



# FLAAR Reports

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## **Be Successful & Profitable Producing Giclee Art Prints**





Caption for cover page: Fine Art Giclee by John Burt

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## Introduction

We have received thousands of e-mails from artists, spouses of artists, friends of artists, all asking for our help if getting them started in producing giclee prints.

People feel that painters all across the USA profit handsomely from the steady income from giclee editions of their watercolor or oil paintings. Some painters earn millions with giclee. Thomas Kinkade is the best known because his galleries are visible in most major cities.

You can also sell giclee prints of all other kinds of art, including computer generated art, charcoal sketches--any kind of art you can imagine. You can also reproduce old drawings out of books as giclee editions.

In the beginning it was the tradition for most artists to use canvas transfers. But as the Iris printer became available in the 1990's, and as other printers caught up in quality, most artists who previously used canvas transfers realized that the future was not in canvas transfers, nor lithographs or serigraphs, but in giclee. Plus the giclee workflow is more straightforward; you can accomplish giclee prints in your own office (or in your own home; you don't need a million dollar offset press or a messy smelly screen printing monster).

The fabled profits from franchised giclee art have continued to inspire many other artists still today. Most artists sense that Kinkade is immensely successful and internationally known, as much for his entrepreneurship as for his uplifting message expressed in his luminous paintings.

But artists who make thousands of dollars a month today did not begin at the top. And many artists who today exhibit at the New York International Art Expo, or at the new Atlanta Art Expo, started off exhibiting in their home town art galleries or by traveling around to local art festivals.

So we at FLAAR thought it would be a nice service to show both stages, the first step at small town art festivals (the present report) and then the step into national prominence at a major exposition in a large city. Our separate reports on the New York art exhibit and the Atlanta art exhibit are in our Giclee Series.

FLAAR works only with giclee. Lithographs and serigraphs are mechanical mass production prints. A serigraph is a screenprinted reproduction, the same process as signs and posters. Giclee is a higher quality and in some instances the giclee process by itself can be as much inspired by art as the original painting. A further advantage of giclee is that the editions do not need to tie up capital in prints of thousands of copies: you can print an edition of 10, or 1, or 100. And giclee are more likely to be on artist's canvas or watercolor paper, while offset lithographs tend to be on printing machine paper. You can also print a giclee on silk, something you don't see too often with a lithograph.

## The first step towards eventual national exposure

You have to learn to crawl before you learn to walk, and you walk before you run. So exhibiting at a local or regional art festival is a good way to get started. When you succeed at the local level, you can move to a larger city, then a regional show, and then try for the national expositions. If your talent is recognized, you may end up being featured in a FLAAR Report covering an International New York ArtExpo in the future.

Bowling Green (Ohio, not Bowling Green Kentucky) is a small college town, home to about 19,000 students and corresponding faculty, staff, and the local merchants that service this community. The local art event is the Black Swamp Art Festival. About a hundred artists exhibit at the street festival each year. Bowling Green, is flat as a pancake because it used to be a black swamp. Oil was found many years ago; German immigrants poured in to work the fields, and the region grew to what it is today.

Most of the photography exhibits are traditional darkroom prints. Few of the exhibiting photographers have taken the plunge to digital. Each year I ask them why: some quickly reply about how digital photography is fake and so on. Of course you can easily fake a scene in a darkroom. I suspect most of these individuals who oppose digital photography either don't use a computer, or are not familiar with the appropriate software, or are otherwise nervous about how to handle a digital camera. We respect people who decide to remain traditional: I can produce a better fine art print with my 8x10 Linhof than I can with any of my digital cameras, but the digital cameras are more practical. But the more people who stick with old-fashioned film, the easier this makes it for digital photographers to succeed.

When I visit each booth I ask if they have any giclee prints. Several artists replied pointedly that they sell "only originals." They often add an off the cuff derogatory remark about copies. If it is a fine art photo, a giclee print is a valid original photographic print, as valid as any darkroom print. For paintings, a lot more care and artistic effort goes into creating a giclee print. Giclees are not posters like lithographic or screen printed art.

The fact that not many clients are buying their originals, and that in the next booth a giclee artist has sold dozens of prints, does not phase some traditional artists. Many artists do all this as a hobby, retirement income, or a second job, so making a profit is not as important as doing what they want to do for personal enjoyment.

