Vincent A. Hartgen was an artist, educator and museum director. He was born in Reading, Pennsylvania, on January 10, 1914, the son of William J. and Jane Hadfield Hartgen. He received a bachelor of fine arts degree in 1940 and a master’s degree in fine arts in 1941, both from the University of Pennsylvania. After serving with the U.S. Army from 1942-1945, he came to the University of Maine in 1946 as head of the newly formed art department. Over the next 37 years, Professor Hartgen built the department, extended the variety of courses, and taught some 10,000 students, helping them to understand and appreciate art. As curator of the university art collection, he also added greatly to its holdings, organized traveling exhibits to secondary schools in the state, and hung works of art in offices and public spaces on the university’s campus. Hartgen retired from the university in 1983 as the John Homer Huddleston Professor of Art and was awarded an honorary doctorate of letters in 1991.

Professor Hartgen painted and sketched extensively throughout his career, completing over 3500 works in watercolor and pen and ink. He had more than 75 one-man shows in addition to his annual lawn show at his home in Orono. His works are represented in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Brooks Memorial Museum in Memphis, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Houston, and the Walker Art Institute in Minneapolis, among many others. He also served on the Maine Arts Commission and was a member of the Maine Coast Artists and the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts.

Vincent Hartgen married Frances Lubanda, whom he had met in high school, in 1940. Their twin sons, David and Stephen, were born in 1944. Professor Hartgen died on November 27, 2002.