

Debra Carpenter

With both parents in administration and academics, I, even at a young age, had an extensive array of art education available to me for the asking. We moved often and the only constant was my art. I received my first box of oils in 1969... which I had to earn, and that began a lifelong obsession.

Graduated HS in 1971, 6 months later, left to travel Europe and the near East for the next 5 years. Until 1980, I painted only what I saw (realism), and what I had seen of old masters. This taught me techniques, light, color, and subject. 1982 returned to study, at University of Memphis, majoring in Fine Arts with intensive focus on painting, and at my mother's insisting, minored in graphic, and interior design ("to make a living", she said). Under the influence of my 3 professors for individual study - one of whom studied under Hans Hoffman, so emphasized color, another the head of the graphic design dept., focused on design, layout and perspective, and the last taught his interpretation of Jung's archetype, of the artist subconscious... a metaphysical, subconscious awareness. At the end, they collectively, told me, "If you are going to be a painter then the rest is up to you. Go paint!" That was 1987... I did work as an interior designer, and painting commissions and wall murals ('to make a living') 'til 2002 and, other than an occasional mural have painted for myself ever since.

After all these years I am still a novice! I am still challenged! I allow my subconscious to see the subjects of my paintings in the letters (Dear Elijah) that each canvas begins with, letters I write to my son... With my archetype freed, I paint because I must, I paint for me.

Exhibits include:

Phillippy Gallery April 1991 (3 person exhibit)
Shainburg Gallery December 1991 (2 person exhibit)
Schering Plough Gallery June 1991 (2 person)
Miller Gallery Aug 1992 (hung)
Eads Gallery July 1991 (2 man show)
St. Augustine Art Association Gallery 2014-16 (hung)
Twisted Laurel 2016
TRAC Burnsville 2018 (solo exhibit)
Guerilla Gallery 2020 (3 man)
Blue Mountain Gallery 2019-2020
Web site. Dearelijah.com since 2004
Article in Asheville Laurel June 2017
Article 'Artist next door' Family', in FL 2012

"IF THE VOICE INSIDE YOUR HEAD SAYS 'you can't paint' THEN PAINT, AND THE VOICES WILL BE SILENCED!" – Van Gogh

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