

Elena Lawrence

Artist Biography

Elena Lawrence's artistic journey is a rich tapestry woven from her upbringing in Salt Lake City, her diverse travels, and her profound connection with nature. Growing up surrounded by art materials, nurtured by supportive parents and teachers, Elena's creative spirit found fertile ground early on. This foundation blossomed as she delved into a watercolor class at Petersen Art Center, where she honed her skills and garnered accolades at the Utah State Fair, including the prestigious blue ribbon. Her thirst for artistic exploration led her to Salt Lake Community College and the University of Utah, where she eagerly embraced a myriad of mediums, from oil and acrylic to metal sculpture and encaustic. Elena's dedication and talent earned her recognition through juried exhibitions and scholarships, culminating in her graduation Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, majoring in Painting and Drawing.

Since completing her degree, Elena has left her mark on various artistic landscapes, exhibiting at esteemed venues such as Phillips Gallery in Salt Lake City and Artworks Gallery in Park City. Her creative vision has expanded beyond traditional boundaries, manifesting in ventures into sculpture, including captivating foam installations for events with Seasons by David in Bountiful, Utah. In 2020, amidst the challenges of the pandemic, Elena found solace and inspiration in an unexpected canvas: a blank 20-foot cement wall in her backyard. Drawing from her recent trip to France, she embarked on a personal project, transforming the stark surface into a captivating mural. This endeavor not only provided a creative outlet during uncertain times but also allowed Elena to bring a touch of beauty and tranquility to her own surroundings.

Throughout her artistic journey, Elena's passion for creation has been a guiding force. In her work with watercolor, encaustic, collage and various other mediums, Elena's enthusiasm for art has remained unwavering. With each brushstroke and sculpture, she continues to channel her experiences and emotions into works that resonate with viewers, inviting them into her world of boundless creativity and wonder.

Artist Statement

As a kid my parents established an environment of creativity. My dad was a photographer, family historian, and the official photo album keeper. He would enter his photography into the Utah State Fair along with string art that he also created. My mom was always sewing, tole painting, creating floral and textile arts, and making posters for church. We had art and craft supplies in every closet. It's no wonder I grew up knowing how to do many creative and crafty things.

As an adult I took watercolor classes from Petersen Art Center in Sugarhouse and entered several pieces in the Utah State Fair. I love the planning that is involved in watercolor and still really enjoy the translucence and unpredictability of water media. In 2017, I graduated from the University of Utah with a Bachelor of Fine Arts and it expanded my creative outlets with oil painting, acrylic, print, metal sculpture, and encaustic. Each one has a method and madness and I still use each medium on a regular basis.

My work with encaustic began in my last semester at the University of Utah. At the start I learned how to heat the encaustic medium (beeswax and Damar resin) and apply it to a wood surface, layering pigment, paper, textiles, and metal into the wax and fusing each layer with a torch. Ever since I learned the basics I have been trying to expand on the varied materials that I use and embed into the medium as well as the sizes that accompany each layout. This medium allows for a mixed media effect with many textures and objects that are surprising and fun to discover.

Many people ask where I get all the metal from. I find the metal around the city, in parking lots, in vacant areas, and in places I travel to. I have friends and family who are now on the lookout for found metal on my behalf. I prefer rusty, bent, imperfect objects that tell a story. In my designs there are often one or two special pieces of metal that are the muse for that particular artwork. For me, the objects evoke a feeling that inspires the composition. It makes each piece entirely one of a kind. Some are whimsical, while others are more sculptural because of the dimensional texture that the metal imparts. While some of the metal is rather heavy, as long as I have a good seal of wax around the object, I've had no problems with them staying attached.

I want the viewer to relate to each piece in their own way, either by knowing what some or all the metal pieces are and what they were originally used for, or by seeing how I've been able to bring together many unusual textures and creating a still life or landscape that they can enjoy.