

meet the artist

Nela Solomon



Nela Solomon was born into a rural, middle-income family in Shiraz, Iran, in July of 1971. The first of three children, Nela grew up in a creatively liberated environment wherein her parents encouraged her innate talents in the visual arts by providing her with sketching pads and watercolor sets at a young age. With these tools, Nela spent much of her youth sketching sunsets, landscapes, still-lives, and even portraits of her young friends. These early artistic endeavors climaxed when Nela lived in Vienna for two years at the age of 21. While her principle purpose was to improve her German, she was enraptured by the city's artwork. From the Austrian Secessionist figuratives such as those of Gustav Klimt and Egon Schiele, to the modern, avant-garde exhibits that

seemed to exist without rules – Nela witnessed the energy and innovation of Vienna and its artistic community. The exhilaration provided by that community would stick with her forever.

While Nela's parents fostered her art, they nonetheless ingrained in her a sense of financial rigidity, due to which Nela allowed her artistic pursuits to fall by the wayside while she took up more lucrative studies in science. Indeed, this drive for financial security – coupled with her newfound love of travel prompted Nela to immigrate to the United States in 1996, where she went on to study at Pierce College in Los Angeles, California.

In an attempt to keep in touch with her artistic pursuits, Nela took up work as the studio apprentice to the well-known artist Emanuel, whose work had gained acclaim across the United States. Nela's deep talent and artistic confidence immediately became apparent to Emanuel, who quickly let the younger painter work solely on her own art. Under Emanuel's influence, Nela worked mostly with mixed media on canvas, and was primarily drawn to paint the broad and vibrant abstracts of her tutor. Not forsaking her rural and liberated upbringing, however, Nela introduced her own degree of spontaneity – painting bold, vast, and vibrant spaces that are as much about nature as they are about abstraction. Indeed, some of her paintings even seem to be a struggle between the two styles, as Nela often blends sharp colors and impersonal geometrics with soft shades of organic, burgeoning still life. The result is a uniquely tense artwork in which the organic and natural elements of the paintings

seem to struggle with the more modern, abstract concepts around them.

Since delving into her art full-time, Nela has opened her own studio, shown her work at several locations around Southern California, and exhibited for the first time at ArtExpo in New York, 2001, where work was met with great praise.