

PARADISE VALLEY

CITY LIFE

Star-Studded Sounds of the Season

LUKE BRYAN, MARK MCGRATH, ZACH LIND, ANDY CHILDS

THE HOLIDAY ISSUE

ALSO SERVING ARCADIA BILTMORE
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ARTICLE BY NORMAN KOLPAS
PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED BY TOM GILLEON

American Master of *“Inner Light”*



WITH TIES TO ARIZONA, DISNEY, AND NASA, ARTIST TOM GILLEON'S RADIANT PAINTINGS
CELEBRATE THE LANDSCAPE AND CULTURE OF THE MOUNTAIN WEST



Known for his luminescent colors in authentic portrayals of Native Americans and the American West's iconic landscapes and structures, Tom Gilleon is one of the most revered masters in the Contemporary Western art movement.

"Tom Gilleon breaks the mold, setting a new standard for artists," says Chris Warden, Executive Director of the C.M. Russell Museum in Great Falls, Montana.

Chris Warden, the Executive Director of the C.M. Russell Museum, spoke those words of praise at his museum's grand opening of *Inner Light: The Art of Tom Gilleon*, an epic 90-painting retrospective that began its widely admired public journey earlier this year at Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West.

And speaking of the Desert Southwest, while Tom lives and paints in Montana, he regularly visits Arizona to enjoy his other favorite pastime... golf.

Here's a look at Tom's impressive background and resume- his ever-evolving and downright fascinating career path and passion.

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A BLANK CANVAS IN THE SAND

Such soaring talent had its start in humble, nurturing surroundings.

“I grew up amongst towering pines and a yard made of white sand,” says Tom of his Florida childhood home with no electricity.

Tom was raised by a Scottish-immigrant grandfather and Cherokee grandmother. Often, his granddad would tell him stories by kerosene lamplight, illustrating them before Tom’s eyes with his own illustrations of sailing ships and sea monsters.

His grandma, meanwhile, taught Tom self-sufficiency; how to live off the land and to trust his own abilities and imagination.

“Our sandy yard became my never-ending blank canvas upon which I would draw with a stick,” he says.

Tom recalls getting his first boxed set of crayons recalling their pristine smelling of warm wax.

“Seeing those colors excited me with their potential to express mood and feeling.”

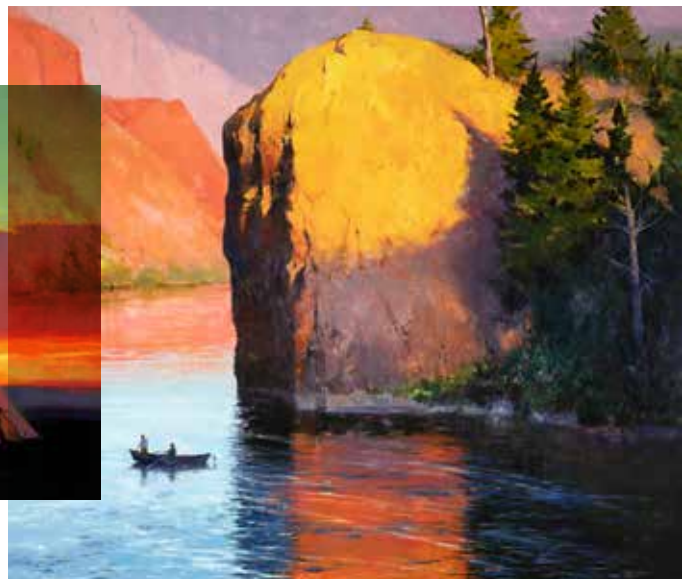
Growing up, Tom also developed other talents, including athleticism.

“In my youth when I wasn’t honing my artistic skills, I would spend hours hurling rocks from a nearby railroad track. My throwing arm became so strong that it helped earn me a baseball scholarship to the University of Florida.”

The academic support, however, also required him to commit to pursuing an architecture degree... but that was not in the cards for Tom.

“Despite my pitching talent, I left college and, much to my family’s dismay, joined the Navy.”

In 1961, while attending the Navy’s Electronics Radio School, Tom was chosen to march in John F. Kennedy’s inaugural parade. Following graduation, he flew on anti-submarine patrols in the North Atlantic, and in 1962, he served aboard the *USS Rankin*, a naval attack cargo ship. As a cryptographer, he was privy to highly classified information.



FROM NASA TO DISNEY

Those experiences helped Tom transfer back into the civilian working world.

“I was eventually hired as a communications specialist by Pan American World Airlines, a defense contractor involved in America’s move toward space. Eventually, Pan Am’s art department discovered my artistic talents, and they reassigned me to illustrate for NASA’s Saturn and Apollo space programs.”

Soon, Tom’s knack for bringing imagined worlds to life drew the attention of another organization: the Walt Disney Company. Assignments to help illustrate the company’s visions for EPCOT led to full-time work with Walt Disney Imagineering, first in Florida, and then at company headquarters in Burbank, California.

“PURE EMOTION THROUGH COLOR”

As a Walt Disney Imagineer for 25 years, Tom worked alongside Disney art legend Herb Ryman and dozens of other world-class artists inventing concepts for EPCOT and Disneyland theme parks in Paris, Tokyo, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.

“Disney illustrators paint in pure emotion through color. Working alongside legendary artists provided me with the best education.”

