



Eldridge Hardie

1940 - 2021

Eldridge Hardie, one of the preeminent sporting artists of our time and a man of great humanity, integrity and a steely but lightly worn resolve, passed away August 11 following a heart attack. He was 81. Hardie (above, left) and his wife, Ann, had lived in the same art- and book-filled home in the University Park neighborhood of Denver for more than 50 years, and it was there, in his cluttered upstairs studio, that he created some of the most evocative and enduring images that have ever stirred a sportsman's soul. The cornerstones of Hardie's subject matter were upland bird hunting, waterfowling, gundogs and fly-fishing, and he was that rare artist who was equally adept working in watercolors or oils (to say nothing of his pencil drawings, which were spectacular).

Named for—and inspired by—his uncle Eldridge King, a successful commercial artist in New York City, Hardie grew up in El Paso. He earned

a degree in fine arts from Washington University in St. Louis; then in 1966, attracted by the trout fishing, he moved to Colorado. He worked as an illustrator and graphic artist until 1970, when he took a leap of faith and hung out his shingle as a full-time sporting artist. His goal from the beginning, he insisted, was “to create paintings that people will want to hang on their walls.”

“I’m essentially a landscape painter,” he once told me. “But because I’m painting landscapes with a sporting narrative, the figures and the action have to be right . . . I just try to pick out things I’m interested in painting.”

Those “things” that Eldridge Hardie painted made an indelible mark—and he unfailingly got it right.

In addition to Ann, Hardie is survived by a daughter, Abby; a son, Tom; four grandchildren and a black Lab named Zinnia. The family suggests that those who’d like to honor Eldridge’s memory make a donation to Metro Caring, <https://giving.metrocaring.org>. —TOM DAVIS