

About the Artist

In transparent watercolors marked by directness and vitality, Deborah Ponder creates narrative vignettes of places and moments touched by the people who inhabit them.



A native of Baltimore, Maryland, Deborah Ponder earned her B.F.A. from the University of Cincinnati, College of Design, Architecture and Art, where she concentrated on drawing, design and oil painting. Naturally drawn to bold compositions and subject matter with human inferences, she was influenced by the paintings of Edward Hopper, the photographs of Robert Frank, and the ideology of Robert Henri.

She undertook graduate studies in painting and art history through Towson University, living and studying in Florence, Italy and painting the Tuscan countryside *en plein air*. This experience was a major turning point in the artist's development in both spirit and practice. She shifted her focus from oils to watercolor, seeking to respond more spontaneously to the Italian landscape and lifestyle with a medium that better lent itself to quick set-up and the portability needed for painting in Florence and the surrounding hills. Her newfound affinity for watercolor would become a lifelong passion.

The artist subsequently undertook concentrated studies in watercolor at the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore and in workshops with nationally known watercolor painters. She found new influences in the watercolors of artist-travelers such as Prendergast, Homer and Sargent. As her painting evolved, a concurrent career in graphic design reinforced her innate preference for strong composition and clear statement, and teaching the principles of visual communication at Goucher College further clarified her approach to painting as a form of storytelling.

"It's when a subject, a place, a certain kind of light and a strong, instinctive feeling converge in a moment of pure emotion that I find inspiration for my paintings. Most often, I respond to natural elements that are in counterpoint to architectural and man-made elements: a window, doorway or porch; a garden wall or fence; breeze-blown laundry on a line; a hastily abandoned table or chair. As an artist, I see these as the unique marks that people leave on the world. They are small glimpses into the stories of others' lives and connections with my own."

The visual stimulation of frequent travel and the landscapes near her rural Maryland studio provide ongoing inspiration for the artist's paintings. She is a Signature Member of the Baltimore Watercolor Society and the North East Watercolor Society, and an Associate Member of the National Watercolor Society and the American Watercolor Society. Deborah Ponder teaches watercolor painting workshops in the Baltimore area.

Paintings by Deborah Ponder are in private collections across the country and can be seen in international, national and regional invitational and juried exhibitions from coast to coast. The artist has extended her reach with publishing of fine art prints, licensing of her images to home design product partners, and her website/ online gallery at www.deborahponder.com.

Selected Exhibition Venues

Gallery West / Alexandria, VA

Harbor Court Gallery / Baltimore, MD

Highlandtown Gallery / Baltimore, MD

Kentlands Gallery / Gaithersburg, MD

McBride Gallery / Annapolis, MD

NWS Gallery / San Pedro, CA

Prince Royal Gallery / Alexandria, VA

State Street Gallery / Sarasota, FL

Strathmore Hall / Washington, DC

The Hudson Valley Art Association Gallery / Hastings-on-Hudson, NY

The Kent Art Association Gallery / Kent, CT

Professional Affiliations

American Watercolor Society, Associate Member

Baltimore Watercolor Society, Signature Member

National Watercolor Society, Associate Member

North East Watercolor Society, Signature Member