

“Greatest Show on Earth”

Susan Quinlan Doll & Teddy Bear Museum & Library

An introduction through the eyes of Vikki Ebbeling

“WELCOME TO”....

“The GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH”....

This wonderful Museum and show ...is orchestrated... within the beautiful walls that protect the “pure evidence” ...

that true Art...

is IMMORTAL.

There cannot be a finer COLLECTION OF ART on Earth...than at the Susan Quinlan Doll & Teddy Bear Museum & Library.

You will find the embodied hearts and souls ... of Artists from around the world and from generations of time in these creations.

Each Art piece is so perfectly displayed ...protected and preserved ... to bring joy to viewers who appreciate the existence of the magic of imagination.

It is displayed uniquely... with the highest regards toward the artists’ work.

The creations portray an array of depths on personal levels which truly fascinate all viewers.

We can never possess the gift of Art... for it is Art... that possesses US!!!

The sheer sight of it....

It beckons us... and lures us to places where dreams are made.

How can we not be seduced by the obvious magic of it?!

Tap into the depths of it once.....and you will never be the same again.

The passion grows as we discover more and more about who we really are in relation to the Artists who created it.

No secret is held... all must be revealed.... as we submit our souls to it.

It has always been and always will be.

It is explosive in its finality ...and...we are able to relate and express the “infinity” through every breath of it.

Art ...is a gift of pureness that we allow ourselves to tap into!

When we let go... of who we want to be...we can embrace the nature of who we really are.

Art... can never die... it is eternal.

But...if there were not one human left in the world to convey or receive its meaning....then art would have no value at all.

Let's meet Susan Quinlan

It is always a pleasure to get to know people who have set their lives to beautiful extremes. Susan Quinlan we can see clearly in your own words ... the baring of your heart and soul towards the Love and respect of Art and Artists.

You radiate excitement ... and dare to share your most heartfelt words and experiences with us. We are honored to get to know the person you are, based on your answers to some of the questions we thought our readers would like to know about you.

Life, Art & Music

"My whole life has been influenced by my feelings about both art and music. I was introduced to both when very young. My father taught Saturday classes at the Cleveland Museum of Art, so I was enrolled in classes even before I was five years old. When my class was over, I was free to roam the museum while waiting for my parents (my mother and sister were also in classes). I would often walk through the galleries, becoming familiar with paintings of all different periods and types. I also began music lessons at the age of four or five, both instrumental and theory. I have always thought that the art was a visual joy. This idea was reinforced by mother who made quilts. I was always noticing the colors and textures she used, and in later life I made my friends crazy when we shopped. They looked for styles, but I was always pulling out two or three items and asking them to look at the colors together.

To me my music was an auditory joy. I didn't get my father's ability to draw (my sister got that), but I was able to play in orchestras and sing in choruses. I loved music, but most of all I loved helping to create it and to be in the middle of the orchestra or chorus. I stopped playing the violin after high school, but continued singing as long as I could.

Education is also a primary value in my life. Not only for myself but for educational possibilities that help others. This is why we decided to do a convention instead of just a doll show – we felt that if collectors could see what is involved in the process of making artist dolls and teddy bears, they would appreciate them even more. Over my own career I have taken what seemed to be peripheral classes, such as book-binding and archives training, but found that all of these became both relevant and helpful when I was finally able to begin the museum and library.."

Collecting, Library, Museum Journey

"When I started collecting, I did not have any idea of starting a museum. I began rather slowly, and began to discover what areas were important to me. I actually started my library first, as the result of four Little Golden Books by Eloise Wilkins that I won at a doll show raffle. At the time I was a university librarian, and it seemed to be a logical step to collect doll and teddy bear books to support my new area of interest. At the time I didn't think that there would be all that many books, and I would soon have a complete collection.

Today I am still collecting, and am approaching 13,000 titles (I added dollhouse books and puppets to

Creative Career Change

be part of the collection). Then about ten years after I started collecting dolls, I began to run out of space to display them at home. That was when Terry suggested that I start a museum, and we began to look for a location. We didn't find any place in the San Francisco Bay Area that we liked, so we looked in Santa Barbara. I had grown up in Santa Barbara, and always wanted to move back there. When we found a location, I took early retirement from San Francisco State University and we began to set up the museum. Luckily Terry can work anywhere, so he was willing to move south. Also Terry and I had always thought that we did not want to retire – we wanted to make creative career changes instead. We have both been so much happier and intend to continue working as long as we are enjoying it.”



