



Carousel Memories

THE PAINTINGS OF ELLEN SINCLAIR

The hand-carved wooden Bushnell Park Carousel was built in 1914 by Solomon Stein and Harry Goldstein and their Artistic Carousel Company. Although it was one of 6,000 made during the golden age of carousels (1900 to 1925), there are only three Stein and Goldstein carousels still in operation. The carousel was brought to Hartford in 1974 by the Knox Foundation's then director, Jack Dollard, a well-known and respected architect.

The carousel's former home was Meyer's Lake Park, a popular amusement park in Canton, Ohio, owned by Carl Sinclair. Carl's children, George and Ellen, grew up at the edge of the park and frequently rode the carousel, which they called the Merry-Go-Round.

Years later, Ellen vividly recalled those times.

"There was only one horse I would ride, a magnificent jumper with red roses carved into his mane. This horse I considered to be mine. George

also had a favorite horse, a black Indian pony with white and yellow feathers carved into his mane and a lasso looped over the saddle.

"The Merry-Go-Round always held the same magic for me, with its rows of gracefully pitching horses, its stirring music, its whirling lights... and the mirrors where I could catch glimpses of myself flashing by on my horse. George must have felt the same magic, too. I would see him ahead of me, crouched behind his pony's neck, firing his gun at the attacking Indians – or maybe at the attacking soldiers. I was never quite sure on which side he fought!

"Years later, the Merry-Go-Round became the 'Carousel' of my first oil paintings. I had been inspired to paint because I wanted to capture the wonder and magic that those prancing horses held for me. Then, after the Merry-Go-Round was sold to Bushnell Park, I again painted it, this time in pastel. As I worked in my studio, I was again surrounded by gypsy women, the music,

an Indian pony, and a magnificent jumper who would take me anywhere I dreamed to go.”

This collection of Ellen’s paintings, originally consisting of 20 pastels of the ponies of the Meyers Lake Carousel, was exhibited at the Canton Art Institute in 1987 in a memorial tribute to her late brother George C. Sinclair.

The Bushnell Park Foundation is extremely grateful to Ellen Sinclair Junger’s family for their thoughtful gift of these paintings to us and the City of Hartford. Our thanks also go out to the Hartford Public Library for hosting this exhibit.



About the Artist

ELLEN SINCLAIR JUNGER 1929 – 2021

Ellen Sinclair Junger was born in 1929 in Canton, Ohio. She grew up on the edge of Meyers Lake Park, where her father owned a successful amusement park. From an early age, Ellen was determined to be a painter. At the age of 18, she moved to Boston to study painting at Endicott College after which she began working with Expressionist painter Hyman Bloom. Ellen married physicist Miguel Junger in 1960, and in that same decade they became parents of a son, Sebastian, and a daughter, Carlotta.

Ellen had to give up painting in her later years, when dementia became a factor. In 2019, at age 90, she visited Bushnell Park to ride the Carousel of her childhood. She immediately recognized her favorite horse and climbed on. As the music and the ride started up, tears streamed down her face.

Ellen produced a large body of landscape and figurative work that shows her expressionistic sense of color and light. Her connection to nature and her love of the outdoors were constants in her life and greatly influenced her work, but she frequently returned to the imagery of carousel horses in her artwork. That carousel (originally at her father’s amusement park, now owned by the City of Hartford and maintained in Bushnell Park) had a huge and lasting influence on her life.

Ellen Sinclair Junger died on December 25, 2021, at the age of 92.

