



**#MuseumAtHome with the
Elmhurst Art Museum**

Sandra Jorgensen



Here is an edited list of some of her passions: shoes, Willie Nelson, her garden, Schubert, Mies van der Rohe, playing the piano, the perfect clam sauce (I have her recipe), singing, teaching, Georgia O'Keeffe, travel, Arshile Gorky, her house, Mondrian, her church, Edward Hopper, swimming laps. -Margaret Hawkins, writer and critic

Let's Get Started



[Click here to virtually tour the Sandra Jorgensen exhibition](#)

Close to Home



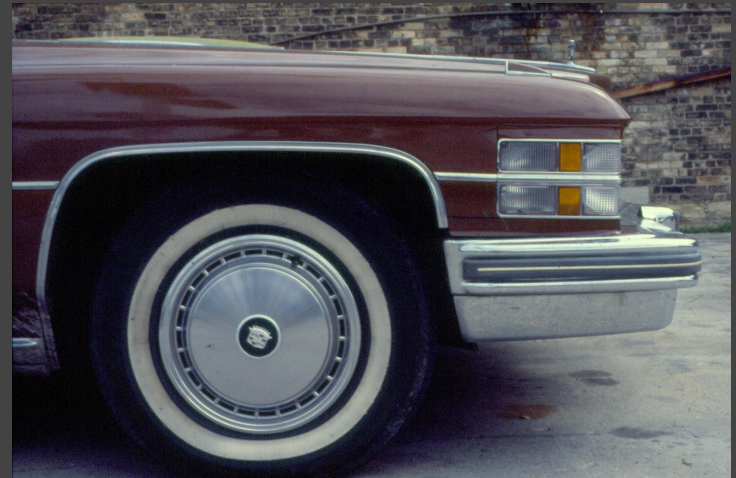
Sandra Jorgensen, Prospect Magazine, Winter 2000. Image courtesy of Elmhurst College

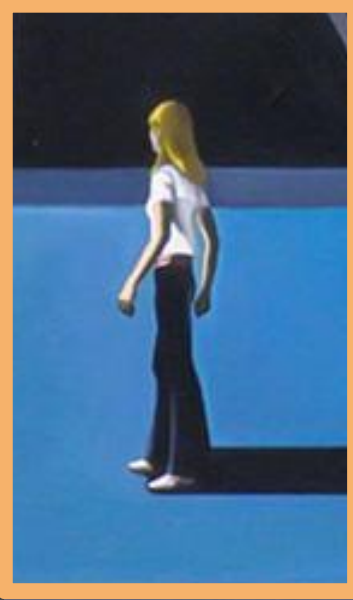
Sandra Jorgensen (1934–1999) brought eclectic interests and various inspirations together in her work as an artist, curator, and professor—which continues to influence local and wider communities. She was influenced by her hometown-Elmhurst, personal items, her home studio, and her imagination. In this guide, we'll explore work from each of Jorgensen's series, to see her various influences throughout her artistic career.

