

Artist Biography

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 implications, 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 spirit and practice, in the artist's development. She forged a deep personal connection with her Italian ancestry. She also shifted her focus from oils to watercolor, seeking a more portable medium for quick set-up in a city *piazza* or for carrying on the long walk to a hilltop villa studio. Her response to the Italian landscape and lifestyle and

newfound affinity for watercolor would become lifelong passions.

The artist subsequently undertook concentrated studies in watercolor at the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore and in workshops with nationally known artists. She found new influences in the watercolors of artist-travelers such as Prendergast, Homer and Sargent. As her skills developed, a dual career in graphic design reinforced her longstanding preference for strong composition and clear statement; teaching principles of visual communication at Goucher College further clarified her approach to painting as a form of storytelling; frequent travel, including many return trips to Italy, provided ongoing inspiration.

Deborah Ponder continues to travel often, gathering ideas for paintings to be completed at her rural Maryland studio. The artist teaches watercolor workshops in the Baltimore area. She is a Signature Member of the Baltimore Watercolor Society and the North East Watercolor Society, and an Associate Member of the National and American Watercolor Societies.

Paintings by Deborah Ponder can be found in international, national and regional invitational and juried exhibitions. Venues have included: Strathmore Hall, Washington, DC; Bendann Galleries, Baltimore, MD; The Hudson Valley Art Association, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY; The Kent Art Association, Kent, CT; and State Street Gallery, Sarasota, FL. Her work is in private collections across the country and was included in the book, *The Best of Worldwide Landscape Artists*. She has extended her reach with international publishing of her fine art prints, licensing of her images to home design product partners, and her website www.deborahponder.com.