



During the second half of the 19th Century and early in the 20th Century, most American architects were trained in Paris, France under the influence of the Beaux Arts system. At that time the predominant form of architectural visualization was painting and drawing by hand. To be able to sell designs of buildings, architects first had to become masters of drawing and watercolor painting. Visions of buildings they created using drawing and painting by hand were not just technical documents. To a large degree they were works of art communicating the architect's visions and dreams of buildings yet to be born. When you look closely at these drawings you can clearly see that they belong to a different mindset and to sensitivity that is far removed from the modern-day computer-generated building designs.

With the introduction of modern design principles created and influenced by architects from the



Bauhaus School, much of the emphasis on the “old-school” presentation skills began to fade. Fortunately, Cornell University College of Architecture continued to emphasize the importance

of drawing skills, even during the 1950's and 1960's, when Bob Steinmetz studied architecture there.

Bob first pursued an education in architecture because of his interest in drawing. Architecture was a perfect fit that enabled him to develop and utilize this skill, and for almost 30 years of practice as an architect, drawing was his constant companion and main tool in his toolbox. Fittingly, he retired from architecture at the turning point in time when computer-aided-drafting (CAD) began to eliminate the need for drawing by hand. However, Bob continued to draw, only now free to explore his own, personal visions.

To compliment his interest in drawing, he decided to venture into the world of watercolor painting. Over the years he has mastered many of the intricacies of this difficult media by observation and by practice, developing his own methodology for watermedia painting. Although he has never participated in a workshop or art course, the challenge of the "trial and error" process continues to be his primary motivator as an artist.

The quality of his work has earned him "Signature Member" status in America's two most prestigious watercolor societies, the American Watercolor Society (AWS) in New York and the National Watercolor Society (NWS) in California.

The paintings presented at the Charles Street Gallery belong to his **Maritime Series**. Many paintings of nautical subjects focus on the beautiful lines and silhouettes of carefully designed luxury vessels. However, the subjects of Bob Steinmetz's

Maritime Series

are about a totally different category of vessels. His "Marine Machines" exist for commercial or military purposes and are exclusively designed to satisfy functional needs. Very often they are chaotic assemblages of discordant parts based on a need hidden from the uninformed observer. No effort has been made to design visual harmonies, yet interesting rhythms, shapes, and patterns can be found in the apparent randomness presented in these subjects. Bright colors are present - not for decorative purposes - but to identify functional



www.thecharlesstreetgallery.com