

Yadkin River School

ARTcestry: DuMond's Descendants and Their Art in Yadkin County



Viktoria K. Majestic is a classically trained, Hungarian-American fine artist, currently living in North Carolina. She studied art both in Europe and in the United States and her work can be found in collections throughout the world.

Majestic grew up in a small European town where her interest in art and nature was formed. During her childhood, most of the time she could either be found in the countryside exploring nature, or indoors occupied by creating art.

It wasn't until graduating from college with a business degree, that she came to realize how much art meant to her, and decided to pursue it as a career.

Following this life changing decision, Viktoria established her own mural painting business, and worked as a mural artist for nearly a decade.

Unfortunately, an incapacitating back problem forced her to change course. She couldn't imagine giving up painting, so she decided to pursue an alternative art field.

Traditional oil painting seemed to be the best fit, which led her to dedicate several years to formal training in classical oil painting. She spent 4 years at the Ridgewood Art Institute, receiving painting instructions from John Phillip Osborne & Danielle Wexler master artists, and took portrait painting classes at the Art Students League of New York with renowned teachers Leonid Gervits and Jordan Sokol.

Over the years, Viktoria has become a full time, professional artist and art instructor. She has developed a painterly "alla prima" style, while also adhering to the parameters of her classical training. Her paintings sensibly capture light, sensations and atmosphere.

She has won numerous awards with her work and has exhibited at places such as the prestigious Salmagundi Club and the National Arts Club, among many others.

Viktoria also has been teaching traditional painting for over a decade, passionately passing on her knowledge to her students. She teaches students of all levels to improve their painting skills, with outstanding reviews.

Mark Andrews Artist Biography

- Retired in 2017 from Family & Geriatric Medicine at Wake Forest School of Medicine: Family & Community Medicine Dept. Mark taught Residents, was Residency Director (5 years), and had his own patient practice there.

- Residence: Winston-Salem (29 years)

- Mark had no art classes or training during public school or college. Inspiration came during his first year of Medical School in 1973 when he and a high school friend collaborated on an oil ocean dunescape (completed in 24 hrs.) which we still display today; his friend went on to graduate from the Rhode Island School of Design!

- More than twenty years later while working as a physician full time, Mark took a weekend oil painting workshop at the Sawtooth Center in Winston-Salem and was smitten!

- During the next twenty years, he completed his first two oil paintings and started one more; the latter was finished 16 years later.

- After retirement in 2017, he began oil painting classes with Craig Richards, and had two of his paintings shown at Hanging Rock State Park. Later that year, Mark started classes with Viktoria Majestic and has studied with her whenever she is in North Carolina!

- Favorite subjects at present are landscapes and still life.

- Mark had two strokes in 2018 that severely impacted his speech and some auditory comprehension of language, but mercifully spared his painting ability. Viktoria worked with Mark both before and after his strokes. She has been and remains very supportive of him despite his communication disabilities, and has often hand written notes on technique and other advice for him to review at home. Mark greatly admires her exemplary oil painting skills, her teaching abilities and her support.

Emily Lanier Cassidy Artist Biography

Emily Lanier Cassidy's journey into the realm of fine art is an intriguing blend of passion for both the arts and sciences. She holds formal degrees from Purdue University, specifically in Animal Science and Veterinary Technology. Her lifelong affinity for animals serves as the inspiration behind much of her art, while her scientific nature propels her to meticulously study and understand the intricate details, driving her rapid advancement in the world of fine art.

Born and raised in South Bend, IN, her childhood preferences hinted at her artistic inclinations. While most children were enchanted by colorful and whimsical toys, she found joy in toy and stuffed animals that accurately depicted the precise form and coloring of the real creatures she loved.

Despite taking few formal art classes over the years, Emily's artistic journey truly kicked off in 2017 when, having just moved to Winston Salem, NC, she participated in the employee art show at Atrium Wake Baptist Health. Managing a cancer research laboratory at the time, she showcased her hand-drawn pieces, winning 1st and 2nd place. However, always hungry for improvement, she began seeking more detailed education.

Emily's formal drawing education continued with a class in "Drawing in Color" at Forsyth Tec in late January 2020. Unfortunately, the class was cut short due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. This turned out to be a serendipitous moment, leading her to discover online tutorials by colored pencil animal artist Bonny Snowdon in July 2020. Bonny's descriptive explanations and demonstrations became a turning point in enhancing Emily's artistic skills.

By January 2021, Emily had the opportunity to showcase 11 pieces in one of the galleries at Atrium Wake Baptist Health. From that point on, commissions started flowing in. In 2021, she expanded her portfolio to include pastel, and in 2022, she ventured into oil painting for the first time. These years have seen her garner several placements in statewide juried shows and secure spots in multiple galleries in the Triad region.

Beyond the canvas, Emily finds solace in singing, a profession she's embraced for years. She has lent her voice to weddings and funerals, and she currently sings in the Winston Salem Symphony Chorus. Her musical journey includes starting her own jazz ensemble in 2006, which enjoyed consistent bookings in the VT/NH Upper Valley region.

