

Artist Statement

Quiet Shadows

This series entitled ***Quiet Shadows***, is inspired by the story of two young women in Iran murdered for expressing themselves fully in the world, unapologetically. Their story brought to mind my move to Boston to attend art school fifty years ago. Art school was my opportunity to finally be able to express myself fully as a young woman - through art. My art is how I make sense of the world - it allows me to remake and reorganize things that do not make sense into a form that I can understand. I had the chance to discover these things about myself, the Iranian girls never did.

I held this inspiration in the back of my mind, and the feelings it provoked made me want to explore the dichotomy of life, the joy and sorrow, the light and darkness, in my series.

Quiet Shadows began with a specific color palette of yellow ochre, alizarin crimson, ultramarine blue and green gold. I chose this palette based on color swatches I had made because they created a moody palette of unusual colors to reflect my inspiration for the series. I began with play – using this palette across all the panels randomly. I had no images in mind and simply made marks, shapes, and lines responding to each as they were painted. Eventually, a bit of form and structure began to appear.

What became clear was a picture divided into thirds, which felt familiar to me and orderly as a contained space which allowed me to express myself within it. Strata form then began taking shape with layers on top of each other. As I painted over sections, I also scraped, sanded and washed away the top surface. What came through were random marks and lines and new shapes that inspired more drawn lines.

The shapes in this series are curvilinear with some rectilinear lines to offset them. Later, I incorporated a shape that is a touchstone for me – an ancient archetypal human-like shape. I added repetition of shapes in differing sizes for interest and added contrasting values to keep the viewer's eye moving through the painting. I included areas of saturated color near dark moody areas to convey the contrast of darkness and light, joy and sorrow.

The pieces in ***Quiet Shadows*** were made using acrylic paint, collage and pencil on cradled wood panels, four of which are 18” square and one is 24” square.

I'm really pleased with my accomplishment of creating this first series. I love these five paintings and feel they express the push and pull of emotion. Putting a full year of effort into learning a new skill (I'd never taken a painting class before) has given me a deeper understanding of myself and the “why” of the design elements that I am drawn to.

There are three more panels that began as part of this series but have moved in a slightly different direction. I will continue to work on them and perhaps add them to this series when finished.