

In Memoriam
NORMAN W. BRADLEY
December 25, 1935 – July 23, 2016

Norman W. Bradley, Associate Professor Emeritus of Fine Arts, passed away on Saturday, July 23, 2016. Professor Bradley, or Norm, as he was referred to by his colleagues, was a painter all his life and a teacher of painting, art history, and design. Norm was born in 1935 and grew up in Fort Wayne. Upon graduating from South Side High School, he attended The Fort Wayne Art School on scholarship for one year. In 1955, he and two friends headed to Mexico, a country and culture which never left him - and it changed his life. He studied art at Mexico City College and soon developed an intense interest in the art, history, and culture of ancient Mesoamerica. This pursuit would last the rest of his life, involving much research and numerous trips to as many of the major archaeological sites that he could visit in Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, and Honduras. He received his bachelor's degree from Mexico City College in 1959.

In 1960, Norm enlisted in the Army for three years as an artist in an information facility of the Pentagon in Northern Virginia. Upon discharge from the military, he headed for Mexico and Mexico City College, which had been renamed, The University of the Americas, where he had a graduate fellowship. In the mid-1960's, his focus shifted strongly toward the culture and history of the Maya with many trips to Yucatan, Chiapas, Guatemala, and Honduras to explore the vast ruins of that amazing culture. He received his master's degree with honors in 1964.

Returning to the States, he lived in San Francisco, Calif., for one year where he painted and made contacts for a teaching position. Eventually, Norm taught art for two years at Parsons College in Fairfield, Iowa. He returned to Fort Wayne in 1967 to be close to his daughter and took a teaching position at the Fort Wayne Art School which had become the Fort Wayne Art Institute School of Fine Arts. He taught several courses including painting and art history. In 1968, he initiated a pre-Columbian Art History course, one of the first in Indiana. In 1976 the General Assembly of Indiana approved the merger of the Fort Wayne Art Institute with IPFW.

In 1970, he met Dixie Landis; they married in 1975, and the two traveled together to Mexico and especially to the great Mayan sites of Yucatan, Chiapas, and Central America to explore the Mayan ruins of these areas. Norm Bradley exhibited widely in National, regional, and local exhibitions, receiving numerous awards. He was a Life Member of Artlink and Member of the Fort Wayne Art Museum. Upon his retirement from IPFW in 1990, Norm and Dixie often traveled beyond Mesoamerica, to Peru in 1990, and other trips to Ireland, Great Britain, and continental Europe. In 1997 he wrote and self-published a book entitled "A MESOAMERICAN ODYSSEY: My Fifty Year Discovery of Mexico and Central America." For Norm, his priorities consisted of family, painting, and pre-Columbian art, especially that of the ancient Maya.

As a faculty member and colleague in the Department of Fine Arts, Norm was highly respected. His colleagues will always remember him as a dependable source of insight and wisdom. His painting and art history students benefitted from his years of experience and dedication to his art. As a painter, Norm was superb. He was clearly influenced by the Abstract Expressionists in the 1950's. He worked mainly as an abstract artist and also create accomplished representational landscape images in oil and watercolor. Many considered him one of Fort Wayne's finest painters.

Norman Bradley is survived by his wife, Dixie (Landis) Bradley and daughter, Melinda Mia Bradley-Stein, and granddaughter, Melissa Stein.