

## **Jan Freeman Long: Biography**

I spent the first half of my childhood living in suburban southern California, and at age 10 my family moved to a small coastal town in southern Oregon. We then resided in a home that had a trail to the beach at the end of the front yard. This setting had a huge impact on me, and spending time out in nature continues to be of great importance.

While living in a rural setting and so close to the ocean I became an astute observer of the natural world and its many interdependent cycles. During long days on beaches or alongside rivers and walking in forests I gleaned that life in the natural world resides solely in the moment, free of the human invention of measured time. This was a significant revelation that has persistently shown up in my work as a painter.

Also at a young age I became fascinated with aerial photographs of the remains of indigenous architecture. I was often astonished by the seamless marriage of utilitarian function with aesthetic form that this “architecture before there were official architects” usually embodied. Rather than registering as primitive these sites have usually conveyed for me myriad ways of housing all that it means to be human.

In 1996 I received a BFA with Distinction from the California College of the Arts (formerly known as the California College of Arts and Crafts). My final semester was spent studying Painting in Florence, Italy at the Studio Art Centers International. During that time I traveled throughout parts of northern Italy, shooting over 60 rolls of film dedicated to capturing the aging surfaces of very old buildings and ruins. These close-up images combined with my longstanding interest in the ruins of indigenous architecture granted me access to the abstract, hybridized vocabulary that shows up in most of my work.

Since 1996 I have been working full time in the studio. By the end of the second year I discovered the necessity of my work having an open-ended time frame while developing. Freeing the work from the constraints of measured time has been paramount in my ongoing explorations of what is timeless and enduring. A significant number of paintings have taken more than two years to complete, and I usually work on 10 to 20 drawings and paintings at a time.