

Chris Stoffel Overvoorde



Chris Stoffel Overvoorde was born in 1934 in Cappella aan de IJssel, The Netherlands. In 1957 he immigrated to the United States eventually becoming a U.S. citizen in 1966. He graduated from the Visual Design program at Kendall College of Art and Design in 1960 and began work as a graphic designer. At night he studied with printmaker-painter, Harry Brorby.

In 1963 he went to the University of Michigan where he studied printmaking with Frank Cassara and Emile Weddige, and painting with Bill Lewis and Alan Mullen. He received his Masters of Fine Arts degree in 1966. Chris received his first art award in 1962. Since then, he has been involved in more than 100+ group, invitational, and juried exhibitions: receiving more than 40 awards as well as having over 50 solo exhibits in the U.S., Canada, and The Netherlands.

Chris was appointed to the Art Faculty of Calvin College in 1966. He had a very active career, engaging his students with the many different hats he often wore; teacher, printmaker, painter, liturgical artist, muralist, graphic designer, theologian and devout Christian. He used his 1984-85 sabbatical to explore the theme of "Prophet, Priest and King," in his favorite printmaking medium: woodcuts. Then in 1993 he initiated an Artist-in-Residence in collaboration with the University of Lethbridge in Alberta, Canada, and began visually exploring the Alberta prairie. He has used the small mountain town of Blairmore, Alberta, as his home base and has returned many times to continue his explorations into what he calls "Prairie Vision."

In the summer of 2003 Chris had a one man show at the Grand Rapids Art Museum that visually spanned his entire career in art. He also published, "Passing the Colors: Engaging Visual Culture in the 21st Century," a beautiful book chronicling his life as an artist and teacher. In 2006 Chris was selected as one of "The West Michigan Eight": a group of eight of the most prominent artists in the West Michigan area, chosen by The Muskegon Art Museum. The West Michigan Eight artists will be exhibiting throughout Michigan during the next few years. Today Chris is busier than ever, executing liturgical commissions, teaching seminars, painting landscapes, organizing exhibits and generally being an ambassador of the arts to everyone he meets.

One of our favorite quotes of Chris summarizes his life in art: "I was called to be a Christian, and the best way I know how to be a Christian is to be an artist. Each of us has to respond individually to God's calling to become a Christian. A true life of thankfulness is a life lived to its fullest potential, employing all the gifts with which God has endowed us, serving God and his people."

