

## Helen Burkett

I am a watercolorist. I've worked in many different media over the years including charcoal, graphite, silverpoint, colored pencil, conte, oil, and acrylic and having done that I know that my real love is transparent watercolor, which uses no opaque pigments, no white or black paint; the white is the paper without any paint and the rich vibrant colors are built up in multiple transparent layers so that the under colors shine through the upper layers.

I arrived in Sarasota in 1974 from the Washington D.C. area where I had studied at the Corcoran School of Art and at the University of Maryland.

The Dutch painter Van Gogh painted in Provence drawn by the strong sun light and Florida provides the same kind of sunlight which creates lustrous shadows and highlights providing nature with a rhythmic dance of line and form.

My work has been included in many exhibitions including those sponsored by AWS, NWS, MWS (now TWCS of A), SEWC (dissolved) SW, FWS, and FSWS as well as having many one person shows during the years I have been making my living as a painter. I joined the Florida Watercolor Society shortly after arriving in Sarasota in 1974 and have been a lifetime member for years. I was awarded lifetime membership in Southern Watercolor in 2019.

Currently my work is on display at the Suncoast Technical College In Sarasota FL where I teach, as well as in various public collections such as those of the Polk Museum, Lakeland, FL; Winter Park Memorial Hospital, Sarasota Memorial Hospital, Orlando Sentinel; Central Florida University; Walt Disney Corp.; Ford Motor Co.; Florida Hospital Center, Eustis, FL; Hayfield Mansion, Louisville, KY; and the Florida State Capital in Tallahassee, FL in addition to numerous private collections nationally and internationally

My article "High Contrast Florals" was published in the July 1996 edition of American Artist magazine and my painting "Vanilla Dream" was included in the International Artist magazine's #72, April/May 2010 edition competition "Flowers and Gardens". The 2008 book "Katherine's World" by Katherine Roland director of the Hilton Leech Studio Gallery includes reference to and images of my work. In addition I am included in Who's Who in American Women 1997---- and Who's Who in America 1998-----.

I feel the influence of many predecessors in my work, Michelangelo da Caravaggio's use of patterns of large areas of extreme light and dark, Charles Burchfield's willingness to attempt to show movement and sound patterns within representational and abstract work, Kandinsky's recognition that the human mind wants to interpret abstract shapes in terms of representational images, as well as the work of many recent and contemporary artists such as Valfred Thelin, and William Pachner.

The following paintings were included in the Ovation show in Sarasota, FL, in 2019.

The "White Dahlia" came about after a visit to the Mendocino Botanical Gardens on a trip in northern coastal California

This basically white painting would be a blank sheet of paper except for the shadows in the negative space painted in varying shades of gray created from greens, purples, and blues which shine softly and make the image of the dahlia visible.

The "Iris" was there in my mind before I put brush to paper as a brilliant dark velvety violet purple that would shimmer against the natural salad of varying shades of green in the background.

The painting "Companions Arrival" was originally titled "Iguana's Banquet". It was inspired by the hibiscus garden at Fairchild Botanic Gardens in Miami. But the large numbers of iguanas in the area also loved the hibiscus garden and this painting is all that remains of that wonderful mass of hibiscus because the iguanas ate them all.