Elmhurst & Herb's Texaco

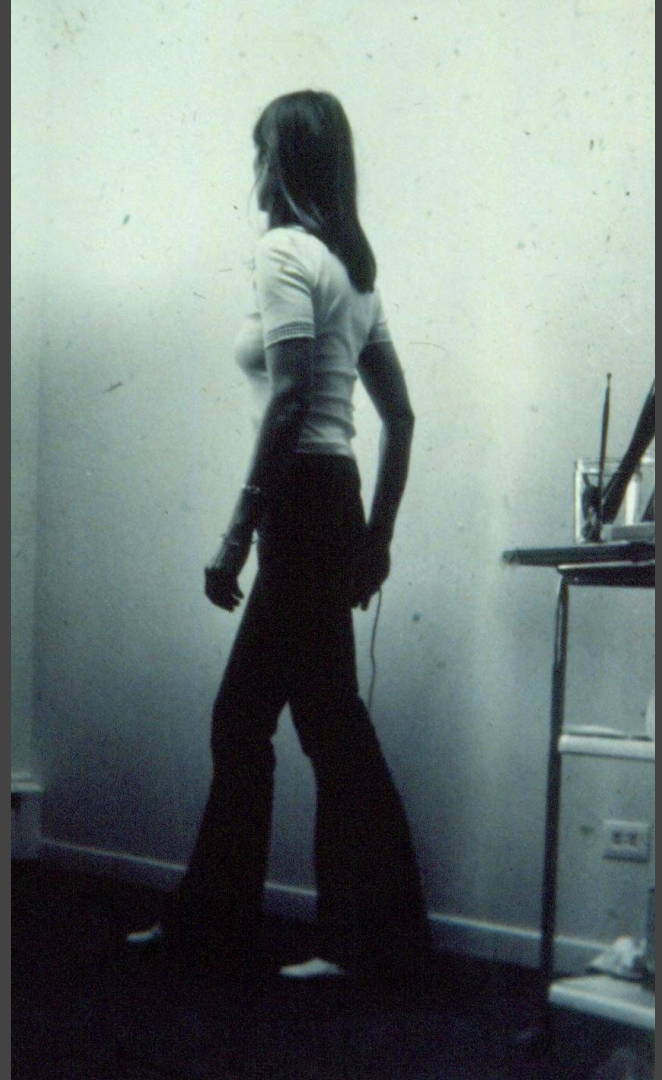
Jorgensen found inspiration all around her, making iconic paintings out of places and things that others would dismiss as commonplace. For instance, she devoted an entire series of her work to a seemingly ordinary gas station in Elmhurst.

This series, from the 1980's, always featured a garage, a front end of a car, a road towards the horizon, and another landmark, such as a water tower or house. She would customize each work by changing her color palette and including different figures, including herself.





While many of her pieces are autobiographical through their references, this series is also one of very few that actually picture Jorgensen. She took photographic studies in her studio first and inserted herself into scenes of the Herb's Texaco series.



Far Right: Sandra Jorgensen, Self-Portrait in studio. Courtesy of Elmhurst College



Sandy and I had the good fortune to travel a lot together. We never had destinations per se. We had quests — her quests—her fabulous quests. For instance, all the Woolworths in Indiana, or eleven states in ten days, or, last summer, searching for Grant Wood landscapes in Iowa by holding pictures she brought and matching them to the landscape, or a long trip to photograph every Texaco from here to California—via Texas.
-Becky Kallem, Jorgensen's former student and longtime friend

*Herb's Texaco, 1984, oil on canvas.
Collection of Harriet Goetz.*



Herb's Texaco V, 1981, oil on canvas. Courtesy of Phyllis Carroll.



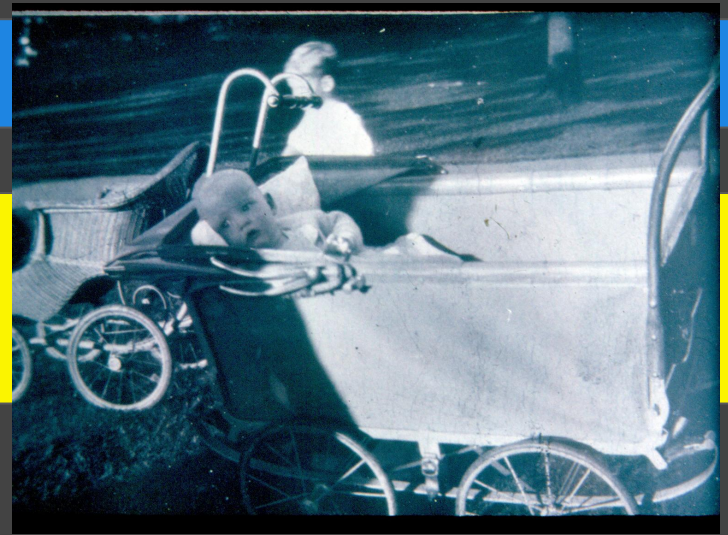
Can you think of a favorite place that you like to capture with a photograph? A sketch? A painting? A journal entry? Do you keep a souvenir from your travels? A postcard? A book?

Herb's Texaco, 1978, pastel on paper
Elmhurst Art Museum Collection. Gift
of the artist.

Jorgensen & Her Buggy

Jorgensen's buggy paintings are in some ways the most personal, and yet also the most abstract compositions of her career. She broke down the picture into geometric colored shapes, while also allowing the represented image to show.

