

# ArtStory

Pursuing quality of life.

## Jenny Forge-Schmalstieg

### Genre:

Pastels

### Associations & Awards:

Gem of the Plains Art Association

Midamerica Pastel Society

Wildlife Artist Association

Best of Show,

Operation Wildlife Art Show, 2005

Best of Show,

Midwest Artist Association

Fall Membership Exhibition, 2004

First Place,

16th Annual National Rural Life  
Art Exhibition, 2004

[www.jennyforge-schmalstieg.com](http://www.jennyforge-schmalstieg.com)



In the world of Jenny Forge-Schmalstieg, nature thrives. Animals play. Life pulses. However, these precious seconds of life are captured unmoving in mid-air and mid-beat.

Using pastel, she shows wildlife and nature in action and does so with uncanny grace and adept control. An amazing feat considering that aside from a few high school art classes, she is self-taught. Even more astounding – she's only been working with pastels for a few years. Still, she is able to create a lifelike quality in her work that regularly draws double takes. "A lot of people think they're photographs," she laughs.

She credits the medium for contributing to the realistic images she strives for. "I worked with acrylic before and I couldn't get the softness and the realness that I can get with pastels. Pastels are immediate. I don't have to worry about mixing paint or waiting for it to dry. I get instant gratification when I'm working."

At 35, Schmalstieg draws much of her inspiration from the world around her. She and her husband own and operate a dairy farm in Effingham, Kan. and her work naturally reflects the animals and nature she sees every day. But beyond that, her life has always revolved around animals. "I look back at the stuff that I drew when I was little and it was always animals. I grew up on a farm and was around them all the time."

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*–Jenny Forge-Schmalstieg*



However, it's hard for her to explain what it is about these creatures that captivates her and pours out through her from one work to the next. "Animals represent to me, how everything and everyone is connected," she says. "My hope is that my artwork will inspire an awareness of that connection and remind people of the beauty in this world."