

Ox-Bow and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago

In 1910, in search of a respite from the urban and industrial havoc of Chicago, Frederick Fursman and Walter Marshall Clute, two faculty members from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), founded the Summer School of Painting at Ox-Bow. Fursman and Clute's vision was to create a respite where faculty and students from SAIC could immerse themselves completely in artmaking, surrounded by a supportive community of artists and an inspired landscape of natural dunes, woods, and water.

Over the past 100 years of operation, Ox-Bow has changed in many ways but two things have remained constant—Ox-Bow's mission to remain a haven for artists and its fellowship with SAIC. In 1995 Ox-Bow and SAIC formalized a sponsorship agreement that affirmed the synergy created in this unique relationship. Today, the relationship between Ox-Bow and SAIC, forged by Fursman and Clute remains strong. This mutual commitment to preserving and nurturing the artistic process has benefited generations of experienced and aspiring artists.

As Ox-Bow prepares to celebrate its Centennial, we are excited to share our history and future with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

FEATURED
COVER ARTIST

Elizabeth
Rupprecht

It's not a stretch to say that Betsy Rupprecht was born and raised at Ox-Bow.

In fact her parents, Edgar Arthur Rupprecht and Isobel Steele MacKinnon, were successful Chicago artists who met at Ox-Bow in 1920. The Rupprechts were one of its founding families in the early part of the last century. They returned to teach and live each summer throughout Betsy's life. Betsy has continued a great family legacy as a talented and dedicated studio artist with a love for Ox-Bow. She is a member of the Auxiliary Board, was the Director of Ox-Bow for many years and is celebrating her 50th year as a faculty member at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Betsy received her BFA from SAIC in 1954 and her MFA in 1965. She has filled virtually every role at Ox-Bow, from chamber maid and dish washer to a member of the Board of Directors and Director of the school. In 1972 she gave up her shares of stock to facilitate the school's becoming not for profit. She is often called upon to share stories and information about the illustrious history of her beloved school of art and artists' residency and we couldn't be more pleased to have her work usher Ox-Bow into its second century. We invited Betsy to reflect on her time at Ox-Bow, and what it has meant to her, her family, and their almost century long affiliation with Ox-Bow:

As a child and young adult, Ox-Bow immersed me in its creative influence; as an adult, this wonderful environment was the setting for friendships that have lasted for years and experiences that have matured my work. And this is what was intended from the very beginning for all who came to Ox-Bow. Fursman, Tallmadge, and my father, Edgar Rupprecht, (the original stockholders of Ox-Bow), had a vision for a nurturing place that opened up minds to artistic possibilities. After 100 years, that vision persists today, enriched by Ox-Bow's collaboration with the School of the Art Institute, inspiring new generations of artists. My parents would be proud of today's Ox-Bow, I know I am.

PHOTO CREDITS: Kate Clark, Joel Dean, Liz Nurenberg, and Shanna Shearer. Ox-Bow archives including images from Ellen Lanyon, Barb Houlberg, and Elsa Ulbricht