

Go to War; Create Art.

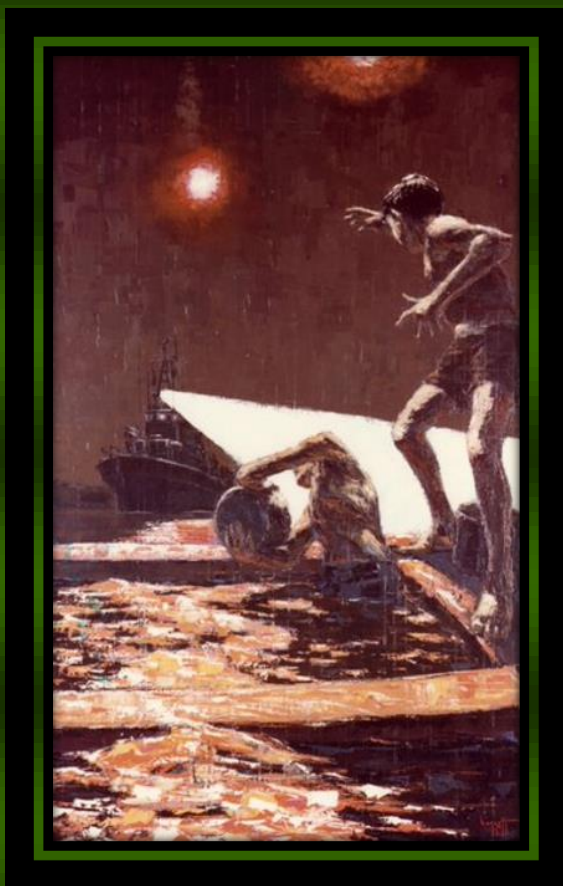
Coast Guard Combat Art in Vietnam



In 1969, esteemed artist Noel J. Daggett was approached by Coast Guard leadership and invited to witness firsthand, the service's contribution to the conflict in Vietnam. On 8 September, Admiral Willard J. Smith, Commandant, informed the Commander, Coast Guard Activities, Vietnam, that Daggett would arrive in-country on Invitational Travel Orders to visit "Coast Guard units, assembling materials which he will later use in producing a series of oil paintings which are to be presented to the service and which almost will constitute a permanent historical record of all Coast Guard activities in that area." Over a period of two months, Daggett's itinerary included patrols on *Point Banks* and *Blackhaw*, trips to Explosive Loading Detachments 1 and 4, visits to MEDCAPs and a School for the Blind. He spent an afternoon with Coast Guard aviator LT Richard V. Butchka before being flown by Jolly Green to Con Son LORAN Station.

Daggett served with the Merchant Marine in World War II, and the Army in Korea. After employment as an illustrator at U.S. Army Headquarters in Heidelberg, Germany, Daggett followed his passion and enrolled in art school. By the early 1960s, he had developed a unique style of patterned mosaic, referred to as "Daggettism." His work has been described as "distinguished by vibrant rhythms, intense colors of rich flavor and an excellent feeling of luminosity."

That is certainly an appropriate description of the works created by Daggett for the Coast Guard. The collection of 40 works was later praised by Dr. H. Lester Cooke, Curator of Painting at the National Gallery as "Among the finest examples of the combat art genre I have ever seen."



Those works are currently held in the Coast Guard Art Program collection. Also included are works depicting the Coast Guard's participation in the war by World War II veteran, master diver and combat artist Apollo Dorian. In 2014, as part of the 50th anniversary commemoration, a project was undertaken to further document the Coast Guard's service in Vietnam. Works by such notable contemporary artists as James Consor, Christine Murphy, Hugh O'Conner, Dino Sistilli, and Jim Stagner were added to the Coast Guard art collection.

