

Renowned artist, Jerry D. Thomas, graduated from Scott Community High School in 1977. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration/Management from Southwestern College in 1981 and worked towards a Master's Degree in Architecture, Community Planning, and Development from Kansas State University. In 1986, Jerry became a full-time artist with encouragement from a group of businessmen and women that formed a partnership to market Jerry's artwork in the U.S. and abroad.

Jerry was drawn at an early age to the nostalgia and excitement of the Wild West and its natural surroundings. The wildlife, trails, and history of the West became an important inspiration for Jerry and his artwork. His attention to detail and countless hours of research have become a hallmark of his realistic images, which are displayed in many private and corporate collections worldwide.

Jerry began publishing his work in 1989, and since has garnered many accomplishments. His list of credits include twice designing the Kansas Wildlife Habitat Award, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Corporate Stewardship Award, the Kansas Governor's Turkey Hunt "Artist of the Year" (following his colleague and mentor, artist Wayne Willis), and the Inaugural Kansas Governor's Ringneck Classic "Artist of the Year". Other honors include being named Kansas Ducks Unlimited Sponsor Artist, National Ducks Unlimited Guest Artist, and Waterfowl U.S.A. Golden Waterfowl Artist, where two of Jerry's famous images were engraved on Browning Arms limited edition guns. Jerry designed the 1992 and 1996 "Tenth Anniversary" Kansas Duck Stamp and has been named Kansas Wildlife Artist of the Year twice, along with being named Waterfowl U.S.A. Celebrity Hunt Artist, Pheasants Forever Artist of the Year, and the Nebraska One Box Association Artist of the Year. His commissions include work for the United States Cavalry Museum, the Little Bighorn Associates, Kansas Association of Conservation Districts, Historic Fort Hays, Fort Larned Old Guard, Coach Bill Snyder and Kansas State University Football, and the Fort Wallace Memorial Association. Jerry's work has been the feature of many magazine articles, book covers, and radio and TV talk shows. He has completed cover illustrations for the Journal of the West, Waterfowl, Military Heritage, and Research and Review of the Little Bighorn Associates, Inc. and the Crow's Nest, the Journal of the Custer Association of Great Britain. The Kansas State Historical Society enlisted Jerry's help in creating book covers of eight historic forts in Kansas through the Frontier Forts of Kansas Network created by Kansas Senator Nancy Landon Kassebaum Baker. His painting, "The River", for the Kansas Wildscape Inc., was instrumental in generating the funds to create the Zach Hudec Memorial Wetlands at Milford Reservoir. The Army Historical Foundation and the National Infantry Association have included Jerry's award winning artwork in their beautiful complete history collector's edition albums.

Jerry has dedicated much of his life to the preservation of our natural and historical heritage. His artwork and passion have generated funding and have been an important part of habitat restoration in the U.S., Mexico, and Canada. His incredible depictions of Native Americans, U.S. Military, and cowboys have helped to preserve important historical sites. The newly established Western Vistas Historic Byway features Jerry's designs along its 102 mile historic route.

On May 1, 2010, Jerry's boyhood home, Scott City, Kansas, honored him with the Grand Opening of the new Jerry Thomas Gallery and Collection. Funded entirely by state and private donors, the Gallery houses Jerry's incredible original artwork and western heritage collection.

Jerry was also inducted into the Southwestern College Fine Arts Hall of Fame in 2012. Just recently, Jerry received Kansas' Finest Award for 2014 for his continued support of Kansas and his promotion of the state's attributes.