

Jane Winget Sheldon
859 803-9665 *janesheldon.net* *janemsheldon@yahoo.com*

It is my right as an artist to look at people, and take from what I see, and make something from that. This is something that all people do in some sense or another: we people-watch, we eavesdrop, we gossip, we make assumptions. I am addressing all of this.

My works on paper explore a palette of muddy earth tones and an evolving selection of truly man made colors. Color is my opportunity to set an emotional tone, and to direct the narrative. The colors I use vary from piece to piece, but the underlying similarities connect my figures. Making use of the translucency of ink and lower-grade acrylic paints to render environment in a literal and emotional way, I make drawings that are paintings; that is, as I make these pieces, I investigate the boundary between the idea “the linear and contour” and painterly interpretations of landscape and the figure. The subjects of these pieces are figures, often singular, in environments the viewer cannot fully see. Almost like a posed “candid” snapshot, the body language of my figures teeters between action and passivity, detachment and emotional engagement. This tension allows my viewer an active role in the articulation of my subjects’ histories and identities. The viewer is in on that moment of stillness, and it is their choice to engage with the painting and the person inside it. Though they are allowed to serve aesthetic purposes, the intention of these pieces is to create a connection between the figure and the viewer. Though not confrontational, there is purposefulness to this connection—an invitation into a world in which characters are meditative, specifically within themselves.

My ultimate goal for this interest in connection is to elicit a pause within the viewer - for them to not just look briefly and see the most superficial elements of a piece (however important they may be), but to stop moving and let themselves inspect and investigate a piece. If they should only digest the visual clues, let them do it in a way that requires them to work. And if they should allow themselves to see the figure as a character, a character in whom they may find some connection or commonalities, a character they are allowed to control to the boundaries of how they perceive the history of other people, they will have just begun to see the work as I would like them to.