In late 2023, Emily bid farewell to her career in the sciences, opting for retirement to delve deeper into the fine arts world. Now, she relishes the joy of learning intricate details about art and applying them in her creations, embracing the newfound freedom to explore her artistic passions.

Gail Crotte Artist Statement

I am a retired Cosmetologist and Medical Office Manager moving from Toledo, Ohio to Winston-Salem, North Carolina in 2009. I've had a lifelong interest in art, which I rekindled at the Sawtooth School of the Arts in 2015, and have been developing as a painter under the instruction of Viktoria Majestic since 2016. My preferred medium is oil on canvas and my favorite subjects are landscapes, flowers and still life.

Betty Vettor Artist Statement

I retired from Forsyth County in 2021 after 31 years but still do some part-time work during the busy season. I have taken classes from Viktoria for about 5 years. Some classes through the Arts Council in Winston Salem and also classes at her studio. I really enjoy the experience working in plein air with her as I do love painting landscapes but have now found that I do love painting still life following several classes at her studio. Viktoria has a wonderful way of teaching along with demonstrations that have helped build my confidence with my work.

Linda Fossier (Gray Cat Art) Artist Statement

Have I always painted – absolutely not, but because of my love for color, an artist friend suggested that I would enjoy oil painting. And “wow” was she correct. Painting for me is about color and how it invades your very soul.

Everyone has a spectrum of colors that soothes their spirit. Therefore my paintings primarily enhance spaces with the colors that I find pleasing. I want viewers to feel something in their soul when they view my paintings. This can be the soothing colors, or an interesting subject that translates into positive responses from my clients.

Oil painting provides me the ability to create awesome shapes and colors, right on the canvas. Consequently I am in the process of developing a passion that will remain with me forever.

Rose Fitzgerald Artist Statement

Mud pies, sandcastles and Crayola Crayons! Wonderful childhood memories! Something about art mediums and tools felt very natural in my hands and has continued to drive me in various creative directions throughout my life. Photography, sculpture, stained glass and mosaics are among the disciplines I have explored over the years.

Now, retired, I find I am right where I need to be on my art journey. I am completely immersed in oil painting. Learning to "see" in a completely new way, using all my senses, is immensely satisfying. Whether it is nature, a person in their environment, or sunlight on a chair, anything can become my subject. There is no need to seek inspiration. It seems to find me!

While painting, I am acutely aware of trying to express my personal reaction to any given subject. Language and words are often inadequate. This makes it very interesting to see or hear the viewer or client reactions.

I am currently working toward a more impressionistic style of painting. The confidence in the brush strokes of the master Impressionists are endlessly fascinating. I particularly like Sorolla, Monet and Renoir. I also have great admiration of the early Renaissance and the Dutch masters.

Recently, images coming out of war-torn areas in Ukraine and Israel have invaded my consciousness. Particularly the displacement of the elderly. People and their places. Something all beings treasure. Complex issues to pursue.

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Ellen Frances Reece Artist's Biography

Ellen is retired from a career as an engineer and educator. Engineering and art together? The two characteristics may seem incompatible, yet when she answers questionnaires to determine if she is left-brained or right-brained, i.e., analytical and mathematical or creative and emotional, the results say Ellen's brain is evenly split. At least one of the masters had this combination, Leonardo DaVinci!

Oil paintings which are classical in nature, impressionistic, painterly, and representational are her product. Aspects of this world are exceedingly beautiful to Ellen. The lovely patterns which exist in mathematics can also be seen in nature. Values, perspectives, and color mixing and intensity are just a few of the "analytical" aspects of art. Some of Ellen's compositions incorporate the Golden Ratio, a highly mathematical scheme used for centuries by master artists. She has studied for years with Viktoria Majestic, an award-winning artist and direct descendent, artistically speaking, of Frank Vincent DuMond. The work of the masters: Monet, Sorrola, Renoir, and other impressionists continue to influence her. The current work of John MacDonald, Daniel Keys, and Kathy Anderson, also inspire. Even though she is enamored with classical oil paintings, every once in a while the mathematician part of her brain insists on a creation of its own, and a tessellation or geometrical object is painted.

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Jane Towns Artist Statement

Winston-Salem, NC

After working as a reading resource teacher in Raleigh North Carolina for a number of years, I began selling real estate in Charlotte in the early 1980s. I left real estate in 2008, and my husband, Roxie, and I moved to Winston Salem.

I have been taking classes from Viktoria Majestic in her studio in East Bend and Sawtooth Gallery since 2016. Viktoria has been a wonderful teacher, patiently guiding her students in principles of value, color and design.

My favorite subjects to paint have been scenes from our family's New River Farm property near Galax, Virginia. I have also appreciated and enjoyed painting still life "set ups" in Viktoria's studio and trips to near by out of door scenic destinations. While I have loved and visited galleries in many places in the US and Europe, my main direct inspiration has been "on site and in the studio" with Viktoria.