

## **Judy McSween – Artist Bio**

Judy McSween is a Charleston-based painter whose abstract works capture the beauty of lived experience. A native of Warren, Ohio, she earned her BFA in Painting from Bowling Green State University before spending over two decades teaching art to elementary and middle school students in Ohio and South Carolina. She credits her students with reminding her to see the world with fresh eyes and to infuse her work with a sense of joy and discovery.

McSween's process moves fluidly between realism and intuition. She begins with a drawn image, then deconstructs its composition to uncover its essence. Through a layered approach—applying paint, wiping it away, drawing into it, and scraping through—she creates luminous pathways that guide the viewer's eye. Her signature is light: whether glowing beyond a horizon, spilling across a field, or catching fleetingly along an edge, it anchors her paintings in a spirit of wonder and renewal.

Influenced early on by the underwater abstracts of her professor Bob Mazur, McSween continues to draw inspiration from the landscapes that have shaped her life—from her Ohio roots to her current home in Charleston, as well as from countless road trips across the country.

Her work has been recognized with numerous awards, including the People's Choice Award in *Perspectives: The Art of Abstract* (2024), Best Painting in the Piccolo Spoleto Juried Art Exhibit at Charleston's City Gallery (2022), and the Design Award for the 2017 City of North Charleston Arts Fest, where her painting *Scraping the Sky II* was selected to represent the festival and became part of the city's permanent collection.

Beyond the canvas, McSween is passionate about art's ability to educate and uplift. Through social media and her monthly newsletter, she shares behind-the-scenes glimpses of her process along with reflections designed to inspire and inform. She is represented by Dare Gallery in downtown Charleston and Sandpiper Gallery on Sullivan's Island. McSween is also a member of the National Association of Women Artists and the National Oil and Acrylic Painters Society.

**Here's a concise version of your bio that keeps the heart of your story while making it exhibition-ready:**

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#### Judy McSween – Artist Bio (Short Form)

Charleston-based painter Judy McSween creates luminous abstract works inspired by the landscapes and life experiences that shape her. Working between realism and intuition, she layers brushwork, palette knife marks, and line to reveal pathways of light and color—her signature throughout her paintings.

Originally from Warren, Ohio, McSween earned her BFA in Painting from Bowling Green State University and spent more than twenty years teaching art, crediting her students with helping her see the world with fresh eyes. Her work has received numerous awards, including Best Painting at the Piccolo Spoleto Juried Art Exhibit (2022) and the City of North Charleston Arts Fest Design Award (2017), where her painting *Scraping the Sky II* became part of the city's permanent collection.

McSween is represented by Dare Gallery in Charleston and Sandpiper Gallery on Sullivan's Island, and is a member of the National Association of Women Artists and the National Oil and Acrylic Painters Society.

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**Would you like me to make an even shorter version (2–3 sentences) that works for things like exhibition labels or quick introductions?**

#### **Judy McSween Artist Bio**

Judy McSween is a Charleston based artist who paints familiar abstracts to document inspiring life experiences. A native of Warren Ohio, and a graduate of Bowling Green State University with a BFA specialization in painting, McSween also taught elementary and middle school art in Ohio and South Carolina for over twenty years. She credits her students with teaching her to interpret her surroundings with fresh eyes and to instill joy in her work.

McSween works by alternating between realism and intuition, taking a drawn image and deconstructing the composition to find its essence. Her style combines delicately blended brushwork with bold palette knife marks and sensitive line work. Through a process of applying paint, wiping it away, drawing into it, and scraping through layers, she exposes pathways, leading viewers through her paintings to spaces infused with light and color. The light beyond the horizon, spilling into a field, or captured for a split second along an edge, is McSween's signature.

Influenced by the underwater abstracts of Bob Mazur, her painting professor at Bowling Green State University, McSween draws inspiration for her own work from the places she's lived, from her childhood home in Northeast Ohio to her current home in Charleston, SC. along with her frequent road trips across the country.

Her awards include People Choice Award in Perspectives: The Art of Abstract 2024, Honorable Mention in Amethyst International Juried Exhibit April 2023, Best Painting in Piccolo Spoleto Juried Art Exhibit at Charleston's City Gallery 2022, Honorable Mention for her paintings at the 2019 Piccolo Spoleto Outdoor Art Exhibit In Charleston, SC, Honorable Mentions in North Charleston's Festival of the Arts both in oils and acrylics, second prize in South Haven Michigan's 2018 Art of the Sea, and an Award of Excellence in Clermont Florida's Champions for the Arts 2016. In 2017, she was selected as the Design Winner of the The City of North Charleston Arts Fest Design Competition. As the winner of the statewide contest, McSween's abstract oil painting, titled Scraping the Sky II, was used to promote the 2017 North Charleston Arts Fest, and the painting became part of the City's permanent Public Art Collection.

McSween advocates for art to educate and uplift through her social media posts. Her followers enjoy videos of her painting process and photos of work in progress as well as her reflective and educational monthly newsletters. She is represented by Dare Gallery in downtown Charleston SC and Sandpiper Gallery on Sullivan's Island, SC. She is a member of the National Association of Women Artists and The National Oil and Acrylic Painters Society.