This report is about the continuing trend in oil and watercolor paintings, namely the popular business to render them as giclee prints with an inkjet printer. You can also produce charcoal sketches as giclee, etchings, and any kind of art you wish to can be recreated as a giclee. And what a lot of artists don't learn about until later, is that you can print a design onto the canvas and then paint on top of it. Lots of artists hand embellish their giclees.

If you are interested in learning more about how to achieve commercial publication of giclee prints, we now have three entire FLAAR Series of reports giclee, including two reports on exhibiting at the national and international level. We cover all levels of giclee paintings, décor, and fine art photography.

- Giclee for commercial galleries
- Giclee for fine art photographers, photo labs and photo studios
- Giclee for individual artists and photographers
- Giclee for personal enjoyment
  
- Giclee for sign shops that want to do more than signs, banners, and posters.
- Giclee for reprographic or other commercial printers that want to take advantage of this fine art phenomenon
- Giclee for home business, retirement business, second business.

Let us now look at a sample of artists who have ventured into the world of giclee at the local art festival in Bowling Green, Ohio. If you too are just starting, let them be a model for you.

### Examples of local artists on the way up

#### Ann Beck

Ann Beck is able to produce her art while being also in charge of a house and home, which can be a full time job in itself. So it helps that a local place such as FLAAR at BGSU can do the scanning of her original art work.



I admire a person who seeks to get out of the home and achieve a goal in their field of choice, in this case painting.



Artist Ann Beck with her paintings and giclee prints  
Ann can be reached at [tundrgrass5@aol.com](mailto:tundrgrass5@aol.com).

**John Burt**

John specializes in oil painting. So giclee printing is a natural. The advantage of giclee is that you can create your originals in any size you, or your client, desires.



John can be reached at 735 Jefferson Dr. Bowling Green, OH 43402. He has his originals scanned with the top-of-the-line Cruse scanner at the FLAAR institute for giclee research at Bowling Green State University.

Vicki Lee

Here you can see how perfectly you can match the original (on the wall) with the giclee print (in Vicki's hand).

You can see more of her work at [www.VickiLeeStudio.com](http://www.VickiLeeStudio.com)

Vicki's originals are scanned by a Cruse reprographic scanner made specifically to handle original paintings. This is a \$75,000 German system, and so obviously not the kind of equipment that an individual giclee artist is expected to have at home or work. This is why FLAAR + BGSU provide a service to provide scans at a price less than what a commercial photo lab would charge. Also there is not really another digital art system of this quality elsewhere in Ohio, so it is a helpful service to the local community.



You can see more of her work at [www.VickiLeeStudio.com](http://www.VickiLeeStudio.com)

**Marcie Reynolds**

Marcie said she sold 85 prints and another 15 she gave away (we guess to satisfied friends and relatives). The particular five images on this one print are nostalgic views of the school buildings in the area. Some of these buildings have since been torn down, so her images maintain the memories of what life was like when these buildings were the center of many people's daily life at school.

If you tried lithography or serigraphy, the minimum print run would be perhaps 500 or a thousand. You would be stuck with storing all the unsold prints.

With giclee you can print one, or ten, or any number at any time. You don't have to be stuck with excess inventory.

With giclee you can vary the size any time you wish. You can vary the paper you print on, canvas one day, photo satin another day, even silk for a festive event.

You can obtain art by Marcie Reynolds via telephone 419 288-2891.

**You too can produce limited edition giclee prints of your art**

But don't limit yourself to your own art. You can reproduce the art of anyone else in your family, or your community. You can also reproduce historical posters (if the copyright has lapsed). You can reproduce etchings or illustrations in old books (assuming the copyright has expired).

FLAAR has entire Reports on all the things you can print. We have three entire SERIES of reports on giclee. Shortly we will announce our courses on giclee. We already provide a Business Plan for how to realistically achieve success as a giclee printer. All are available on

- [www.FineArtGicleePrinters.org](http://www.FineArtGicleePrinters.org)
- [www.wideformatprinters.NET](http://www.wideformatprinters.NET)

There are over 200,000 artists in the US who subscribe to various art magazines. There are probably an even greater number of artists who don't subscribe to art magazines. This is the total number of artists who can learn about the potential of giclee limited edition prints of their originals. Then there are the artists in the rest of the world.





Latin America is a wide open market because giclee is still a relatively unknown concept there. Asia, Africa, all produce art that can be turned into giclee.

