

# Ralph Garafola

## "From Then, To Now"

by Ekiter Hert



"Sunset Stroll" Oil On Canvas, 20"x24"



From a draftsman in New York to an illustrator, with the application of knowledge has made Ralph Garafola a successful illustrator and fine art painter. He began by drawing a white piano that had twin vases on a brown paper bag when he was only five years. After leaving the army, Garafola commenced a commercial illustration

studio that he operated for 50 years. Under Frank J. Reilly at The Art Students League in NYC for over seven years, he studied fine art and perfected his skills in illustration, drawing, abstract and painting. His dedication allowed him the position of the class monitor (assistant) while still in school. "Reilly was a great mentor and father figure to me, and I have as much respect for him now as I did when I was his student in the 1950s and 1960s. I owe him my sincere gratitude," Garafola said.

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"Waterloo Village" Oil On Canvas, 30"x40"





"Moose In Yosemite" Oil On Canvas, 24"x36"



"Painting On The Left Bank" Oil On Canvas, 48"x36"

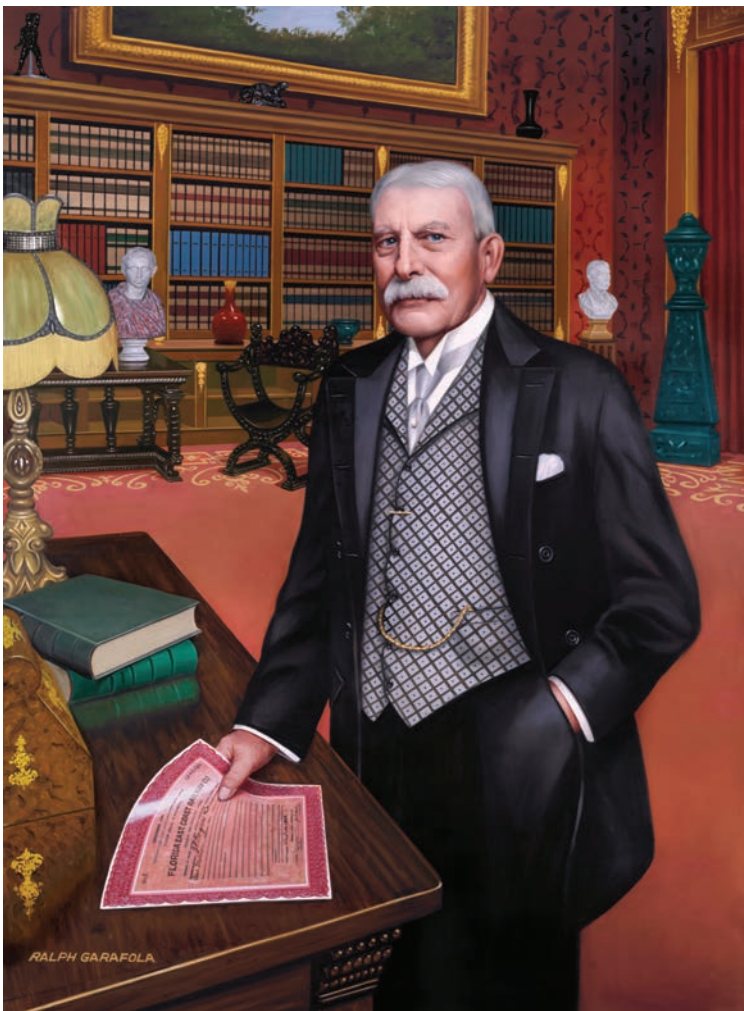


"James With Dog Duke" Oil On Canvas, 36"x30"





"Racing To Windward" Oil On Canvas, 16"x26"



"Henry Flagler With East Coast Railway Million Stock" Oil On Canvas, 54"x40"

Garafola's painting style is contemporary realism using different media which include oils, watercolors and is highly skilled in brush handling. He likes Plein Air painting because you paint nature as it is. All his paintings are portraits. Whether the subject is a person, landscape, seascape or still life, his approach is to portray the subject in its natural environment. It puts the viewer inside the painting. All of his paintings tell a story. His inspiration comes from something beautiful, interesting or a moment in time. Recently he painted Henry Morrison Flagler in his library at his Whitehall home in Palm Beach. He holds in his hand the first East Coast Florida Railway million dollar bond certificate. Garafola retired from commercial illustration and returned to painting. In his early seventies began teaching and writing books to pass along his knowledge and skills to younger generations. He expresses his passion for teaching the true essence of painting, identifying that there is a lack of knowledge in art instruction today. His book Frank J. Reilly—The Elements of Painting reveals Reilly's theory of what one needs to know about painting, which fills that void.

For Garafola, retirement is not an option. He says, "As long as I can see and hold a brush, I will keep painting." ■

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