

## **Bio for Lori Reed, Galesburg, Illinois**

When Lori was seven years old, she sat at her grandmother's picnic table and made a pencil drawing of a deer. She proudly took the drawing into the farm house to show her grandmother and was greeted with a sudden intake of breath followed by an exclamation of "Oh, honey! You're going to be an artist one day!" So, in her mind, her destiny had been revealed.

Lori spent many a summer day on the farm drawing, coloring, and painting things on rocks. In high school, she finally received formal art training and was strongly encouraged by her art teacher to pursue art in college. Following two years in a fine art curriculum, a summer job in graphic design shifted her focus toward obtaining a degree in graphic design.

After a few advertising agency jobs, Lori started her own graphic design business in Galesburg, Illinois, and eventually convinced her husband to leave his art director job to work with her in the growing business. They've happily worked together for many years – even teaching graphic design at the liberal arts college in Galesburg – but the lure of doing art for herself, rather than a client, became stronger and stronger.

The offer to exhibit work at a nearby liberal arts college's beautiful new gallery set things on a course where Lori has not looked back. The thirty-six pieces she exhibited in that show in 2006 were very well received, thereby encouraging her to devote still more time and effort to further develop her mixed media work. This experience served as an adult analog to her grandmother's exclamation and served to launch Lori into her current productive period. She pursued a number of themes and worked with various materials; more exhibition opportunities arose and the hours of the graphic design business were cut back. A theme of nostalgia or part of a story became dominant in her art as she began to layer with acrylic matte medium vintage photos from her grandmother's 1920's album, handwritten entries from a great uncle's store ledger, pages from old library books — work that has formed into her "Album Series."

In 2009, two separate road trips — Yellowstone National Park & western Montana and to the hill country of Texas — sparked a desire to depict the feelings evoked by walking in the more rugged, natural places of the country. Using photographs taken on those trips, as well as ones from earlier trips Lori and her husband had taken to Colorado, Utah, Arizona and New Mexico, she started on work that has become her "High Plains Series." She often manipulates the photos digitally to have a more painterly or sketchy feel and works with prints of the altered photos as the base of her art. She then layers up art papers, fibrous grassy papers or actual plant material and raw flax. Works that Lori makes on stretched canvases wrap around the edges and give the feeling of catching different angled views of the scene. There is a compelling tendency to touch these works.

One of Lori's collectors says, "I became aware of Lori's art-making after her first local exhibition and have since had the pleasure of collecting pieces from several different series of her work. Without a doubt her skill shows development on a steep incline, intensifying my experience of each piece as she explores new and meaningful artistic expressions. Early works evoke whimsy and joy, and I treasure them for that. Her current works, however, speak to me more spiritually. She has somehow imbued those flat canvases, through their many layers, with great depth and life."

There's a feeling of being someplace else when you stand in front of a Lori Reed work of art, a place filled with power and calm.