

Vicki Byrum Dennis

“Get the Message Out” Exhibit
Arts Benicia November-December 2020

Creative Vision

Water is my secret weapon. I love its fluidity, its unpredictability. The joy of mixing water with pigment, whether watercolor or acrylic, drives most of my art. I have learned to let the water speak for itself. It goes where it wants to go. I can only go along for the ride.

I have a curious mind. I paint what I want the world to be. I paint with strong color, strong shapes, strong composition. Sometimes I add bits of paper, fabric and other fun stuff to build an even more organic painting.

As a Kentucky woman who now calls California home, I’ve built a California sense of openness and belief in possibility on a solidly southern foundation. I care deeply about issues of our time. In my art work, I often turn to the themes such as climate crisis, social injustice or women's issues.

This amazingly strange year has provided artists everywhere sources of information and inspiration. I believe we are all struggling to process and capture our feelings in our creative work. Artists are perhaps luckier than some since we have outlets for expressing our dismay, anger, fear, anxiety, all the while trying to find the happiness and beauty that occasionally bubbles up between the cracks. I found happiness in celebrating the victories in particular the Centennial of the Women’s Suffrage Act which was signed into law on August 26, 1920. As a life-long feminist, I have worked on voter registration and voter turnout projects in past and present elections. I am so grateful for the women in our history who never gave up the struggle. It is due to them that I can and am politically active today.

Artist Statement for *The March*

The March is part of a series created to celebrate the Centennial of the passage of the Women's Suffrage Act, August 26, 1920. It celebrates the strong women who fought so hard and marched for so long to finally get the vote for women. While I am inspired by so many of the women of history who never gave up, I am particularly moved by the words of one of the world’s best known suffragists, Susan B. Anthony: "I declare to you that woman must not depend upon the protection of man, but must be taught to protect herself, and there I take my stand."

Resume

- Born and raised in Louisville, Kentucky. Bachelors’ and Masters’ degrees in English Literature. Moved to California in 2014
- Long-time writer, public relations and communications consultant
- Began painting as a hobby in 1999, primarily in watercolor

•Exhibited in galleries and special shows in both Kentucky and California. In Benicia, my work can be seen at HQ Gallery, 331 First Street, 333-D First Street and at my studio in the historic Arsenal Art District, Studio 216, 991 Tyler Street, Benicia.

Exhibits

- The March**, Arts Benicia, “Get the Message: Words and Images,” juried exhibit, November 2020
- Protection**, Mendocino Arts Center, “Together Apart,” members on-line juried exhibit, June 2020
- Daylily in Red**, Marin Society of Artists, “Expressions,” exhibit, San Rafael, California, national juried exhibit, June-July, 2019
- Wildfire**, Healdsburg Center for the Arts, “Reflectivity: Artists on Climate Change,” Healdsburg, California, national juried exhibit April – June, 2019
- Painted Ladies, Gallery 216 at Estey Realty, Benicia, CA. One of four women painters featured, February, 2019. Showcasing nine of my watercolor paintings.
- Wildfire**, 55th Annual Nor-Cal Regional Juried Art Show, Fairfield-Suisun City Visual Arts Association, November 201
- Lemon Women**, Arts Benicia, “In the Fields: Botanical Lore,” juried exhibit, November, 2018
- Arts Benicia, “The Art of the Community,” Benicia, California, annual members exhibitions, 2014-2019
- Holiday show, Umpqua Bank, Benicia, 2017 - 2019
- Solo show at Umpqua Bank, Benicia, 2017
- American Canyon Arts Foundation annual exhibit, 2015, 2017. In 2015, I was awarded second place in the watercolor division for my painting, **The Joy of Koi**.
- Birth of the Blues**, series of 12 paintings exhibited as featured artist, Gallerie Renee Marie, Benicia, 2016
- Daylily in Red**, Gallery 104, La Grange, Kentucky, “Red” exhibit, 2014. Awarded Best of Show
- Awakening**, awarded first place, Jewish Community Center, Emerging Artists Exhibit, Louisville, Kentucky, 2010.
- Annual Kentucky Watercolor Society member exhibit, 2007 – 2014
- Metropolitan Women’s Club of Louisville juried show, 2011 – 2013

Galleries

- HQ Gallery, Benicia, California, 2018-Current, hqgallery.org
- Java Point Cafe, Benicia, California, exhibiting member of the Camel Barn Painters, 2016-2020
- Gallerie Renee Marie Contemporary Art Co-Op, Benicia, California, 2015 - 2018
- Gallery 104, La Grange, Kentucky, 2009 – 2014.

Workshops & Classes

- Diane Williams & Chuck Potter, Benicia, 2018
- Mary Parkerson, Benicia, 2019-2020
- Robert Burridge, Mendocino Arts Center, Mendocino, CA 2016
- Dale Leitenin, Martinez Arts Association, Martinez CA 2015
- Throughout the years, I've taken other workshops and classes with nationally known artists such as Laura Lein-Svencer, Carol Cooper, Sterling Edwards, Elise Beattie, Judy Greenberg, Karlyn Holman, and Gail McDaniel.

Art Advocacy

- Arts Benicia, Board of Directors, 2016 – Present. Currently servicing as Vice-Chair of the Board
- Arts Association of Oldham County Kentucky, 2011-2014. Served as Vice-Chair and coordinated a marketing strategic planning process