

**ARTIST OF THE
MONTH
Ruth Ann Maury**

Art has been part of Ruth Ann Maury's life from the moment she was born to a professional artist-actress. During the first nine years of Ruth Ann's life, she experienced the museums, art galleries, planetarium, theaters and lecture halls in Pittsburgh PA. By the 3rd grade, she was writing and illustrating her own stories. With her mother and brother, she moved to Miami in 1955. While in the 5th grade, she wrote her first play that was performed on the school stage. In the school's sixth grade class play, Ruth Ann designed and painted her first scenery and played one of the leading roles. Beginning with these early years, Ruth Ann created art as a natural part of her everyday living.

As an English and drama teacher, she created and developed the school's first drama program, produced numerous yearly school shows, employed in her English classes a "humanities approach," and illustrated school publications, all of which helped garner her the 1982 Riviera Junior High Teacher of the Year. Upon receiving this honor, after 13 years of teaching English, Ruth Ann was recruited by her principal to move to Sunset Sr. High. During the following 17 years of teaching English at the high school, she continued to use drama, music and art in the classroom. In the 5 years prior to her retirement, she created and developed the required freshman composition course that used art and music as part of the curriculum, and that ultimately helped to raise the school's test scores. Nominated by former honor students, Ruth Ann is listed in three separate editions of *Who's Who Among America's Teachers*.



Choosing art as an avocation, Ruth Ann focused on theater as her goal. From the elementary school years through college, she used her art for her own character makeup, costume and set designing. During her college years, she spent 3 summers as a member of the acting company of Missouri's Arrow Rock Lyceum, which at that time was a true repertory theater. Although that theater now has different goals, she is pleased to have been a part of its early history. Ruth Ann also performed at the U. of Florida (where she received her B.A.Ed. in Language Arts) and at Gainesville Little Theater.

From grade school through college, she performed monologues for various charities and events throughout Florida. In the early '60's, she taught herself to play the guitar and wrote and performed her original songs. For a brief time after college, Ruth Ann acted and directed plays in community theater in Miami. Ruth Ann earned her M.S. in English Education at Nova Southeastern University, her Practicum (practical thesis) receiving accolades.

Throughout Ruth Ann's life, she has created art that has sold, been auctioned, or given away. In her husband's and her "retirement" and subsequent move to Central Florida, she is experiencing a renaissance in her art and exhibits in the Tri-County area. Over the years, Ruth Ann has received numerous awards and other special recognition for her talents and service. Her greatest influence continues to be her artist-mother and is thankful for her husband's patience and support.

This watercolor is one of her Birds in Paradise Series (#8). Her work will be on display at Spanish Springs Citizens Bank during the month of October.

