



Nancy Jean Shaw

May 10, 1935 - March 13, 2020

Nancy Jean Shaw, of Summerfield, Florida, passed away on March 13, 2020. Nancy was an American art historian and Curator Emerita of American Art at the Detroit Institute of Arts. A well-known expert in late 19th and early 20th century American art, she published extensively and lectured widely in the United States and Japan on the DIA's collection, and on the private collection of American art owned by fellow Detroiter Richard A. Manoogian.

A native of the Midwest, Nancy was born in Saginaw, Michigan and attended Oakland University to receive a BA magna cum laude in 1969. In 1972, she accepted a position as an assistant curator at the DIA. She earned her MA in Art History at Wayne State University in 1973 and was appointed Curator of American Art in 1975, one of the first women to be so named. Nancy co-organized a number of widely acclaimed exhibitions, but she is especially known for her compelling acquisitions, particularly the first one, *Cotopaxi*, painted in 1862, now recognized as one of Frederic Church's finest paintings, and an icon in American art.

In 1998, Nancy retired with her husband to Beaufort, South Carolina, and turned her attention to Southern art. She wrote extensively on such well known painters as Elliott Daingerfield, and more obscure artists, and lectured on the Southern landscape. After moving to Florida in 2004, she wrote and lectured on a variety of art historical subjects, including Eliel Saarinen and The Cranbrook Academy of Art.

In addition to her scholarly pursuits, Nancy judged art exhibitions in Detroit,

Beaufort, and The Villages, and painted abstract landscapes throughout her life. An accomplished actress, she performed with little theater groups in Michigan and Florida. She also liked to sing and performed with St. Timothy's Choir in The Villages and The Celebration Choir at the Church on the Square, and with women's barbershop groups, including The Beaufort Belles in South Carolina and The Belles Chords and Sisters in Harmony in Florida.

She is survived by her husband Danny W. Shaw of The Villages, FL; her brother Richard J. Marcotte of Sioux Falls, SD; her daughter Christine M. Dougherty of New Orleans, LA, and her grandchildren Hazel and Zuzu Dougherty.

Arrangements entrusted to Beyers Funeral Home and Crematory, Lady Lake, FL.

Tribute Wall

LA

“ Dear Dan. We were shocked and saddened at the news of Nancy's passing. Her generosity in sharing her vast knowledge of the art world will never be forgotten by our family. We valued her suggestions each year when we spent time with our Granddaughter Leah at the DIA. Nancy gave Leah updates on Southern American Art, and the history of each piece in the DIA collection. Our Granddaughter is now 20 years old, a college student at the University of Tampa, and she still has a love of art history. She spends time in The Tampa, St. Petersburg, and Sarasota museums. We will miss Nancy's vibrant personality, and her kindness. She had such a positive affect on everyone who knew her. Please know we are thinking of you during this sad time. Take good care.
With Deepest Sympathy,
Lanny and Kathy Austin

Lanny & Kathy Austin - March 22, 2020 at 12:42 PM

DF

“ Dan, We were very sad to hear of Nancy's death, which came as a great shock to us. Although we did not know her extremely well (at least not as well as I know you), we had several interactions with the two of you since moving to Florida and found her to be a brilliant and kind person. I know you will miss her terribly. Please accept our sincere condolences.
Dave and Karen Flanigan

Dave Flanigan - March 20, 2020 at 05:06 PM

SW

“ I was saddened to read Nancy's obituary in the Detroit News today. I had the pleasure of working with Nancy during the renovation of Whitney Hall, a collection of 18th C. rooms located within the American Wing of the Detroit Institute of Arts. Even though an organization I belong to had raised the money for the renovation, Nancy was in charge.. She was very patient with us amateurs who thought we knew a lot about 18th C. decorative arts. She gently corrected our misinformation and was quick with praise when we got things right. Nancy gave me the privilege of reproducing a needlepoint seat cushion an antique chair in the collection. It was an honor for all of us to be able to work with and learn from such a scholar. My memories of Nancy are all fond. I send my deepest sympathy to Nancy's family.

Very sincerely,
Sis Walton (Mrs. Jonathan T.)

Sis Walton - March 19, 2020 at 06:11 PM