Sandra Jorgensen's buggy was an important memory from her childhood. She depicted this buggy in a series of painting, sketches, and prints throughout the 1980s.



Sandy was my sister. She was nine years old when I was born. When I was a baby, Mom would send Sandy out to push me in my carriage until I fell asleep. To speed the process, Sandy would aim the carriage so the sun was on my face, and I would have to shut my eyes — and fall asleep faster. -Karen Behanna, Jorgensen's sister



What is your fondest item from your childhood? Do you still have it tucked away or on display in your home? Does this item hold a special memory?

Inspired by something in your home? Share it with us on social media, with the tag #elmhurstmuseum

Previous Slide: *Sandra Jorgensen in Her Buggy* circa 1935. Courtesy of Elmhurst College Art Collection.

Left: *Buggy #7*, 1977, oil on canvas. Courtesy of Elmhurst College Art Collection, gift of the artist.
Top:



Sandra Jorgensen often drew inspiration from her own home and neighborhood. She used photographic and works on paper as studies for her paintings, often using some of the same angled roof and fence in the left image.

How would you draw your home? Do you have a lot of trees? Flowers? A fence? Do you have a swing set? Basketball hoop?



Buggy Drawing, 1987, pastel on paper. Courtesy of Illinois Legacy Collection, Illinois State Museum, Gift of Kent Smith.

Jorgensen & Her Gardens

Jorgensen loved to work in her garden and swim. She chose to complete a series of paintings and sketches featuring a tight composition straight from her own imagination. The garden scenes often featured a central pool, a set of trees, stairs, and a home with the lights on.

Would you like to jump in the pool at night? Does it look like nice and calm? Can you hear the sounds of a garden at night? How about the crickets? What do you think the people are doing in the home?





Previous page: Garden Pool with Round Window, 1983, pastel on paper. Courtesy of The Ruttenberg '52 Collection.
Above: Small Precipice, 1988, oil on canvas. Courtesy of Marcia and Robert Goltermann.



Garden Pool with Steps I, 1982,
pastel on Mi-Tientes paper.
Elmhurst Art Museum
Collection . Gift of the Frank W.
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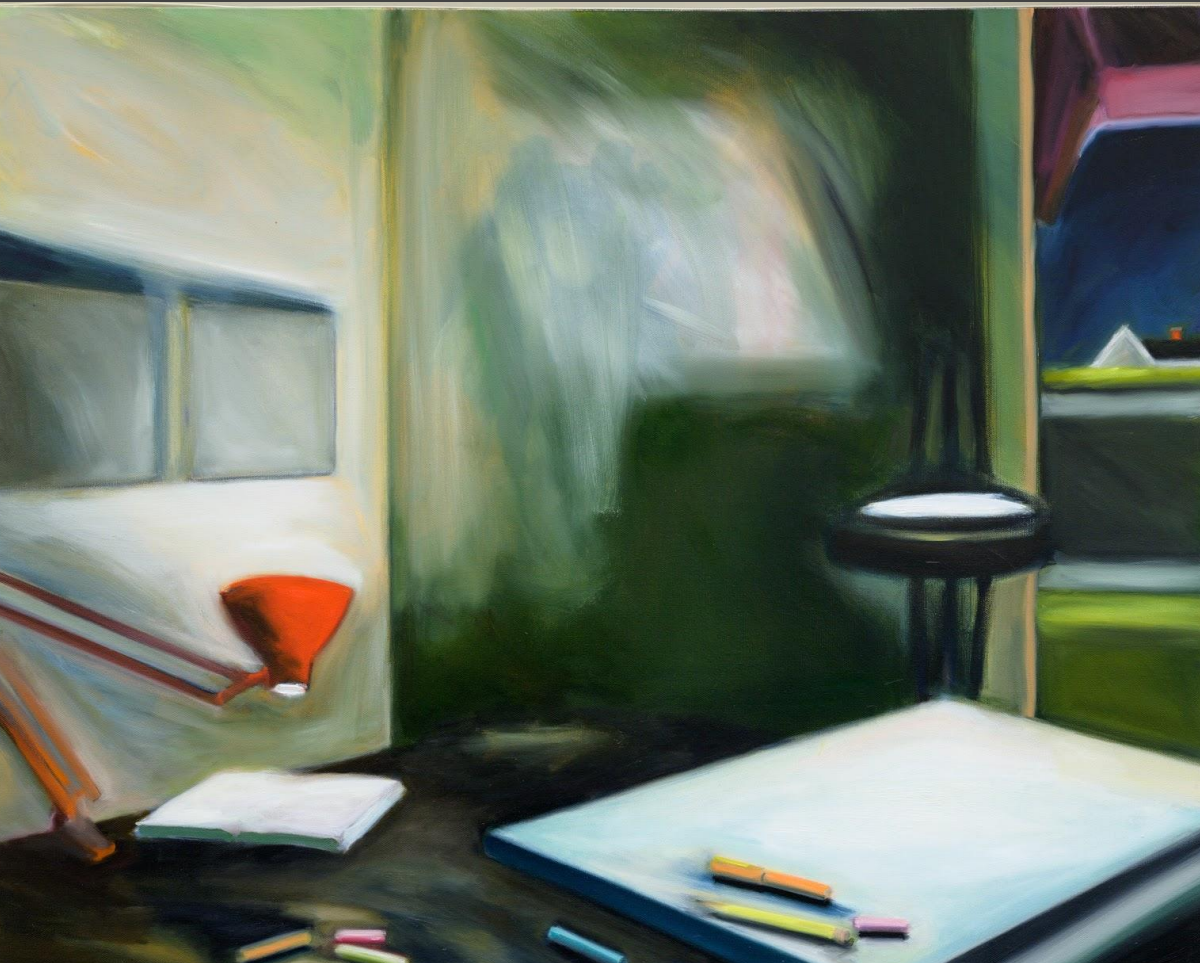
In Her Home Studio

