

Dr. Sheyda Ardalan was born in London, England, to Iranian parents. She grew up in Switzerland, Egypt, Turkey, Spain, and Iran and speaks Persian, English, Spanish, and Turkish. She is a Third Culture Kid who grew up in multiple cultures different than that of her parents during her developing and formative years.

Sheyda graduated from Tehran International School receiving her International Baccalaureate Diploma in 1976. She moved to Brooklyn, NY, and attended Pratt Institute where she obtained her BFA, majoring in Illustration. After working as a graphic artist in New York City, she received her Master's degree in Art and Art Education from Teachers College, Columbia University and started working as an art teacher in public schools. In 2009, she obtained her Doctorate degree in Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. Her dissertation investigated the mentorship and apprenticeship practices in the traditional arts of Iran, and she traveled extensively around Iran for five years, observing and interviewing master craftartists and their apprentices. Her case studies included a brass engraver in Tehran, a charough (traditional Azari shoes) shoemaker in Zanjan, a glassblower in Yaftabad, and a sculptor in Sanandaj.

Since 1994, Sheyda has been teaching art to students in grades K-12 in the Cheshire, Milford, New Canaan, and Greenwich Public School districts, all in Connecticut. She is currently an art teacher at Catherine A. Miller Elementary School in Church Rock, NM. Sheyda has been a TEAM Teacher and mentored beginner teachers; she has been cooperating teacher to student teachers from universities in Connecticut and New York. Sheyda was also Adjunct Professor of Art and Art Education at Teachers College/Columbia University for eighteen years. Sheyda is the co-author of *Art and Technology: Innovative K-12 Digital Lessons* published by Teachers College Press in 2021.

Sheyda lectures on teaching art to children and adolescents at educational institutions and conventions. She visits Iran regularly, conducting free art workshops in villages. She has also taught art in a juvenile detention center for teenage girls in Tehran. When not traveling, teaching art, or painting in her studio, Sheyda, an advocate for animals, spends her time volunteering at the few animal shelters in Iran. She also enjoys fencing, swimming, kayaking and horseback riding.