

Alison Leigh Menke

Expressive Impressionist

Alison Leigh Menke is an expressive impressionist. She loves painting directly from life and creating work in Plein Air. Her approach emphasizes the importance of expressing a true sense of light and place while showcasing the rich qualities of oil paint, palette knife, and brushwork. Painting thick and thinking abstracted scenes, she uses composition, texture, and vibrant color to move a viewer around her paintings. Alison's currently focusing on scale. She has been exploring a balance between a loose and controlled sense of mark-making in her petite paintings and translating those ideas to a larger surface. Alison's latest works are on brushed anodized aluminum. It's a ridged surface sandwiched with a polyethylene core. This inorganic material is strong and enduring. Paint flows with easy and is a joy to work on.



Born in Caracas, Venezuela, in 1987 and raised in Clarksville, Maryland, Alison is fluent in both Spanish and English. She graduated in 2010 from the University of Maryland with a degree in Art and Art History and studied abroad in Amsterdam and Greece. Constantly traveling, she has competed in nearly one hundred national and international Plein air competitions and festivals over the last seven years. As she strives for greater challenges, Alison has produced massive size works. Commissioned work is permanently on display at the National Harbor in DC. She shows in several galleries, predominantly HorseSpirit Arts Gallery in Savage, MD, and is featured in Plein Air Magazine's Dec – Jan 2020 issue and many other publications.

Just married, Alison currently resides on the island of Puerto Rico. It's an exciting new adventure and a place of colorful inspiration! She hopes to create artist retreats in Humacao, PR, and share this paradise with artists and art lovers of the mid-Atlantic and beyond. She will continue her travels around the country to Plein Air Festivals and art shows and hopes to see you at HorseSpirit Arts Gallery soon!

Organizations

- Mid-Atlantic Plein Air Painters Association (MAPAPA) – Artist Member (2014 – present)
- American Impressionist Society (AIS) – Associate Member (2017 – present)
- Maryland Federation of Art (MFA) – Artist Member (2015 – 2020)
- Washington Project of the Arts (2011 – 2015)
- Junior Member of the Arts Club of Washington (2014- 2015)
- Oil Painters of America (2019 – present)

Instructional History

- Beverly Ann Jones Menke, my greatest influence, instructor, and inspiration. My mother is one of the most incredible people I've ever known. A doctor, a painter, Singer and Composer of music (made #9 Top Latin Hits in 1999), and published author (Always)
- Tim Bell, a Maritime artist from Baltimore. Workshop in Plein Air (Summer 2014)
- Randell Sexton, PAPA landscape painter in oil, San Francisco, CA (May 2014)
- Ann Templeton, Plein air painting workshop in Rabun County, Georgia (Summer 2008)
- Kim English, Plein air painting and figure workshop at Donner Ranch in New Mexico and Pueblo, Colorado. (Summer 2006) (Spring 2015)
- Nina Weiss, Plein air painting and color wheel workshop in Ireland (Summer 2008)
- Carolyn Anderson, Portraiture workshop in Easton, Maryland (Fall 2009)
- Jean LeGassick, Plein air and knife painting PAPA workshop in Jackson Hole, Wyoming (Summer 2010)
- Gill Dillinger, Plein air painting PAPA workshop in Jackson Hole, Wyoming (Summer 2010)
- Caroline Jasper, still-life, reflective surfaces, water, and landscape workshops in Annapolis, Howard County, and Ocean City, Maryland (Winter 2005, Summer 2005, Spring 2006)
- Margaret Baumgaertner, portraiture workshop in Lacrosse, Wisconsin (Summer 2007)
- Jon Cheiny, figure drawing in graphite from live models workshop in Boston, Massachusetts (Winter 2005)
- Phil Levine, cityscape Plein air painting workshop in New York City, New York (Summer 2008)
- WC Richardson, painting and drawing instructor, and advisor at the University of Maryland (Spring 2007-Spring 2010)
- Justin Strom, wood block printmaking course at University of Maryland (Fall 2009)
- John McCarty, steel welding course at University of Maryland (Fall 2008)
- Steven Jones, metal casting course at the University of Maryland (Spring 2009)
- Emily Conover, painting instructor at University of Maryland (Fall 2007, Spring 2008)
- Stacey McKenna, painting instructor throughout high school. She currently teaches at the Maryland Institute College of Art. (2002-2006)
- Gino Molfino, drawing instructor throughout high school – influential time (2003-2005)

Alison's 2022 Plein Air Schedule	
04/16/2022 - 04/24/2022	Olmsted Plein Air – Atlanta, GA
05/09/2022 - 05/14/2022	Wayne Plein Air – Wayne, PA
06/28/2022 - 07/04/2022	Telluride Plein Air Festival – Telluride, CO
09/05/2022 - 09/10/2022	Sonoma Plein Air – Sonoma, CA
10/01/2022 - 10/09/2022	Cape Anne Plein Air Festival, Gloucester, MA