Later in her life, Jorgensen worked primarily from her at-home studio. She composed sketches and paintings of still lifes and landscapes. While her landscapes were inspired by memories from her childhood and travels, her still lifes were based on staged photographs and renderings from her own sketchbook. She would sometimes copy her original images, make a print, then hand draw marks on it to make it unique.





Passing Storm, 1994-1997, oil on canvas. Collection of Elmhurst Art Museum Collection. Gift of Holly Cohn, Mary McKean and Friends of Sandra Jorgensen



Jorgensen often used items from her home studio to compose her still life paintings and sketches. You'll see her red lamp and sketch book appear in many works. Jorgensen also featured her artist tools on her desk in some of her work.

What items would you include in your still life artwork? Is there a room in your home where you feel the most creative? What are your favorite artistic tools to use? Painting? Colored pencils? computer?



Sketches in Sandra Jorgensen's studio.
Courtesy of Elmhurst College Art
Collection.

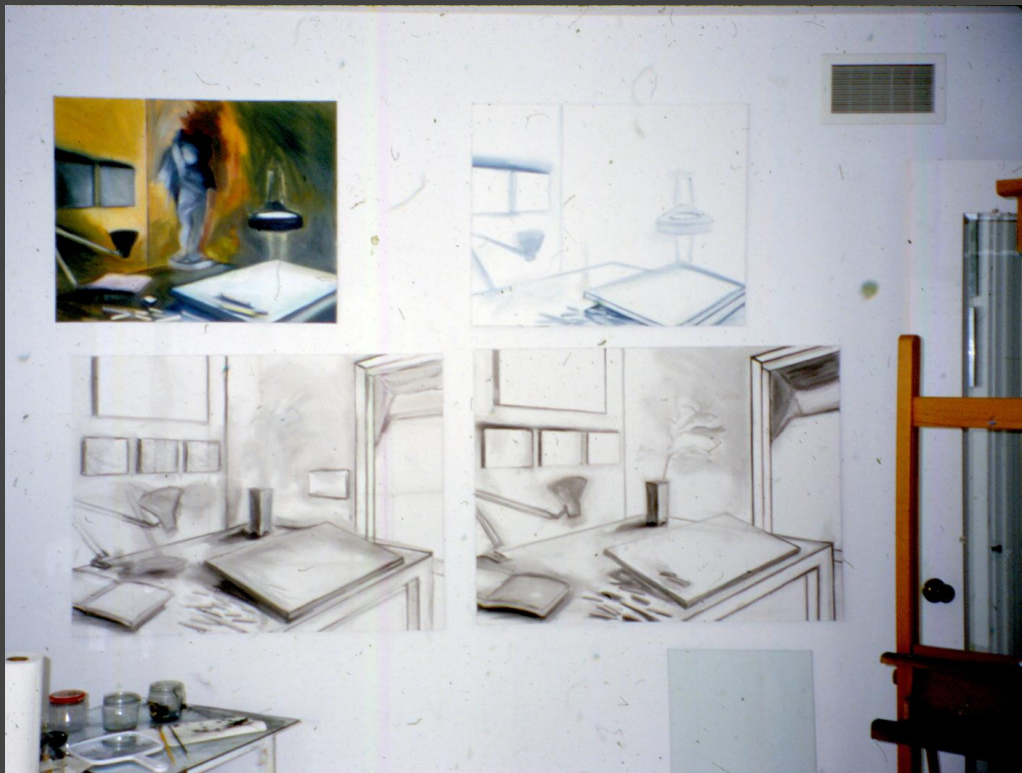


Top: Photograph of Desk by Sandra Jorgensen. Courtesy of Elmhurst College Art Collection.

Left: *Student Still Life with Blue Sky*, 1991, pastel on paper. Courtesy of Mal and Mickey Poland



Top: *Figurine*, 1997, pastel on gray paper. Private Collection
Right: Photographs of Sandra Jorgensen's studio and still life sketches. Courtesy of private collection.



Sandra & Other Artists

Sandra Jorgensen's work was inspired by other artists as well. She had a special interest in Edward Hopper, Georgia O'Keeffe, Piet Mondrian, Roger Brown, Mies van der Rohe, and Arshile Gorky. Our museum docents saw hints of Roy Lichtenstein's influence as well.

What other artist's do you think could have inspired Sandra? What other artists inspire you? How do other artists inspire your creative projects? What do you like about their work?



Sandra Jorgensen's studio with a Roger Brown painting (top left). Courtesy of Elmhurst College Art Collection.



On the left, we have Sandra Jorgensen's mural from the Sulzer Library, Chicago, 1985 and on the right, we have Roger Brown's *See Seven Cities*, 1971. Can you see how Brown's painting style influenced her own work? Can you see some differences?

