

# GREG ALLEN

## ***A CERTAIN QUALITY OF LIGHT: Paintings from the American West***

Holland Project Gallery | Sept. 5 - Oct. 6, 2023

In 1962 my parents divorced and my father bought a house that had a flat roof with white rocks on it. I lived with my mother in an apartment with avocado green chairs and an avocado green shag carpet that we raked because it couldn't be vacuumed. I was born into, and lived in a Mid-Century Modern world. Once I was old enough to care enough to notice, I didn't care for the look one bit. The exception was cars. I dug my father's new '67 Firebird and my mother's '61 Chevy Impala. To my dismay at the beginning of the '70s she traded in that big, beautiful car for a Toyota Corolla that was half the Impala's size and seemed flimsy. I couldn't have known it but soon the durable, well-built world of metal and Mid-Century Modern design would be traded in for one of planned obsolescence.



Peanut #3 sitting atop a world of avocado green.

Some sixty years on decades of products made to fail, honed to a fine art, informs today's modern world. Items purchased that come with a warranty are built to fall apart within weeks of that guarantee's expiration. The warm glow of neon signage has been replaced with the cold light of plastic. Design reflecting the Cold War race to the moon deified America at the height of its power and foretold a future among the stars. Eventually twelve Americans walked on the moon, and that was as far as we got. Design stopped

looking to the future too.

For my sensibilities current architecture and design doesn't have a lot to recommend. Across Nevada (and most everywhere else I imagine,) Mid-Century Modern structures are fodder for the wrecking ball. Five-Over-Ones, that is five floors of apartments over mixed-use on the ground floor are springing up everywhere, and couldn't look more shoddy both in design and construction. Here in Reno some of the most iconic buildings constructed in the middle of the last century have been repurposed as concrete slabs and dirt lots. What's being lost can not be measured nor replaced.



What we've lost. Virginia Street, Reno.

In the 70s never could I have believed I'd develop an abiding love for post-World War 2 architecture and Mid-Century Modern design, yet here I am. These are the subjects of my main body of work. I celebrate their memory and through my work they still exist, if only in paint.

As a child I drew well, and always knew I would grow up to be an artist. I had little idea what that meant, except as informed by my immediate family it involved starving. High school art teachers made me their pet, and stood behind me transfixed as I struggled to draw humans with proper proportions. Throughout my twenties and into my early thirties money was earned as an occasional freelance illustrator and graphic designer. In the dark ages before computers cutting and pasting was de rigueur, as was deploying generous amounts of White-Out. I didn't take my skills as seriously as I might have. That would change in 1993 when I began teaching myself to paint while recuperating from a traumatic injury.



Editorial Illustration for Mountain Magazine article on competition climbing, 1986.

Beginning with my second art show in 1996, I've been lucky enough to support myself through sales of my work and occasionally accepting commissions. I'm grateful that people enjoy my production, and my work has found homes with collectors across the US, Europe, and South America. The artistic sensibility that is the largest part of who I am sees a beautiful world, and I'm grateful for every day I get to spend in it.

Greg Allen

August 9th, 2023

## BIOGRAPHY

Greg Allen was born in Los Angeles, California, in 1961, into an artistically and intellectually gifted family. As a child Greg drew prodigiously, and after high school he pursued a passion for technical rock climbing and earned a living as a freelance illustrator. Greg relocated to Reno, Nevada in 1988, where he performed as a vocalist in a local band. He was seriously injured in 1994. While recuperating, Greg began the lifelong process of teaching himself to paint. His work immediately attracted the attention of collectors, and through word-of-mouth sales, commissions, and gallery representation, he has sold over 700 paintings.

Greg Allen's paintings have been exhibited in solo and group exhibitions in businesses, galleries and museums in Nevada, California, and New Mexico, including the Santa Fe Museum of Modern Art in Santa Fe, New Mexico; the Nevada Museum of Art in Reno, Nevada; the Las Vegas Art Museum in Las Vegas, Nevada; the Cydnie Maiss Gallery in Reno, Nevada; the Frank Hill Gallery in Reno, Nevada; Sun Mountain Artworks in Virginia City, Nevada; the Western Nevada Community College Art Gallery, in Fallon, Nevada; Galleries Cui-ui and the River Gallery in Reno, Nevada; and most recently at the Holland Project in Reno, Nevada. His work is in many private collections throughout the United States, Europe, and South America.

## WORKS LIST

*Starting at the window and front entrance of the HP Gallery,  
all works oil on canvas.*

1. (window) *Pyramid Lake's Pinnacles, Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation, Nevada, 20 x 60 inches*
2. (entrance) *Over the Pyramid, Pyramid Lake, Nevada, 24 x 30 inches*
3. *The Last Land of Broken Dreams. California State Highway 127, Fifteen Miles North of Baker, California. c.1994, 16 x 41.5 inches*
4. *Apache on the Playa, 24 x 30 inches*
5. *Portrait of the Artist Age Six, c.1967*
6. *Drawing of woman on bear by artist's paternal grandmother Naomi Katz, c. 1936*
7. *The Late, Great, Nevada Club, of Reno. c. 1996., 30 x 40 inches*
8. *Summer Monsoon Vigas Over the I-80 Corridor, Tracy to Sutcliffe Power Lines, and the Pah Rah Range at Sunset, 20 x 60 inches*
9. *Union Pacific EMD SD45 7521 Working the the Sparks, Nevada Yard, c. 1995, 24 x 28 inches*
10. *Full Moon Rise Over the Desert Moon Motel, Las Vegas, Nevada, 48 x 23.75 inches*
11. *The Late, Great, Zephyr Bar. South Virginia Street, Reno, 24 x 36 inches*
12. *Roy's. US highway 66 at Amboy, California, 24 x 18 inches*

13. *Pussycat a' Go-Go, Las Vegas, Nevada*, 24 x 36 inches
14. *The Safari Motel, Sparks, Nevada*, 36 x 18 inches
15. *Interstate 80 Detail Revisited*, 30 x 40 inches
16. *Lucky Motel, East 4th Street, Reno*, 34 x 20 inches, SOLD
17. *Morris Hotel, East 4th Street, Reno*, 40 x 20 inches
18. *Reno View Motel*, 22 x 27.75 inches
19. *Lucky Boy Dresden*, c. 2012
20. *Union Pacific in the Black Rock Desert During the Golden Hour*, 12 x 36 inches
21. *Southbound Pink Truck, Northbound White Truck, Nevada State Route 447 at Limbo, Nevada*, 12 x 48 inches
22. *Louella Flanagan Stands Amid the Destruction Caused by Her Paternal Grandfather's First Raid, Operation Tidal Wave, the Mission to Strike Ploesti, Romania, 1943*, 36 x 22 inches
23. *Mousekateers at the Ivy Mike Shot*, 1952, 30 x 24 inches
24. *Joe Castello Representing*, 36 x 24 inches
25. *Surf Sun Valley. Landlocked*, 60 x 46 inches