Many of these artists will begin like Ann Beck, at home. Their first steps are a local art festival. Some will persevere until they exhibit nationally. Many will develop their own web sites to display their art. Many artists (such as those shown here) prefer to stick with their art and leave the printing, color management, and photography of the paintings to others. We note with sadness how artists try to use snapshots taken with a simple digital camera. This will mute the colors, make the image slightly out of focus, and generally result in a print that is not as good as the original.

You only have to scan your print once. Then you can reproduce it, or not, as often or little as you desire. So the one-time scanning or photograph of your print should be as close to flawless as possible.

FLAAR offers additional Reports on how and where to scan or photograph your original work of art. This initial digitizing of the work of art is more important than the final printing of your masterpiece. In other words, the scanner or camera used to digitize the painting is more important than the printer that will make the reproduction.

### Further reading

You could probably find thousands of pages on screen printing. It is also called silk screen printing. One site you can start with is [www.printmaker.com/sprnt.html](http://www.printmaker.com/sprnt.html). Another site is [www.elainefineart.com/art\\_terms.htm](http://www.elainefineart.com/art_terms.htm).

SGIA used to be the screen printing graphics trade show. But screen printing is waning and wide format inkjet printing is growing, so SGIA now stands for "specialty graphics..." SGIA is now devoted about one third to screen printing, one third to inkjet, and one third to other imaging technologies. You can find more information in the FLAAR Report on trade shows.

So many web pages exist on giclee that we don't list any here. FLAAR has three entire series of publications on giclee and will shortly begin offering courses and workshops.

Because we are dedicated to digital imaging we do not cover lithography, etching and other traditional forms of printing and decoration. However we have an interest in all forms of art. The founder and president of FLAAR is an art historian and has held two research positions at Yale University's Dept of History of Art. So doing research and publications on giclee is a fitting evolution for the digital millennium.

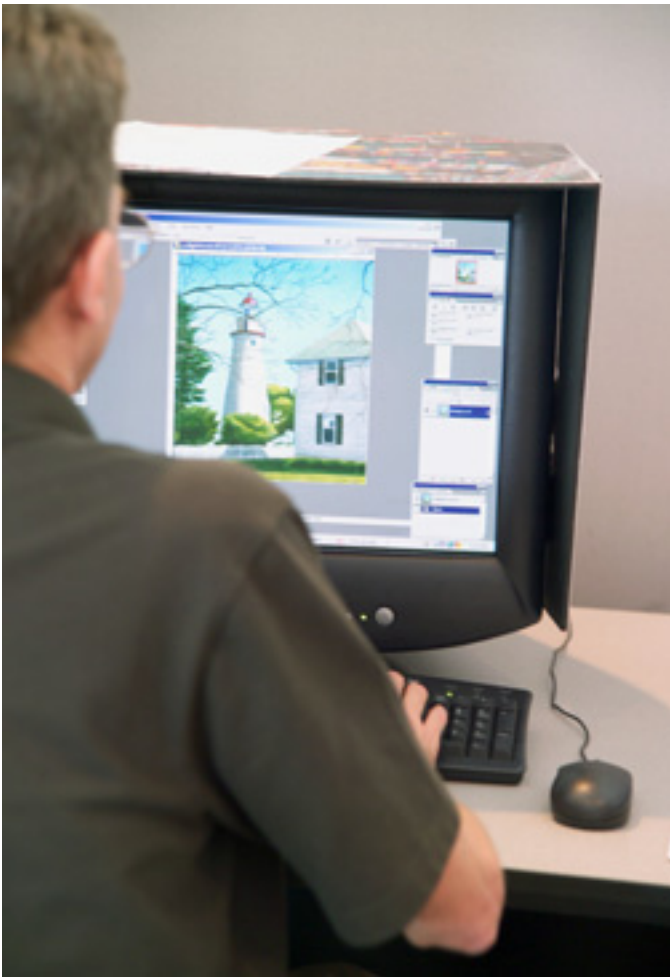
## Appendix A More Examples of the Work of John Burt

Artist John Burt dropped in to the FLAAR facility at Bowling Green State University recently, so it was possible to take some more snapshots of him and his art. We wanted to show the fabulous reprographic camera, the Cruse scanner, that is available in the FLAAR facility to assist local artists. Only one other university in the US has such a \$70,000, 80-megapixel camera.

So here are some examples of the workflow from the accomplished original paintings to the attractive giclee prints.