Jorgensen & Music

Sandra Jorgensen loved to listen to music. She would often include her musical inspirations in her painting. From Schubert to Willie Nelson, music was a constant throughout her life. Jorgensen also celebrated local musicians by designing album covers for the Elmhurst College Jazz Band.

If you were a friend of Sandy's, you now look at a piece of art with a little more scrutiny. Perhaps you can recognize a Schubert melody. You most certainly can sing a Willie Nelson song. -Karen Behanna, Jorgensen's sister





Willie Nelson and the Lamb of God,
1981-1983, oil on canvas.

Courtesy of the Gray Family



D.960, 1997, pastel on paper
Courtesy of Julie Dreebin



Pawnbroker, 1995, pastel on paper
Courtesy of Doug and Vivian Beach



The Dark Corner, 1998, pastel on paper
Courtesy of Doug and Vivian Beach



Inspired by
Sandra Jorgensen:
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PRESS

Daily Herald

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More on Sandra Jorgensen



More on Sandra Jorgensen's Artistic interests and influences

Edward Hopper

[Museum of Modern Art, New York](#)

[Whitney Museum of American Art, New York](#)

Piet Mondrian

[Tate Modern, London, UK](#)

[San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco](#)

Georgia O'Keeffe

[Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Arkansas](#)
[Art Institute, Chicago](#)

Roy Lichtenstein

[Los Angeles Contemporary Museum of Art](#)
[Huntington Museum of Art, West Virginia](#)

Arshile Gorky

[The Guggenheim, New York](#)

[Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia](#)

Roger Brown

[Smart Museum, Chicago](#)

[School of the Art Institute, Chicago](#)

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to see images of
works by her
favorite artists
and influences.**



Sandra Jorgensen's sketch book. Courtesy of Elmhurst College Art Collection.

Thank you to exhibition sponsors
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and Elmhurst College

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Thank you to Brian Clair,
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