

IN MEMORIAM

JOHN BOHNENBERGER

February 29, 1926 – January 9, 2012

CAC MEMBER AND WATER-COLOURIST **John Bohnenberger** was born on May 29, 1926 in Chicago, Illinois to **George and Magdalene Bohnenberger**. John served in the U.S. Army from 1943 to 1946 and later worked for the U.S. Post Office in Monterey Park from 1947 to 1972. Bohnenberger was primarily a self-taught artist, although he studied under the water-colourist **Jan Kunz**. In 1994 he moved to the Atherton Retirement Community in Alhambra, California. John passed away on Monday, January 9, 2012.

In 1998 Bohnenberger received an honourable mention from the **California Art Club's 88th Annual Gold Medal Exhibition** and second place in the Club's Second Annual *Sights and Sounds of Santa Ana Plein Air Painting Event* held at the **Bowers Museum** in Santa Ana, California.

California Art Club Artist Member, **Catherine Hill**, remembers John Bohnenberger:

"I remember seeing his bold watercolour paintings many years ago. I thought, 'Who is this amazing artist?' Finally, in an exhibition with the **San Gabriel**

Art Association, someone said, 'There's the great John Bohnenberger' Where? I looked. There! I saw a thin little guy wearing a hat. Later, I got to know him. My husband **Mark** and I painted with John on Thursdays in a plein air group from the San Gabriel

Art Association. John always said that if he went a day without painting, he didn't feel right. If he was really happy with his painting that day, he would slap it down and say, 'Eat your heart out!' We loved it! He must have won enough award ribbons to stitch them together to make twelve quilts! John was an inspirational sight—throwing water wildly from his brushes and using his self-made desk table from a VHS display box that he tied around his legs, and when he was finished working,

he folded into a carrying suitcase. John's work had a bold and sure-of-itself quality, but he was shy about his talent, always avoiding doing demos, and was intimidated by other professional artists. But they were in awe of him. Painting seemed to come magically and easily to him. He was truly John the Magician."



John the Magician
Oil on board 12" × 16"
A remembrance by Catherine Hill