

# BETH AVARY

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The impressive beauty of artist Beth Avary’s paintings has a way of transcending viewers from the struggles of daily life to a place of peace and tranquility. Avary’s passion for beauty and acknowledging the good in the world are reflected in her work and in her philosophy on art.

“I feel there is a high beauty in this world beyond the daily strife of our experiences—a kind of truth that I like to hold in my mind’s eye when I work,” Avary says. “There is something above all the difficulties, and it is beautiful and good. As an artist, I get to express that feeling with form, color and design.”

Avary delights in the fact that others feel the beauty and healing quality of her work. A woman with cancer wrote her a letter saying that looking at her painting had helped her significantly during her illness.

Many of Avary’s paintings are complex, and oftentimes viewers don’t grasp the full nature of her work immediately. “Patrons keep discovering new things as they look at my paintings and discover things they hadn’t seen before,” she ex-

plains. “I don’t hide images on purpose in the paintings, but because of the complexity, some things are in shadow.”

Avary, who studied at the Chicago Art Institute and Northwestern University before graduating cum laude from the California College of Arts and Crafts, started out with a focus on abstract work, which she believes was a good foundation for composition. “I think of my work in abstract terms, even though



▶ “Sunset Ride,” an oil on canvas, 36 x 48 inches



▶ “Savanna,” an oil on canvas in three panels, 30 x 40 inches



▲ “Woman With Shadows,” an oil on canvas, 18 x 24 inches

there is subject matter,” Avary says. “I think in terms of abstract shape and color.”

Avary creates landscapes that have a magical quality and is excited about her new series of figurative paintings of women that she calls “Faces of Eve.” Avary has had many favorite pieces over the years, and right now she especially likes one of the paintings from her new series called “Woman With Shadows” (shown above). “I like the way her eyes sparkle through the shadows playing on her skin,” she says. Her work is available in both originals and limited-edition giclées and typically ranges in size from 9 x 12 inches to 3 x 4 feet.

Avary has had many solo and group

exhibitions as well as museum shows. She has been represented in galleries throughout the country. Recently, one of her pieces titled “Summer’s End” was accepted into the “Blossom—Art of Flowers” show, sponsored by the Susan Kathleen Black Foundation. Avary’s piece was one of 50 paintings selected from 1,742 entries. The show opened at the Houston Museum of Natural Science and will travel to several museums over the next few years.

Traveling across the globe throughout her life, Avary has had a couple of interesting opportunities abroad, including an invitation from the International Association of Astronomical Artists to travel to Russia. Their goal was to create artwork to garner interest in the American Planetary Society’s joint mission with the Soviets (at that time) to Mars. Several artists collaborated on the project and created paintings of planets and galaxies. Avary was the exhibit director of the show that came out of the experience. “We exhibited in Moscow, and the show came back and toured and went to the Smithsonian Institute and then traveled throughout the country,” she explains. Avary also lived in Japan, a country she says influenced her work.

Drawn to the Romantic and Expressionist works of Pre-Raphaelite painters as well as Van Gogh, Gauguin and other symbolist painters, Avary has drawn and painted for as long as she can remember. “Painting is a form of communication that is different than words,” she says.

“You always grow as an artist. There is never an end to growth, and what keeps me going is the feeling that I’ve accomplished something and mastered something new. It’s such a joy to paint because you see a painting evolve and manifest, and you never know exactly how it’s going to turn out.”



▲ “Autumn Melody,” an oil on canvas, 36 x 24 inches

## AWARDS / RECOGNITIONS:

Best of Show in the 1986 Halley Space Art Exhibit, Los Angeles; First Place in the 1988 New Age Renaissance Fair, San Jose, Calif.; Best of Show and Public Favorite in the 1989 Silicon, San Jose, Calif.; Honorable Mention in the 2004 74<sup>th</sup> Annual Statewide Exhibit, Santa Cruz Art League



▲ “Summer’s End,” an oil on canvas, 18 x 24 inches