

Barry Christensen

Bio

I was born in San Francisco in 1950, and raised in the suburbs of Redwood City and Menlo Park. At age 10, my grandmother and I visited an exhibition by master artist Franz Kline. The monumental-scaled and powerful paintings left an indelible impression that completely altered my understanding of art.

I have been most fortunate in my art education and the dedicated teachers that mentored me over the years. I had two inspired teachers in middle school and four art teachers in high school, where I experimented with ceramics, jewelry, painting and illustration/cartooning. Following my high school graduation in 1968, I attended Canada College in Redwood City for two years, where I continued to study with a great painting teacher. I transferred to Central Washington University in 1971 as a junior. The Art Department was terrific with young, passionate professors and talented, hardworking fellow students learning together within a beautiful rural landscape setting. Paradise!

I graduated with an MA in sculpture in 1975. In the fall of 1976, I began teaching fulltime at Wenatchee Valley College. I stayed in Wenatchee for two years before enrolling in the MFA program at the University of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign. The first year there I was a Teaching Assistant and in my second year I received a Ford Foundation Fellowship. I graduated in 1979 with an MFA and a host of new experiences from the Midwest.

After Illinois, I moved to Seattle and shared a live-in studio with two of my fellow graduates. My work was included in group shows at Rosco Louie Gallery, Traver Sutton Gallery and Mia Gallery. In 1983, I decided to leave Seattle and move to the Skagit Valley, where I have resided at the bottom of Bow Hill for 38 years. I have shown my work at Skagit Valley College Gallery, Edison Eye Gallery and i.e. Gallery.

My art making laid dormant for several years as my garden and fruit orchard seemed to receive most of my attention. This pinhole photography collaboration started four years ago and it was all new territory for me. I have enjoyed working with Janet Neuhauser and Eric Riedel. It has been a lesson in letting go and accepting unforeseen results.