

ARTISTS BIOGRAPHY

Ellen Silva was born in 1956 in Richmond California, and began painting and drawing as soon as she could hold a pencil or brush. She was actively encouraged by her father, who oil-painted as a hobby and taught her the basics.

Ellen blossomed in the fertile soil of the San Francisco Bay Area, influenced by poster artist Peter Max, and album cover artists of the 1960's known for their bright colors and swirling psychedelic graphics. She spent many hours drawing her favorite rock musicians and designing album cover logos for fictitious bands.



As a high school student she became infatuated by impressionistic painting, especially the art of Vincent Van Gogh. But, she was convinced by her teachers to go into commercial art rather than pursue a career in fine art as it was thought to be more “practical.”

In 1980, Ellen earned a bachelors degree in Graphic Design/ Illustration from San Jose State University. In 1981, she combined her design and illustration talents to freelance. Since that time, Ellen has worked as a self employed artist and designer, with clients ranging from wineries (Thomas Fogarty, Woodside) to hospitals (Stanford Medical Center) to musicians (Joan Baez).

Ellen took a mural tour in 1997, with Precita Eyes Mural Arts Center in San Francisco. She began taking classes and volunteering on mural projects, and soon was awarded the opportunity to direct a mural project with JFK Elementary School in Daly City, CA. A constant stream of mural projects followed—53+ in the past 11 years—, including 4 more at JFK, and recently co-direction and painting project along side Susan Cervantes (director/founder of Precita Eyes) at St. Mary's College depicting Dante's Inferno.

The vivid colors of the 1960's still influence Silva's mural work, as do the works of master muralists Susan Cervantes, and Diego Rivera. Ellen has painted murals in homes, restaurants, schools and hospitals up and down the west coast. She also teaches mural workshops for Precita Eyes and in her home in El Granada.

CURRENT MURAL PROJECTS:

St. Francis Center, Redwood City, CA, 38' x 7.5'

AWARDS:

1st Prize, Community Art Show, Richmond Art Center, 1969
Very Special Person Award, JFK Elementary School PTA, May 2001

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