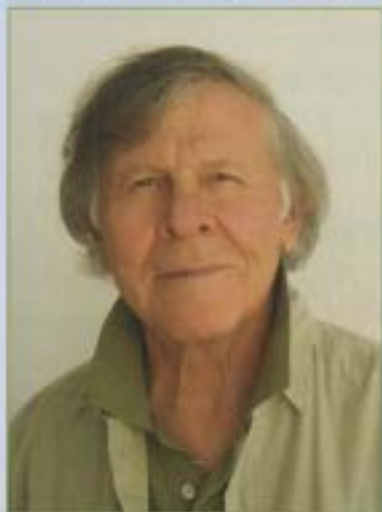


ABOUT THE ARTIST



Augusto Argandoña

A well-known artist with a reputation for crisp, realistic watercolors, Augusto Argandoña holds a degree from California State University in Industrial Design, a profession he practiced for 20 years. While working as a designer, he started painting watercolors as a hobby. The positive response his work received fueled his enthusiasm and, in 1990, he launched his full-time painting career, working primarily in watercolors.

Capturing the essence of the Gulf Coast lifestyle, Augusto's originals and prints are showcased in Florida galleries and gift stores from Anna Maria Island to Boca Grande. He has strong ties to the Venice community, established initially by participating in the outdoor shows on Venice Avenue and other venues. He shares, "My connections quickly expanded through my association with Collectors Gallery & Framery, which represents my art in Venice, and Venice Art Center (VAC). Today, my original paintings and prints are part of many Venice area residents' collections, and my art is also in some of my clients' northern and European homes."

Currently an instructor at VAC, Augusto has taught classes and workshops in watercolor painting at the Longboat Key Center for the Arts, Visual Arts Center in Punta Gorda, the former Hilton Leech School of Art in Sarasota, and New York's Niagara Frontier Watercolor-Society, West Seneca Art Society, and East Aurora Art Society. As Augusto shares, "For me, all of this was once a dream...now I am living my dream."

For more information about the artist, log on to AAFineArts.com or email argandonaart@yahoo.com.



In recognition of the city's 90th anniversary, artist Augusto Argandoña familiarized himself with photographs depicting historic landmarks from the early days of Venice and the surrounding areas. He then reinterpreted them, bringing these images to life through brilliant watercolors that deepen our appreciation of their beauty.



VENICE ICE COMPANY

Take in what would have been a familiar, comforting sight for early Venice residents: a delivery truck from the Venice Ice Company, pictured in front of the ice house. As the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers developed the city during the 1920s, the Venice Ice Company operated next to the railroad tracks in Nokomis. Since homes and businesses did not have electric refrigeration at that time, people depended upon daily deliveries of cakes of ice to keep the food in their iceboxes cold. At its peak, the Venice Ice Company produced 20 tons of ice a day to serve the southern part of the county.

VENICE DEPOT

Stop into the city's train terminal, a place that filled an important role in the community from its debut in 1927 until passenger service ceased in 1971. During its decades of use, the depot served individuals and groups including Kentucky Military Institute students, faculty, and staff; the U.S. Army; and the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. Acquired by the county in 1998, the Historic Venice Train Depot is currently a museum, preserving a valuable part of the city's past.



KENTUCKY MILITARY INSTITUTE

Step back in time to appreciate a memorable scene from Venice's past, as students and faculty from the Kentucky Military Institute (KMI) are shown in uniform. Beginning in 1932, KMI made Venice its winter home, with over 300 students and the school's faculty and support staff arriving in the area every January. Although the school closed its doors in the 1970s, KMI has continued to be a vital presence in the community and its alumni have worked hard to ensure that the legacy endures.



FLY BACK IN TIME

Recalling the days during World War II when the U.S. Army had a base in Venice, this image features a trio of P-51s that are maneuvering to make their approach to the base. In showcasing the space that would become today's Venice Avenue and Centennial Park—parts of the current downtown area very familiar with residents and visitors—the image offers a fascinating glimpse at the past. By reflecting on how much has changed, it also serves as a contrast, revealing how much the city has continued to flourish.



HOTEL VENICE

Revisit the heyday of Hotel Venice, the first building constructed by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers in Venice during the late 1920s. Among its many highlights, it became a winter school for the cadets and faculty of Kentucky Military Institute, then was established as a retirement residence, a purpose it still serves today. Given its history as the earliest building, the Hotel Venice was the first building in the City of Venice to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

VENICE BEACH

Celebrating the local beaches that have attracted residents and visitors to Venice for over one hundred years, this image provides a glimpse into how beachgoers may have looked in the early 1900s. Such an important focal point of the community, John Nolen's city plan of 1926 featured Venice Avenue terminating at a beachfront park, preserving the dune system; however, at that time, all the city-front beach property was privately owned. Through the efforts of individuals such as Finn Caspersen beginning in the late 1930s, Venice Beach became a public park in 1978 and has been a community treasure for nearly 40 years.

The name to know on the ISLAND of VENICE



Helen Moore
REALTOR, 1993

941.724.2030

HelenMoore@michaelsaunders.com
HelenMoore@michaelsaunders.com

Michael Saunders & Company

110 Nokomis Ave. N | Venice, FL 34285

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A. ARGANDOÑA
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