

BY ADRIENNE PAPP



ADRIENNE PAPP is a recognized journalist who has written for many publications including *Savoir*, *Beverly Hills 90210*, *Malibu Beach* and *Celebrity Society*, among many others. She is the President and CEO of Los Angeles/New York-based publicity company *Atlantic United, Inc.* Adrienne writes about world trends and interviews celebrities.

ONE FASCINATING LIFE, ONE WORLD-RENOWNED ARTIST: VIOLET PARKHURST ON ART, LOVE, AND FAME

The boundless passion and ageless spirit of world-renowned artist Violet Parkhurst has earned her recognition both as an artist and humanitarian that only a few can dream about. November 3rd was officially made Violet Parkhurst Day by Antonio Villaraigosa, Mayor of Los Angeles, honoring Parkhurst for her outstanding achievements and unparalleled artistry, sought after worldwide.

This year, LA Harbor International Film Festival (LAHIFF) featured Parkhurst's painting *Midnight on the Cinematic Bridge*, printed on all official posters and invitations of the festival, then sold by silent auction. The proceeds went to LAHIFF and Animals Rule Placement Foundation, as designated by the artist.

The Golden State Pops Orchestra also commissioned Parkhurst to produce a theme painting, which then was projected as a 15 ft. diameter, round image that glowed on the side wall of the theatre during the concert. The painting was titled *Notes in Sand & Surf*. Proceeds from the canvas and poster sale went to sponsor the orchestra.

Parkhurst has been featured more than 200 times in vari-



Incoming Fog 24x18



Moonlight 24x36



Notes in Sand and Surf 24x18



ous magazines and international publications, television shows, and movies, including *The Supernatural* on WB, and the miniseries *Drive*. Four paintings will appear in the new *Get Smart* movie with Steve Carell (*The 40-Year-Old Virgin*) to be released in 2008, where the filmmakers turned a local storefront into a Parkhurst Gallery with a sign boasting “*New Work by Violet Parkhurst.*”

In 2002 Parkhurst was invited to China by the Chinese government and honored as the first Western artist to have paintings placed in the Great Hall of China and the China National Museum of Fine Arts. Four American and two Chinese presidents have owned her artwork, and she is listed in the *Who’s Who in International Art*.

Over four million collectors have purchased her paintings and books. Owners include King Faud of Saudi Arabia, Angela Lansbury, Hilton Hotels, the honorable mayor of Kobe, Japan, and numerous American governors, mayors, and celebrities. Her scrapbooks contain photos with Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan, President Bush, Bob Hope, and Clark Gable, just to name a few.

Two of her paintings toured major European museums, including the Prado and the Louvre, with twenty-three other artists in the Cultural Exchange and became part of the permanent collection of the Stockholm Museum. In total, her paintings reside in eight museums worldwide.

Parkhurst took the tough path to acclaim, specializing in two genres usually reserved for male artists: Seascapes and nudes. Painting with oils, her male and female nudes are full-bodied, wholly exposed Rubensian figures. Likewise, her seascapes show the ocean in all its violent, beautiful fury, often with crashing waves, white water, and rough, craggy coastlines.


Particularly noted for her exquisite use of color to render startlingly realistic lighting, Parkhurst once spent an entire year studying the complexities of color blending. French artist Rosa Bonheur was a big influence, along with the impressionists. “I didn’t want to be an absolute realist,” Parkhurst says, “I want people to look at my paintings and feel they are seeing the actual scene, but not a photograph.”

Parkhurst was once a foreign correspondent in Rio de Janeiro, at which time she also became a fixture on the Hollywood scene, leading to an affair with heartthrob Clark Gable.

“The reason he thought so highly of me was that I never tried to get into the movies,” she explains. “Every girl he went with wanted a part in a movie, and I didn’t.”

In fact, Gable liked her so much that after visiting her tiny house in Topanga Canyon, he bought her a big house in Malibu. Her new book, *Fame Be My Lover*, reveals intimate portraits of her many adventures, including her love story with Gable.

With a hard-driving creative passion, Parkhurst sometimes paints eight to twelve hours a day, and sponsors a yearly award for outstanding artists such as Thomas Kinkade and Cao Yong, who hung their early artwork in Parkhurst’s galleries.

Today, Parkhurst still paints avidly and enjoys her Thoroughbred horses. A vivacious, joyous spirit, still with a twinkle in her eyes, her extraordinary journey is an inspiration to her large audience of collectors worldwide. To meet the artist in person and see her work up close, visit the Parkhurst Art Galleries at 439 W. 6th Street or in Ports O’ Call Village, both in San Pedro, CA. Tel: (310) 547-3158 or log onto www.parkhurstartgalleries.com. 



Violet Parkhurst