As an individual artist you can buy your own printer and set up your own giclee studio. You won't want to get your own Cruse your first year, but once you are nationally successful you probably will be able to afford to have your own Cruse next to your own giclee printer. But to start with you can have BGSU do your scans (or send your paintings to any photo studio or print shop that has a Cruse; the [www.CruseDigital.com](http://www.CruseDigital.com) website has a list of all their installations).





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**Acquire these reports at:**


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**Glossary of Fine Art Giclee Terms**  


**Workflow for Fine Art Giclee**  


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**24-inch Wide Format Printers**  


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**Epson Stylus Pro 7600 Evaluation**  


**Epson 5500, HP 10ps, and HP 3000 Evaluation**  


**Wide Format Printing for Fine Art Giclee**  


**Iris 3047 Giclee Print Evaluation**  


**Ink and Media for Fine Art Giclee**  


**Giclee on Canvas and Watercolor Paper**  


**The Crucial Role of Scanners**  


**Photographing Paintings: Giclee Print Quality**  


**Large Format Quality**  


**Medium Format Quality**  


**Repro Station Copy Station**  


**Digitizing Artwork**  


**What Camera to Use**  


**Wide Format Scanners**  


**How to Photograph a Painting using the Zig-Align System**  


**Fine Art Giclee Series**

# DP 101 : Achieving Quality in Digital Photography

SLR 35mm  
Digital Cameras



Aperture  
and  
Shutter Speed



Nikon D100  
Digital Camera



Evaluation & Review  
of the  
Canon Digital Rebel



Sigma SD9  
Foveon



Lens Reduction  
Factors: Chart



Hybrid Digital  
Cameras to hold  
Medium Format  
Digital Backs



Lenses and  
Filters



Professional  
Results from  
Budget-Priced  
Cameras



Practice &  
Critique



Pros and Cons of  
Digital and Film  
Photography



CCD and CMOS  
Image Sensors



History and  
Timeline of Digital  
Photography



Composition The Key  
to Prizewinning  
Photography



Nature  
Photography



Portrait  
Photography  
with 35mm SLR  
Digital Cameras



Architectural  
Photography  
with digital  
cameras



Lighting Digital  
Photography



Quicktime  
Virtual Object  
Movies



Shooting on  
Location with  
Digital Camera  
Equipment



How to Organize  
an Exhibit of Your  
Own Photographs



Computer  
Equipment for  
Digital Imaging



Camera and  
Computer Memory  
Storing Digital  
Files



Adobe  
Photoshop  
for Photographers



Additional  
Software for  
Digital Imaging



File Formats for  
Digital Images



Worthwhile  
Tradeshows  
for Digital  
Photographers



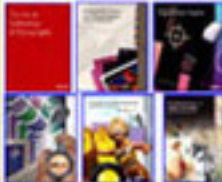
Digital Cameras at  
the Photokina  
Tradeshow in  
Germany, 2004



New Photography  
Equipment at the  
PhotoPlus Tradeshow  
in New York, 2004



FLAAR Reviews:  
Photo & Camera  
Magazines



# DP 201 : Taking Digital Photography to the Next Level

## Digital Image Resolution



## Pros and Cons of Digital vs Film Photography (Medium and Large Format)



## Digital Backs for Medium Format Cameras



## Cameras to hold Medium Format Digital Backs



## Recommended Equipment for Creating a Digital Studio



## Lighting Modifiers for Portrait Photography



## Lighting for Profitable Portrait Photography



## Nature Photography with Medium and Large Format Cameras



## Landscape Photography with Medium and Large Format Cameras



## Panoramic Photography for Digital Cameras



## Digital Panoramic Cameras



## Architectural Photography with Medium and Large Format Cameras



## Product Photography with Professional Digital Cameras



## Computer Workstations for Digital Photography



## Color Management for Digital Photography



## Bit Depth and Dynamic Range



## Workflow Summary for Medium and Large Format Digital Photography



## Glossary of Digital Photography Terms



## History of Panorama Photography: Circa 1840-1980



## Photography of Art: Sculptures, Artifacts & other 3-Dimensional Works of Art



## Taking Photographs with a Reprographic Copy Stand



## History of Rollout Photography



## Lighting for Product Photography



## Gray Balance for Professional Digital Photography



## Shooting On-location with Medium and Large Format Cameras



## Portability: Which Digital Camera is best for Out on Location?



## Professional Software for Working with RAW File Formats



## FLAAR Book Reviews: Adobe Photoshop



## FLAAR Book Reviews: Medium and Large Format Cameras



## Trade Shows for New Camera and Printing Technologies

