

Kirby Congdon
Bio
Born 1926

I still have my grandmother's hand easel and I remember deploring the faulty perspective in her paintings when I was a teenager. I tried perspective myself in small notebooks as a soldier in World War II in Europe and so I attended a Boothbay Harbor art group in Maine. I worked as a pot and pan dishwasher to pay my way at Branch Camp the first summer after release from three years' service in the United States Army in 1947. Subsequently I attended Columbia College and its University on the G.I. Bill through 1951.

A one man show at the Aegis Gallery in Greenwich Village in 1962 was described by John Canaday in the New York Times as by a "delightful talent". This show consisted of paintings and constructions. A later one man show was given in Key West in 1998 at Upstart Crow Books, of my iron constructions. Four ink and water paintings were reproduced in Liberal Religious Education magazine in 1966. I designed covers to my literary publications, *Magazine Four, Five and Six* (but my partner, Ralph Simmons, an art supervisor, took care of our other publications).

A 20 page pamphlet, hand sewn in 250 signed and numbered copies, titled *Iron Work* was put out in 1997 by Cycle Press, illustrating my constructions using found iron pieces. This accompanied an essay on the subject of contemporary art found in everyday artifacts. The project was reproduced in *Rio, A Journal of the Arts*, in July of 1997.

A poem of mine ("Noon Harbor" from *The Christian Science Monitor* and from my first collection of poems, *Iron Ark*) was used as a "word image" in a show, *All Insignificant Things must Disappear: The Social Sphere and the Post-Economic Landscape*, presented at Trinity Museum in Manhattan in November of 2010, curated by Darren Jones, who writes me the following:

Your collage work "is staggeringly relevant, which is the aspect of it that I am most drawn to...they feel contemporary. They emit a pulse of the present cultural life that cannot be extinguished and is timeless. These works are like unseen stars, light years away, that send out faint signs of distant nuclear fusion across the universe. A few people know they exist; the task now is to make them seen across the cosmos!"