

THE
GENTLINGS



A RETROSPECTIVE

The Art of Scott and Stuart Gentling

by Edmund P. Pillsbury, Ph.D.

Chairman of Fine Arts, Heritage Auctions

Director Emeritus, Kimbell Art Museum

The legacy of Scott and Stuart Gentling – better known as the Gentling Brothers – is as multifaceted as it is enduring. Twin brothers, Scott and the late Stuart have always shared a passion for their native Texas – its topography, people, and birds in particular – and specifically for the Aztec civilization to which the region owes its history and so much of its character. They joined this fascination with an insatiable curiosity about art, music, and literature, and this has manifested itself in their wide reading and travel as well as in their collection of ancient American artifacts, historical costumes, and other works of art.

Their art, not unexpectedly, has taken its own course, often in directions quite different from those of their contemporaries in the Southwest. Emulating the consummate naturalism of John James Audubon, the romanticism of the pre-modernist Thomas Eakins and the technical virtuosity of the giant of twentieth-century American watercolor Andrew Wyeth, they have taken advantage of their rich experiences and keen powers of observation to root their art in reality. At the same time they have spared no effort to transform their art into a visual metaphor for the passage of time, doing so by means of their mastery of brushwork, lighting, and design.

There has been debate about the relative talents of the two brothers. Scott, the more reclusive, is traditionally viewed as the one possessing the superior gifts of pen and brush; Stuart, the more gregarious, the promoter or “idea” man. Neither of these stereotypes fits. Scott is as articulate and responsive as Stuart has been prolific and creative. Indeed, as time passes, their joint achievement becomes greater than the sum of its parts. Did Stuart conceive this work and Scott invent and execute its design? Did Stuart rework this passage and Scott add some finishing touches? These questions of studio practice – and many others – seem academic in front of the works themselves, all of which, whether individually or jointly signed, command authority by virtue of a concentration of feeling and quality of realization.

If for no other reason than their technique, one cannot escape the beauty of the drybrush paintings and exquisite watercolors of Scott and Stuart Gentling. Every texture, surface and contour radiates with life. Every hue expresses its own integrity and brilliance and every shade a subtle variation of mystery. To experience their work is to luxuriate in the alchemy of life and pleasure.



Dawn Patrol, Watercolor, 26 x 36

Scott Gentling

Frontspiece:

River Log, Watercolor, 21 x 30 Scott Gentling



À Marat, Watercolor, 26 x 36

Scott Gentling



Andrew Wyeth, Watercolor, 30 x 46

Scott Gentling



Jane Goodall, Watercolor, 26 x 35

Scott Gentling



Clemmie, Watercolor, 34 x 32

Scott Gentling



Two Macaws, Watercolor, 36 x 24

Stuart Gentling



Aztec Series, Watercolor

Scott and Stuart Gentling



Aztec Street, Watercolor, 20 x 30

Scott and Stuart Gentling



American Kestrel, Watercolor, 30 x 20

Stuart Gentling



Snowy Egret, Watercolor, 28 x 22

Scott Gentling



Seashells, Watercolor, 29 x 21

Stuart Gentling



Puffins, Watercolor, 29 x 21

Scott and Stuart Gentling



French Silk, Watercolor, 21 x 29

Scott Gentling



Amadeus, Watercolor, 36 x 24

Scott Gentling



Two Doves, Watercolor, 40 x 30

Stuart Gentling

Acknowledgements from the Curator:

Upon the untimely death of Stuart Gentling last year, a long overdue examination of Stuart and his brother Scott Gentling seemed worthy. Stuart has long been a prominent figure in Fort Worth society, while his brother was more the painter, first and foremost. This exhibition was a challenge in that it called for Scott Gentling's aid in the shattering aftermath of his brother's death. As a twin myself, I cannot imagine his loss. So first I thank Scott Gentling for his cooperation and patience with me. Thanks to Ted Pillbury for his invaluable insight into the Gentlings' work; thank you to Karen Ferguson, who provided the reproductions for the catalog, and Wheeler Press in Denton for their generosity in printing the catalog. A thank you to Elaine Taylor for her skill in helping me design and execute its final form. Thanks also to Ralph Carr, long-time Gentling art dealer for his assistance in contacting collectors and coordinating this exhibition. Those collectors who kindly allowed me to examine and borrow from their collections include Walker Holland, Tom Loffland and Lee Tennison. A final thanks to the Fort Worth Community Arts Center staff for their commitment and devotion in keeping the art of this city alive for all to see. —Daniel Blagg, Chairman, Exhibition Advisory Panel, FWCAC

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