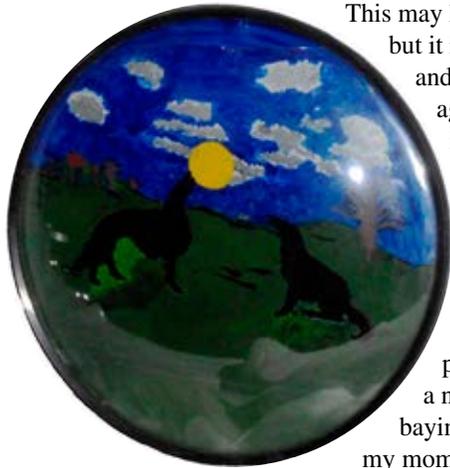


Unique Zoitiques

By Cindy Michalak

Nearing the end of summer, kids are back in school and the leaves want to change color already. Soon, everywhere you look, scenery will change colors and you will find yourselves in the middle of nature's artwork. Thusly, I have decided to show some different types of artwork, including 3 pieces that I created many years ago. The things I created were created only for my own personal pleasure. Shall we?



This may look to be a little gaudy but it is something that is near and dear to me. Many years ago my mom dabbled in painting now and then. Being a creative person, she found this curved glass hollowed ornamental-looking thing and decided to paint a Borzoi scene to put inside. This shows a night sky with a Borzoi baying at the moon. I believe my mom used watercolors to create this. It measures 10" across.

Value on this, of course, is priceless.

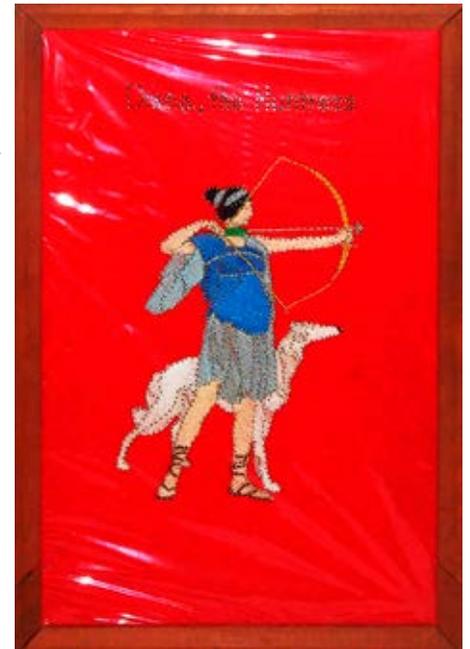


Here is a rather interesting piece. Using a black-painted board, someone scratched or etched a picture of a Borzoi taking down a wolf. I assume it must be a young wolf judging from the size compared to the Borzoi. Towards the bottom, there appears to be a signature but it is totally illegible. Perhaps it's not a signature at all and merely a squiggly design. In any event, this is a lovely and unusual design. I am pretty sure that we won this at a dog show back in the 1970s, when we used to show on a more regular basis. As with the previous piece, I also consider this priceless, since there are no others to compare it with.



A wooden doorstop cut out and painted in the likeness of a Borzoi. I purchased this in the 1990s prior to the inception of eBay, thru a dog collectibles club I belonged to. I made many wonderful and inexpensive purchases thru that club! The original sticker is still on the back stating it was made by Claywood Creations of Miami, FL. I've already tried looking them up on the Internet but you wouldn't believe how many companies use that name! The doorstop measures 23" x 14" and props up straight as the wedge at the back slides under the door to keep it in place. Never seeing another like this, I would value it at \$40. Of course, if you're handy in woodworking, I'm sure you could make one for a lot less.

A long time ago, I wanted to give my father-in-law a nice gift. He was a duck hunter and I purchased a flying mallard's stringart to create and made it just for him. At 83, he still has it hanging in his living room. I branched off onto my own favorite of trying to do a Borzoi. As with the mallards, I made a copy of an old *Borzoi Quarterly* cover that showed Diana with Borzoi. Getting to work, I bought a huge piece of ceiling tile and had Mike cut it down. I bought a piece of felt and stretched it across the board with an inch overhang and pinned it at the back, with 1/2" pins. Taping the picture over the board, I placed pin after pin in the outline of the picture, creating a similar image in pins.



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When I tore off the paper, I had to figure where to start but envisioning what would be the lowest layer of clothing and begin at the back. For instance, her legs would be under her skirt, so I had to string thread around her legs first and then the layer of dress over that. Even the head had to be "above" the neck or the 2-dimensional look would be off. To finish this off, we had been given a box of wood framing that was the exact fit for the ceiling tile and Mike cut them to size and inserted the picture into the frame. A few years later, as it began gathering dust, I decided to take the frame off and put some Saran Wrap over it and then put the frame back on. I made this one 17" x 11". For each picture, it takes me at least a week of working every night after work for 5 hours. I wouldn't know where to begin to price something like this and just kept it for my own collection.



If you attended the 1992 Houston, Texas BCOA National, perhaps you recall seeing something similar to this picture as the theme. I originally made this to bring to the auction, which was Mike and my very first national. After the hard work I put into it, I thought perhaps people would find it silly

and not bid on it. So to save humiliation of someone laughing at my donation, I decided to just keep it in my house. The Borzoi is a cowboy complete with a 6-shooter at his side, ready to draw on the unsuspecting armadillo. Now I'm not sure if that was supposed to be a shadow or something that came from the armadillo, but it was there so I included it. I never got around to framing it. No known value since there's nothing to compare it with.



My last stringart was created from one of my favorite Borzoi postcards. This was my first attempt at stringing a human, and

other than the little girls "unibrow" it didn't come out too bad. The postcard was drawn by Germaine Bouret. From the Internet: "She found inspiration in the streets and squares by drawing children, an almost exclusive theme of her work, and soon she specialized in postcards and prints in various sizes, which are widely distributed in many French households. She has also illustrated children's books like Alice in Wonderland and Tales of Perrault." My intentions were to sell this, but I chickened out after liking it too much and not wanting to part with it. Priceless to me, but maybe only worth a nickel to someone else. Notice the layering of the hair, leads, face, etc. Very time-consuming and probably why I gave up making these.



Ah; my best for last. Referring back to the 1992 BCOA National, this is where I first met Gwen Post in person. We had corresponded prior by us meeting thru the dog collectibles club. Gwen had brought some items with her to donate and also sell. This etched glass hunting scene was actually part of a top for her coffee table. Either she or Paul stood on it to reach something and it cracked in half. She had the edges shaved down on this portion and had it for sale. I didn't want to spend the \$125 price on myself but pined over it in our hotel room. To my surprise, Mike and Gwen met so that Mike could buy it and surprise me, which he did! I put a piece of black satin behind it, Mike made a frame out of the same framing material for the stringarts and then we bought a chain to hang it. I stopped by Gwen's house on my way to get my puppy last May and saw the other half of this on one of her tables. It was made by a friend of Gwen's named "Jeanette of New Orleans." I value this at \$500 and is one of my favorite Borzoi items I own.

A little more gabby than usual on this column but I had to in order to describe things properly. So on that note, I will cut my visit short here and wish everyone well! Talk to you soon!