

Title: Starry Night

Medium: Acrylic on canvas

Artist Name: Harold Wayne Nichols

This piece began as a surrogate project between myself, Robin Paris and Tom Williams, two Professors from Watkins College of Art. I gave them the idea to take a photo of a starry night since I had not seen the stars in the night sky for many years because the glare of the prison lights and cages and other obstructions meant to keep me in also seem to keep the stars out. Robin and Tom then took a photo of this scene and it has since been displayed on several occasions including earlier exhibits. I have painted it, or rather a versions of it here. Prison has taught me many things, one of these is the importance of the little things in life such as the stars in the night sky. When was the last time you drove out beyond the lights of the city just to see the stars? I hope you will take the time to do that and to enjoy the other "little things" life has to offer.

ARTIST CONTACT INFORMATION

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Title: Untitled

Artist Name : Harold Wayne Nichols

*I jokingly call this piece "An
Homage to Jackson Pollock" saying
it is what he would paint if he
were in prison. Truthfully, it
represents the frustration I feel
about prison. I have been in prison
for twenty six years and everywhere
I turn, the prison is the most
prominent aspect of my existence.
No matter what I do, no matter
what color or beauty I attempt
to bring into my life I am always
reminded every day that I am in
prison and that I have a death
sentence looming over me and that
I will be forever limited in what
I can accomplish.
However, despite these limitations,
thanks to the guidance from
outsiders who have come into the
prison and shared their time I
still try to do what I can.
If you are looking for a message
in this, let it be that no matter
who or where you are there is
still beauty within and art is
not simply an object on a wall,
but it is the process that created
it. If you have never tried, I
hope you will.*

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This cartoon is direct from prison life.

I work in the housing unit as part of a two man maintenance crew. One part of our job is to do electrical repairs which includes changing out old light ballasts. On this particular incident I had changed out a ballast the day before and then my supervisor, a free-world maintenance worker [we call them "green shirts"] changed one only he grabbed a hold of the live wire and was electrocuted. This in and of itself is not funny but what is funny, or at least what I found funny, is that after avoiding death by electrocution he was being led away by medical personnel and his big concern was his glasses getting broken. Does it sound bizarre that a man sentenced to death by electrocution would work making electrical repairs? Well I guess it is but until the State takes it away I still have a life and intend to enjoy it the best I can. I think that is the reason I draw, and paint - because I enjoy living.

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Title: "SCREWED-UP COUNT"

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The event depicted here actually happened.

The prison guards at particular times of the day come around and make a "count" of all inmates [for some reason the prison is a stickler about this]. On this day the count did not turn out right and the prison went on lock-down till all inmates could be counted.

In our pod two officers came in to count and the result was one I found hilarious.

I am not a cartoonist so as I was trying to decide "characters" for this cartoon I decided that although prison guards around here are not referred to as "screws" very often, in this instance the term just seemed to fit.

Hey, I enjoy laughing and look for humor where I can find it. You should too.

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