

Ruth Greenblatt: *Lady with a Viewpoint*

By Jackie Sperry

Ruth Greenblatt began doing art work when she was 42 years old. "I wanted to be an artist when I was a young woman, and I was an artist, but I was told by my teachers that I could not draw, and I made the mistake of believing them." Ruth said she took the criticisms seriously and decided she had no talent.

"Then one summer about twenty years ago, I was having a difficult time. To work that through I started drawing, and when I stood back and looked at my work, I was struck by its power. I realized that I just saw things in my way, which was different from most other people. From then on, I just forged ahead."

Ruth started drawing and taking classes. She discovered oil pastels, which have become her preferred medium. "Oil pastels are vibrant, and I love the colors. You can do so much with them. Ruth sometimes works with a palette knife, or she may dampen a rag with turpentine and blend the colors to a smooth finish.

This summer Ruth joined the summer class at the Museum School of the Provincetown Art Association. Here she found the freedom to work at her individual pace on whatever interested her, while at the same time gaining the stimulation of interacting with other artists and watching their work and progress. "It was a great experience," she said.

Ruth became a kind of class celebrity because of her interest in rendering automobiles in oil pastels. I asked Ruth how she got started doing cars.

"One day in the winter I was driving from North Truro to P-town, and, as I went past Watts' gas station, I noticed all the old cars around the place. It just struck me how much the cars were like people. They had dents and rust and some had smashed windshields. There is something very human about that."

Ruth said she had hated the old car she was driving that day, but, once she made this connection, she loved it "I drove all around, looking at wrecked cars. You know," she said, "life is so sad, its funny, so in a way my cars are a satire about life. They have that comical look, if you are into it."



The more I looked at Ruth's cars, the more I got into it. Some were sad in the strange, funny way life turns out to be, the more you get into it. Others were bold and brassy and colorful, with a kind of "Red Baron-Joe Cool" demeanor that showed they got into the swim of things with a definite splash.

Ruth had three of her cars on exhibition at last Friday's end-of-summer show which was hung in the classroom at the rear of the building. They were "Big Red," "Mighty Mack," and "Retired At Last." Looking at them showed me that there is something special about the way Ruth sees things.

She exhibited at the Eye of Horus and at Campbell's Summer Stock Gallery this summer. Ruth hails from Long Island, New York, and is now a year-round resident. She has been married to Henry Greenblatt for 36 years. During the winter she will continue her studies at the Museum School and will be looking at the world to see things as they are, to her perceptive eyes.