

Bill Wagner's Special Collection

Pete Malmberg, Museum Curator

Forest Park is very pleased to feature one of Bill Wagner's unique collections of small, original art pieces for the spring of 2024. The pieces are quite valuable and could only be displayed in special locked cases that the museum now features in Wagner Gallery. These beautiful pieces showcase Bill's great love of all kinds of art. He admired many different artists from all over the world and corresponded with many of them. Signed prints, etchings, and original sketches were among his most prized possessions. He described them as owning a little piece of that artist, author, statesman, celebrity, or interesting individual.

Bill was acquainted with many different artists and cartoonists. Local well-known artists like Elizabeth Miller, Herb Hake, Frank Miller, and Karl Mattern were proud to call him a good friend. Bill had a great eye for works by local artists such as Karen Strohbeen and Kathy Hummer. He also helped develop the career of the first prominent Black Bermudan artist, Charles Tucker, and one of the foremost architects in South Korea, Hi Jun Yu.

The pieces featured in the case at Forest Park are among Bill's most revered. They include an original signed Picasso Etching ("Pour Roby"), a signed Gertrude Abercrombie sketch, a John Stueart Curry autograph in paint, an original Karl Mattern pen and ink drawing from the Iowa State Fair Salon, an original work by Jim Bisignano, and signed prints by Joel Iskowitz, Salvador Dali, Claus Oldenburg, Henry Moore, Kathy Hummer, Marc Chagall, and Miro. Bill would be honored to see them displayed and shared with the public. Please enjoy them and feel free to ask the Forest Park curation staff any questions. We are thrilled to showcase the collection in this beautiful, permanent setting!



*A selection of works in the
Wagner Collection*