

Anna Lane

Biography

Anna Lane was born in Boston in 1954 and moved to Cape Ann, where she grew up in a family of visual artists, embedded in a rich cultural community. She works in acrylic, watercolor, pastels, and gold leaf.

Studying ballet and modern dance throughout her youth, she performed as an adult with The Dance Theater of Boston (with directors Billy Wilson and Sonja van Beers) and The Harvard University Dance Center (with choreographer Claire Mallardi). After a traumatic injury when she had to give up her dancing career, she received her RN in 1978, and worked at Mass General and Brigham and Women's Hospitals in Boston and in the healing arts for decades.

She lives and has a studio in Gloucester. She participated in group exhibits at Flatworks Gallery in Gloucester. Working with textiles in the 1990s, her hangings were exhibited at Society of Arts and Crafts on Newbury Street in Boston. Her work has been in The Folk Art Museum shop in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and hangs in private collections nationwide. In the past few years she has seriously focused on painting.

Anna feels a deep affinity with the natural and spirit worlds and living beings, embodied in her paintings, sometimes whimsical. Her influences are many and include: classical and ancient artists, Aboriginal artists, Native American artists such as T.C. Cannon, and many contemporary artists, Katharine Ace and David Hockney among them.

Artist's Statement

"I am still continually struck by the beauty of this place I grew up in. Painters and sculptors have come to Cape Ann for generations, drawn by its dramatic landscapes of rock and ocean, and the penetrating light. I was born into one such family of artists, growing up in a rambling Victorian house at the northernmost tip of the island. Our home was a hive of creativity: my father, masterful, precise—a sculptor, painter, potter, and teacher. My nurturing and imaginative mother—an amazing dressmaker by trade, a painter too, and most of all an expert at every domestic skill and decorative craft that could ever delight a child. My sisters and brother and I were surrounded by art, and artists. Through them, we learned to look at the world the way artists do, to look with intention, and to really see.

And such an extraordinary place for seeing it was. Our house sat between the restless Atlantic to one side, on the other, deep shadowy woods dotted with quarries, where the stonecutters had once harvested their granite. As kids we explored every inch of this isolated, pristine world. We dove into seemingly bottomless quarries, and the sharp metallic echoes of our shrieks pierced their inky stillness. We climbed enormous, giant-tossed boulders, and felt like we were on ladders to the infinite. We rode the treacherous waves that swirl around the coastline here. And after wild ocean storms had strewn treasure onto beaches, we filled our pockets with trinkets from other lands, and other times.

Today I walk those same trails I did as a child, and there I draw my inspiration—from the intricate patterns on the forest floor and from the embracing trees above it, from the tangled seaweed washed up with its cache of tiny marine life, and the glorious birds and other wild creatures I come across on my travels. Often now I notice signs of change to the environment that are dispiriting and worrisome. Painting helps to relieve my worry, and soon enough I can lose myself in the colors and textures, in the keen focus of my tiny brushes, in the quiet burnishing of gold leaf.

People tell me “your paintings make me smile.” That is sufficient praise for me. I hope to show, in the best of my paintings, a sense of place colored by magic, the mysterious underpinnings of nature, the innocence of animals and a glimpse into the spirit world. Thank you for looking at them.”