

# Carol Perron Sommerfield

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## ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

I took a 34 year break from art as I pursued a successful career as a corporate executive. I returned to painting in mid-2010. As I picked up my paintbrushes after all those years, I realized that my art is not only about images, but also about my own transition and change.

I use representational images as metaphors for themes I am experiencing in my life and work. I seek to evoke a new way of seeing beauty in what is often overlooked in our busy lives. I have a love affair with color and light, and I use both to evoke mood and tell a story in my oils, acrylics, pastels, and watercolors.

My goal is to have the viewer experience the subject – to share my reaction to it. In this pursuit I have been influenced by many artists, each informing a challenge of interest to me. I am smitten with the work of Turner, Wolf Kahn, Eric Aho, Forrest Moses, Tom Thomson, and, more locally, Jock MacRae, Eleanor Goldstein, Meg Lindsay and Ellen Hopkin Fountain. What interests me about them is their ability to express the essential mood of a place through varying levels of abstraction. My still lives have always been influenced by the work of Janet Fish in the 1970's, and Edward Hopper is clearly an influence for my Abandoned series. The Abstract Expressionists have always informed my work and thinking.

I am a bold painter who loves vibrancy and the punch of color and light. However, recently I have challenged myself with subtlety. This summer I continued a series I started a few years ago – the mist series. Here restraint is required and grey is the primary color. It is a very different facet of my style and I have enjoyed both the freedom and constraint that this series requires. I've also moved off into abstraction in my watercolors and my series "Where There's Smoke, There's Blood". And yet I need the balance of bold to keep me centered, and my still life series provides the pizzazz I so desperately need at times. They have big personalities. The best part is that I get to eat the subjects at the end.

I continue to explore and learn. Over the past two years I was granted artist residencies at Arts, Letters and Numbers and Drop, Forge and Tool. At both residencies I immersed myself in failure – for to fail is to create. This was a humbling learning experience since I hate failure. Ironically some of my best work was produced during those residencies. I am grateful for the continued learning offered by Jock MacRae and Gina Bratter. Every artist needs a sounding board, a critical eye, and the push to exceed perceived boundaries and limitations.

I am an optimist and ultimately, regardless of topic, that attitude oozes out of my work. After 34 years of pent up desire to create art, I am exuberantly unleashed to make up for lost time.