Dreams do come true

“My first professional concert was with the Cleveland Orchestra in Severance Hall in the premier of a work called “The Children’s Crusade” when I was nine years old. In high school I was part of a chorus that sang under the direction of Leopold Stokowski. And in high school my orchestra director was Henry Brubeck, brother of jazz musician Dave Brubeck. So I was always excited when I got to work with other well-known directors. I was lucky enough to work with Norman Leydon, Carmen Dragon (Father of the Captain of Captain and Tenille), Mitch Miller, and my very favorite of all, Erich Kunzel. I was also able to perform in additional premiers, including the Liverpool Oratorio by Paul McCartney.

I grew up in Santa Barbara, moved to Los Angeles for school and work, and then to San Francisco when I got married. But my heart remained in Santa Barbara, so I was happy that Terry was willing to move back here after I took early retirement, and he was willing to find a place here for the museum. The city has changed a lot, but I still love it.

I was raised to respect and admire artists and musicians. I loved their talents and their ability to be creative. I never thought that I would actually know people like this, but rather would just admire them from afar. But in the doll and teddy bear world I have had the chance to become acquainted with artists, and it has been a wonderful experience. And a doll or teddy bear means so much more to me when I can also relate it to the person who made it. This is one reason why I prefer artist dolls and bears over antiques. The older ones are beautiful, but I don’t have the added relationship of knowing who made it. And often this can give the piece an added dimension. One piece I really enjoyed seeing (but it had already been sold) was one that Ankie Daanen made out of a piece of beadwork that I sold to her. It was amazing to me to see what she had been able to do with that beadwork on the doll.

I felt through much of my life that the rest of the family had all of the creative artistic talent, and I was there to enjoy what others had done. But when I put the museum together, I was in charge of the

Excitement of changing art

displays. From the reactions of the people who have visited, I now think that my artistic talent lies in the area of display, something I had never really tried before. But visitors to the museum have said many nice things about the cases.

So many of my dreams have already come true, that I have very simple dreams for the future. I simply hope that I can help to keep up interest in dolls and teddy bears, and that people will continue to find the museum both fun and relevant.”

Does art change over the years?

“Of course it has changed. That is what makes it exciting and relevant. Not everyone likes the same thing, and art provides a wide selection of options for people to enjoy. Think if we had never progressed past the Renaissance or the Baroque – we would probably still have beautiful art works, but they would perhaps have become very boring. And I don’t think that they would fit our life styles as well. And think of all of the more recent art we would be missing – impressionism, pointillism, modern art, and so on. I have always loved Maxfield Parrish, but if things had not changed, he would either have been making standard artwork or not doing art at all.

There is also the fact that new materials have been developed that have allowed doll artists to do so many new things. I am constantly amazed at what they are able to accomplish. I think the fact that I know I cannot do what they do makes me appreciate their creations even more. I made one teddy bear, and I kept it to remind myself never to make another. Also cloth dolls have always been one of my favorites. I tried to make one of the dolls I loved as a child from a pattern, and almost got it done. But plackets were my downfall. I am not a sewer. So thank heaven for the inspired and creative people who can do these wonderful works of art, for that is exactly what they are.”

What would you like people to know most about you?

“I love beautiful things, I love creativity and imagination. And I am happy when I can help those who can demonstrate artistic abilities and who create beautiful things. And I love introducing these works to people who come to the museum and make them aware that artist dolls exist.”

Thank you Susan and Terrence Quinlan... for all you have done for the World of Art!

You have made a lifelong mark... that is very appreciated by Worldwide Artists... and by Viewers who love to see the great displays you have created.

You are forever Loved !!!

Written by Vikki Ebbeling

PDMAG Lifetime Achievement Award



At the 2019 Quinlan Artist Doll & Teddy Bear Convention, the Professional Doll Makers Art Guild surprised Susan Quinlan (and Terry too) - with its first- ever— Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Lifetime Achievement represents... a lifetime of heartfelt devotion...to the deepest dreams and achievements...and the commitments to the desires brought forth by the human soul.

The Award defines and depicts the spirit of who a person really is.

It is given as a permanent position ... as a profound statement of excellence..made in this world by an extraordinary person or people...towards the good of mankind.

Susan and Terence Quinlan... you have fit the perfect description of the "Lifetime Achievement Award"...given by the "Professional Doll Makers Art Guild".

We Congratulate you both for your extraordinary work in the Art world and for your devotion towards Artists around the world. Your support and attention to details and needs ..have touched the hearts of many people.

You have both made this Art World a better place.

We Thank You Sincerely