

## Judy Dillon

*“My passion for watercolor began twenty years ago when I started studying with Patricia Abraham. I continue to paint, study, experiment and learn. The passion is still there! My style might be called ‘altered realism’. I love color and form, whether in a still life, portrait, or landscape. Mixed media has been creeping into my work and adds new challenges. I enjoy meandering in new directions, playing with paint and paper. I also enjoy painting people in natural poses and settings and do this work on a commission basis only.”*

### **Who are you and what do you do?**

I am an innovator, problem solver, creator (and sometimes destroyer) of art that is of my making in media of my choosing. I meander through various medias and styles. I feel no urgency to please anyone but myself in my work. I usually start with an idea or a simple drawing and let the painting tell me what to do. That means spending as much time studying the work as time spent painting it! At some point, intuition takes over and shows the way to the next step in the process.

Much of the time, I start with an abstract under painting. Just the process of splashing paint on paper forces me to stay looser in the next phases. Painting takes on a whole new feeling when not adhering to some exact subject or form. Even “realistic” subjects become more alive and vibrant with unexpected color.

Painting gives me the chance to create and solve new problems. I can create something that no one has seen quite the same way before. How fun is that!

**What’s your background?** No art in my background! I graduated from UCD and taught elementary school for twenty-one years. I was always creative in a “crafty” way with my



girls and kindergarten students, but didn’t discover watercolor until I took a class with a friend 25 years ago. I was hooked from then on. I painted mostly in the summer, until I retired in 2001. From that time I have painted, taken classes and workshops, shown my work and entered shows. Art is part of me now.

**How has your practice changed over time?** When I began to work in watercolor, I would look at someone else’s beautiful painting and think “If only I could paint something like that, I’d be happy.” Those “things”--roses, faces, flowers, etc., filled my mind and I was striven to paint them.

Now, I look at the painting in front of me and wonder how I can push the reality in a new direction--more color, different medium, line, simplifying. The painting dictates the direction, rather than the reference material.

**Is the artistic life lonely?** No! An artist certainly works alone because only that artist can create that unique piece, but art is a process of concentration leading

to activity. Decisions about color, form, stroke, value, etc. are ongoing in the process. The artist is actively involved in the painting from beginning to end. The artist needs to be alone to hear the painting speak.

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