

ON EXHIBIT: THE ARTWORK OF STEVEN LEAHY

“While the predominant subject for my work has been aviation, I have begun to realize that it really isn’t *what* I paint, but *that* I paint. Seeking out the colors in the reflected light on the underside of an F/A-18 is the same as seeking out the colors in the reflected light on the side of a face. Each painting has its own challenges, and all have their rewards.”





Steve Leahy has been working as a professional illustrator since graduating in fine arts from the University of Massachusetts in 1991. His love of depicting photo-realism themes has earned him top awards at the AirVenture show in Oshkosh, Wis., in 1997, 1998 and 1999, the Publisher's Award for Artistic Excellence in the 1998 American Society of Aviation Artists forum in Wichita, Kans., and inclusion in the 33rd Society of Illustrators show in New York. He has two paintings displayed in the National Museum of Naval Aviation, Pensacola, Fla., and an interview in the April 2001 issue of *Airbrush Art and Action* magazine.

Aviation and art have always been a part of Steve's life. He grew up in a town situated in the flight paths of two airports where planes flew overhead daily. His artistic bent was influenced by his father as Steve watched him produce mechanical drawings, and by his uncle who is a retired Marine Corps helicopter pilot and combat artist.

Steve summed up the essence of his art: "Every day of our lives we are bombarded by an enormous amount of experiences, so much so that we miss most of the miracles in the overload. In my artwork I capture some of those magnificent moments and offer the viewer the



Opposite, *Hornet High*; top, *Roger Ball, Hornet*; and above, *Uncle Jet & Peanut*.

opportunity to stop and experience them as I have. The paintings transcend photo-realism in that every work is a translation of that small piece of time through my eyes—compositions that now fill the surface with detail and finally have the ability to demand our attention."