



## **Kathryn Metz**

September 3, 1932 - September 27, 2018

Resident of Santa Cruz, California

Kay Metz was a painter and printmaker who, for the several decades after she retired from teaching art at UCSC, delighted in painting the wetlands of southern Santa Cruz County. Venturing out with her painter friends, Mary Warshaw, Marta Gaines, and others, she set up her easel in most seasons, though not all weather, and referred to herself as a plein air painter.

Kay came of age as a painter in New York City in the 1960's studying abstract expressionism, which informed all her work subsequently, from her intimate plein air paintings to her monumental landscapes that were luminous and slow to know but filled with reward for the time taken— just like Kay herself. She evolved her work with that aesthetic through representational and abstract ! landscapes and in all the mediums she chose, primarily oil painting, watercolor, printmaking, and woodcuts.

Born Kathryn Metz, in Dayton, Ohio on September 3, 1932, Kay died on September 27, 2018 at Dominican Hospital in Santa Cruz following a valiant fight to recover from a traumatic heart surgery.

She received her BFA from Bowling Green State University in Ohio and her MFA from the University of California in Los Angeles. Her teaching experience began in 1964 at Phoenix College in Arizona. She left there in 1966 to go to Paris and study at Atelier 17, the celebrated print studio established by Stanley William Hayter, under the auspices of the College Art Study Abroad at the American Center for Students and Artists. She continued her studies in New York City, including an independent study with Philip Guston and one with Robert Blackburn.

Kay then resumed her teaching career in 1967, becoming a part-time faculty member at the NYU School of Education, New York City. Following this and several other brief teaching stints, she was hired to establish the printmaking department at the University of California, Santa Cruz in 1971, remaining there until her retirement in 1992. While becoming an accomplished and influential artist, Kay was also a tireless and generous teacher whose students often came back to see her after graduating. She always welcomed their visits and spoke happily of them. Exceptionally independent, she went to Europe on her own, recording her impressions in drawings and photos, which she turned into series of woodcuts and large-scale paintings. In 1997, Quarry West, UCSC's literary magazine, devoted its 33rd issue! to honoring many Santa Cruz women in the arts with its publication of "In Celebration of the Muse: Fifteenth Anniversary Anthology." Of the 72 Santa Cruz women writers and printmakers featured, 12 printmakers were invited by art editor Mary Warshaw to contribute their work to the journal, pieces created in honor of Kathryn Metz, professor emerita of art.

Not limited to being an accomplished artist and teacher, Kay actively supported the arts locally and the environments she painted. She was an avid active member of the Watsonville Wetlands Watch for many years, and a Board Member from the 1990s into the early 2000s, plus a supporter of other local organizations. Though she had no children of her own, she valued youth education in arts and supported the Arts Council of Santa Cruz County. Her interests and activities were inclusive of the needs and desires of her total environment. She was political, engaged, a deep thinker, not afraid to speak her mind.

Up until her heart surgery, Kay was working in her studio to organize her collection with the help of Betsy Miller Andersen with whom she developed her cultural legacy.

She was generous with her gifts of art work to friends, institutions, and places. Her works are held in numerous collections, including the New York Public Library; the Library of Congress; the Fresno Art Museum; Monterey Museum of Art; Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County; the University of California, Los Angeles; and Special Collections, McHenry Library, University of California, Santa Cruz. She gave two large paintings to Dominican Hospital, among other gifts. Currently, there is a small retrospective of her work at Vanguard Realty in Santa Cruz, up until December. Several exhibits are planned for the near future.

The UCSC Art Department will host an informal memorial which will be announced at a later date.

*This beautiful obituary was written by Kay's friend Susan Maresc.*

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