

CAROL JOHNSTONE

email: windword@cjohnstone.ca

ARTIST STATEMENT

Most of my working life has been spent as production editor/graphic designer and writer. I've been drawing and painting ever since I could hold a crayon (at the age of 6 I won a prize for a water color "painting" of "A Bride and Her Horse"). Painting and reading were my two refuges from the vagaries and vicissitudes of life.

In high school -- Lowell High School in San Francisco, a college preparatory institution, which meant no homemaking or shop -- my more formal training began. I remember an assignment we had to create a bedroom we would like to have where we would feel "safe" (at least that's how I interpreted it). I was sick with a cold that week, and this project captured my imagination. I envisioned a room in a house with a slanted room that overlooked the Pacific Ocean. I painted the plywood walls of the box I made dusty rose that I'd cut a slant in to show it was at the top of the house. I glued balsa wood moulding along the floor and stained in a walnut colour. I made a little balsa wood copy of a Sheridan Lady's writing desk that I'd inherited, staining it walnut. I made a maroon velvet bedspread and curtains on the windows and made a long walk in closet with a bay window at the end with a bench for reading. It was rather elaborate. Needless to say, when I brought it to class, everyone else had used cardboard boxes.

Along the same lines, my first oil painting was called "My Bed." It was based on a pen-and-ink drawing I had done and so was "hard-edge" in a kind of pop art style -- maroon bedspread and with walls and floor in grays, black and white.. My teacher didn't know whether to give me an A or an F -- did I know what I was doing? So, I painted a realistic self portrait with an Alizarin Crimson colour scheme. It was stolen off the wall. I got an A.

I've been painting and drawing sporadically ever since.

Photography is a more recent love that grew out of 30-plus years of Shambhala Buddhist practice and taking a class in photojournalism at Kings College in 1995.

I began doing photography in journalism school with a one-day class on photo journalism. My first photo (of MC Shy Luv) appeared in that weeks edition of the North End News. I fell in love with the craft.