

## CHAPTER

9

# Artistic HANDS

**I** REMEMBER WELL DONNING MY FATHER'S OLD DRESS shirt and having my second-grade teacher spread out a big sheet of wet, glossy paper over the newspaper-protected worktable. I enjoyed the ensuing sensual, manual experience if not the final, finger-painted masterpieces. On other days, the class trundled down the hall to the music room where each of us got a set of tiny cymbals, wooden dowels, tambourines, or sandpaper blocks for "Rhythm Band." Unknown to me at the time, both activities were recapitulating the entire human experience of self-expression by creating art with our hands.

It started with our Stone Age ancestors portraying bison, horses, and deer on the walls of their caves, along with silhouettes and prints of their own hands. Thirty thousand years later, the fascination continues. For all artists, hands are tools. For some artists, hands are subjects, and in case you haven't tried, drawing a credible hand is hard. Portrait artists know this and charge considerably more if a sitter wants their hands as well as their face captured on canvas. Let's have a look at hands in art.

The Hand Owner's Manual

Other topics covered in Chapter 9: Artistic Hands

**HANDS, PAINTED AND CARVED**

History of hand art

**MUSEUM HANDS**

Hand swelling

**FINGER PAINTING**

Serious painters who discarded brushes

**I CAN QUIT ANYTIME I WANT**

Collecting ceramic hand vases

**GIANT HAND SCULPTURES**

A world-wide guide to visiting public art

**NAZCA LINES**

The largest hand drawings are in Peru

**DID PIANISTS ASK TO HAVE THEIR TENDONS CUT?**

Fact or fiction from the 1800s?

**HOW MUCH DO MUSICIANS PRACTICE?**

Advice and observations from professional musicians

**LEGENDARY MUSICAL HANDS**

Rachmaninoff and Paganini

**WAVING HANDS**

The art of conducting

**APPLAUSE**

The physics of clapping

**IN A MANNER INCAPABLE OF IMITATION**

Hand gestures in dance