

Featured Alum: Betty Jean Lane, attended 1974-75; Fine Arts

Years Attended: 1974-75

Area of Study: Fine Arts

Email: bjartworks@msn.com



Now living in Duarte California, this California-based painter and sculptor has over 30 years of study and creativity in Fine Arts. Her dad still lives in the Prescott area, and she makes it out to see him at least twice a year. Betty Jean (BJ) is finalizing plans to be in AZ during the week of Yavapai College's 40th celebration! The last few times she's been in Prescott, she's even been able to paint downtown Prescott's famous "Courthouse Square".

She's hoping to get a couple days to set up her "plein air" studio while she's here...as long as it doesn't rain! In the meantime, she has been invited to demonstrate and show her artwork during the LA County Fair (in the Millard Sheets Gallery). She writes, "It will be good to be back in my home town! And I look forward to seeing the changes at Yavapai College! See you soon!"

Here is her full profile:

"It was my dream early in life to be an artist. I graduated from Prescott High in 1974 and by the fall I had saved enough money from a part-time job at the local movie

theater to enroll in art classes at Yavapai College. At 19 years old, I began sharing my craft, as I demonstrated making apple-head dolls at the Sharlot Hall Museum. During my college years, my earliest artwork was exhibited at the Mountain Artist Guild Gallery, in Prescott. Encouraged by my painting professor at Yavapai College, Elaine Farrar, I was accepted into a gallery in Carefree, Arizona. My second year of college landed me an art scholarship. I was able to continue my art studies, and took every art class available to me.

I had my first one-woman show at the early age of 20. I was destined to hit the big time. Los Angeles awaited me with its glitter, and I soon found myself moving into this busy city. I soon began showing work in and around Los Angeles and taught art workshops and private lessons.

All of my painting professors at Yavapai College were significant in the development of me as a fine artist. However, in addition to all the instruction and knowledge I gathered in those two precious years, one professor stands out among the others. Elaine Farrar, my painting instructor, offered me the most encouragement and truly believed in my talent. I sincerely thank her for her precious gift.

In 1981, with the creation of a family, my ideal career settled down to a sacred bedroom, converted into a studio. A closet artist was born. Although my exhibiting was minimal, I kept my heart and one hand in my art, and I continued to take classes at local community colleges, created private and commissioned work, and began a journey to discover new expressions of self through different mediums. I took classes in clay sculpture and discovered ceramics. I took classes at the local community college in airbrush, illustration and design. I also kept involved in the art community in different ways.

While my children were young, I volunteered to teach art in my children's school classrooms. Later on I volunteered to teach art in the special education classes and when State monies ran out for art teachers and art programs, I volunteered to share my knowledge with some local schools during the year.

After 27 years of raising 3 daughters I have finally come out of my closet. Re-discovering my art, re-emerging in the current art world, I have exploded with extraordinary force. Pandora's box has been opened and my heart has emerged once again, and my artwork has come full swing. I am once again exhibiting in galleries, presenting demonstrations, creating and following my dream. I have found that it's never too late to follow your heart and your dreams."

Betty Jean (BJ) Lane Update, 1974-75, Fine Arts

Betty Jean was the featured Alum for September 2008. Read her original profile by [clicking here](#).



Over two decades ago, BJ designed what has now become close to 100 original pieces of Christmas for the nine yards in my neighborhood cul-de-sac. "After drawing each figurine on plywood, my neighbors cut each piece out, and adults and kids included primed, and colored in the 'paint-by-number' paintings that I created. I then detailed each piece," she explains.



Their neighborhood was featured on channel 4-NBC Vista Mesa Court, in Duarte is featured in the weather segment! Also, Vista Mesa Court is featured in a Christmas special that airs on NBC, Christmas Eve at 1 a.m., and Christmas Day at 6 a.m. She thanks all the neighbors for their continued support in offering this unique neighborhood display to her community.

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BJ now lives in Duarte California, but her father still lives in Prescott. (See our profile of her in the [September 2008 issue](#))



Here's a look at her latest artwork in a show titled "Creating From the Heart",

displayed at the Los Angeles County Library, San Dimas Branch, through Friday, July 31.

The show features an eclectic collection of original drawings, mixed medium, watercolor and oil paintings. Included are portraits, landscapes and artwork inspired by Southern California.

