

# THE MISSISSIPPI Lawyer

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## LAWYERS *in the* ARTS

### INSIDE

- **Over 70 Lawyers  
Featured in the Arts**
- **An Update on the Financial  
Challenges Facing  
Mississippi's Judiciary**
- **Attorney-Client Privilege  
for In-House Counsel in  
the European Union**

## GAIL NICHOLSON *Gulfport*



It took only a few words of encouragement and affirmation in middle school for Gail Nicholson to set her goals as a painter in motion. “A seventh grade teacher told me I had ability, and I latched on to that,” she recalls. “I majored in fine arts as an undergrad and taught high school art in Memphis for a few years.”

Nicholson paints in oil and says that her attention has been focused on mastering the academic style of masters like Valezquez and Sorolla for the past eight years, concentrating on mood, light, edges, and paint quality. “I paint portraits, life (nude figure), still-life and landscapes,” she notes, adding that while she truly enjoys the creative process, she doesn’t seek out shows. That said, her works have been showcased at such locations as the New Orleans Academy of Fine Art and once at Ohr-Okeefe in the past.

Looking to the future, Nicholson says that she plans to continue exploring the medium of oil painting, pointing out that it wasn’t until recent years that she understood the true skills that had to be mastered before a painter could be competent in a “personal style.”

“It’s a source of joy to me to paint,” she emphasizes, adding that she enjoys discovering the uniqueness of the people and objects she paints. “There is great beauty in people, objects, scenery, light, shadows... and few endeavors allow you to observe and appreciate like painting does.”

Nicholson has been practicing law with husband Chet at Nicholson and Nicholson law firm for 25 years along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. She describes her life as rich with passions and activities, adding that “my husband is endlessly interesting and unpredictable.” Nicholson has five grandchildren, who have all taken up drawing or painting to some degree.

## ALFRED NICOLS *Brandon*



For former Judge Alfred Nicols, the beauty of Southern landscape is “haunting”—so much so that he has spent countless hours over the past 45 years trying to capture images of the familiar surroundings that he loves through his painting. And while his talents with brush and stroke have taken him in many other directions during that timeframe, he notes that his inspiration always brings him back to his homeland.

He points to nostalgic images such as fall fields and meadows following his Dad quail hunting as a boy, fishing small farm ponds during his college days and duck hunting cypress brakes and delta marshes. He emphasizes that “always the objective is to simplify and amplify so as to portray the essence of the land in such a way that viewers can apply their own memories and feel a connection to a special time and place of their own.”

In 2010, one of Nicols’ landscapes was named a finalist in the worldwide landscape competition hosted by *International Artist Magazine*. “This particular year, I was the only artist from the Southeast that made it in the top ten,” he notes.

His art was also recently featured in the Nov/Dec 2009 issue of *Mississippi Magazine*, and he exhibited more than 70 works in a show sponsored by the Greater Jackson Arts Alliance in 2008. His paintings have also graced the walls of the Washington offices for Senator Trent Lott and Senator Roger Wicker as well as the lobby of the new Inn at Ole Miss.

“I’m getting a lot of attention for an old cat,” he quips, adding that he has enjoyed following a new software program that tracks visits to his website. After implementing the tracking software, he was delighted to find that the website garnered more than 3,035 visits from all over the world in sixteen months. “In recent months I have sold art to purchasers in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Mobile, Alabama who used the website to decide on their purchases,” he adds.