And the Walt Disney Company, in turn, benefitted immensely from Tom’s exceptional talents.

“Tom had the genius to encapsulate in one image the entirety of an imagined world,” says Bob Weis, former President of Walt Disney Imagineering, in an essay he shares in the exhibition catalog for *Inner Light*.

Not surprisingly, the Walt Disney Company generously loaned 12 original Gilleon oil paintings for the artist’s retrospective show.

In 1982, Tom went on a painting retreat in Montana, a trip that changed his heart, soul and life forever.

“I had never been to Montana and fell in love immediately.”

During that week, he put a deposit on a piece of land overlooking the Dearborn River where he built his first home and studio. Not long after, though he continued to do assignments for Disney, Tom moved to Montana and began his transition into a career as a fine artist.

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PDS
PHOENIX PLASTIC SURGERY
RONI PRUCZ MD



Dr. Roni Prucz is a Board-Certified Plastic Surgeon, Phoenix Top Doctor, Paradise Valley City Lifestyle Top Physician, Best of Scottsdale Top Doc, and the #1 rated Plastic Surgeon in Phoenix! He is a fourth-generation engineer with a background in mathematics and computer science - fields that demand precision and accuracy. Combining these disciplines with the artistry of a Plastic Surgeon allows him to create natural results that have earned him thousands of 5-star reviews. With prestigious degrees and training from Duke University, Johns Hopkins Medicine, and the University of Washington, Dr. Prucz is one of the best trained and most respected surgeons in the Valley.

THE RISE OF PLASTIC SURGERY HOLIDAY GIFTS

When it comes to holiday gifting, choose a more personal gift than the latest tech or winter wear. Plastic surgery and cosmetic treatments have made their way to the top of holiday wishlists, with more people treating themselves—or a loved one—to a refreshed look just in time for the new year.

Why The Holidays?

Time off from work and winter breaks offer the perfect recovery window for surgeries like facelifts, eyelid surgery, or mommy makeovers. These procedures often require only a few days to weeks of downtime, making the year-end break the perfect time for some “self care”. Plus, family visits often provide extra support during your recovery.

Whether you’re looking for a dramatic transformation or a quick pick-me-up, there are plenty of options. A facelift smooths wrinkles and skin sagging to give you a fresh and youthful look. Eyelid surgery restores a bright, rested appearance by eliminating puffiness and drooping eyelids. And finally, the “mommy makeover,” combines breast and body procedures to help moms reclaim their pre-baby figure.

While major surgeries may be on some wish lists, not everyone is looking for a big transformation. For those seeking minimal downtime, Botox and dermal fillers provide renewed confidence that’s hard to beat as a holiday gift.

Whether you’re considering giving the gift of a procedure or booking one for yourself, consult early with a board-certified Plastic Surgeon. At Phoenix Plastic Surgery, we are in the holiday spirit so mention this article when you call. While beauty gifts might not be traditional, they can be a wonderfully personal present, and what better time than the holidays to invest in feeling good.

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CELEBRATING NATIVE CULTURE

Living amidst a landscape steeped in Native culture, and keenly aware of his own heritage passed down through his grandmother, Tom naturally gravitated towards American Indian subjects.

“One day I decided to do a painting of a tipi I’d erected outside. I remember thinking it might be a waste of canvas and paint, but it sold immediately, and my gallery wanted more.”

Tom’s tipi paintings have become a defining aspect of his fine art career. He also began creating large-scale portraits of revered Native American leaders from the past. Such paintings have been sought out by private collectors and added to the collections of top museums nationwide, as well as those of NASA, the United States Air Force, The Walt Disney Company, Universal Studios, and Warner Bros. Studios.

And he keeps achieving new milestones.

Tom’s 72 x 60-inch oil painting *Mourning Star*, for example, sold for \$350,000 in 2021. In addition, his 50 x 80-inch oil painting *Dirge with Black Feet* sold for \$375,000 at The Autry Museum’s 25th Annual Masters of the American West exceeding previous records.

“WHAT WOULD REMBRANDT DO?”

When it comes to such soaring visions, nothing quite compares to Tom’s latest innovative explorations in digital art.

One highlight of the *Inner Light* exhibition is the world debut of *Spirit Catcher*, Tom’s stunning 22-minute triptych digital painting inspired in part by the ethnographic photographs of Native Americans.

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In fact, Tom was recently honored to participate in the first art exhibit on the Moon by the Lunar Museum of Art (“LUMA”), which created the first NFT in space on the International Space Station. Twelve digital images of Gilleon’s art have been stored on a server delivered to the surface of the Moon on a SpaceX rocket.

“LUMA is the anchor art museum in a cultural arts center experienced on the Moon in virtual reality,” says Tom. “Celebrating Earth’s emerging spacefaring civilization, I am a proud founding member of LUMA’s ‘First Artists.’”

WELCOMING TOM GILLEON’S ART INTO YOUR OWN HOME

Through his exclusive representatives at the KingArts agency, Tom Gilleon’s work is expanding availability to a wider audience. Ideal for holiday gifting, people can now purchase signed limited-edition prints on canvas, Gilleon jigsaw puzzles and tipi greeting cards.

tomgilleon.art



“Our sandy yard became my never-ending blank canvas upon which I would draw with a stick.”



Happy holidays, neighbor!

My team and I want to extend our warmest wishes to you and yours for a joyous and peaceful holiday season.



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