! I kept at it and eventually expanded into landscapes, wildlife, florals, and into colored pencil and paint. Along the way, several artists took me under their wings and gave me invaluable assistance and encouragement. I can never begin to thank them, so I pay forward their kindness by being open to help others. I have facilitated 2 art classes at Saginaw for the past 12 years. Several of my students have appeared in PCAP exhibitions.

Art is my escape from the harsh realities of prison. Time flies by as I am miraculously transported in my mind. I imagine the birds singing and the brook babbling as I draw a landscape. Maybe I could have a chat with the model in the portrait I'm rendering.

For me, the art works its magic as it soothes my nerves and brightens my outlook on life. It keeps me going after almost 32 years behind bars.

I brought a wide spectrum of subject matter and mediums to the selection committee to show that I try to be versatile with my art. However, everything has a unifying theme - to praise the Creator for the beauty that is found in this world. My hope is always for the viewer to be able to acknowledge His goodness as I have tried to portray it through this artwork.