

## Biography

Originally from the UK, Lynda Stevens has been living and working in Budapest since 1996. She has worked there as a freelance TESOL teacher since 2000, whilst never failing to devote her inner life to her unique artistic path.

Stevens developed a passion for creating intensely patternistic colour drawings at the age of 19, on a purely self-taught basis, in a style that has been likened to 'outsider art.' However, soon it became inappropriate for this artist to be linked to any kind of naive label in art.

In the mid 1980's, after graduating from the University of Warwick in 1981 with a BA (Hons) in English and Italian Literature at a time of exceptionally high unemployment, she attended two two-year, part-time courses. The first led to a diploma in drawing and painting at the Mid-Warwickshire College in Leamington Spa, where she was introduced to the rigours of life drawing, still-life drawing and painting alongside having the opportunity to experiment with a much wider range of media, including etching, airbrush painting, charcoal and acrylics. There were also lectures on the theory and the history of art. The second course at the Mid-Warwickshire College led to a certificate in Craft Materials from Coventry University, exploring media ranging from metal to ceramics and textiles.

In 1986, Stevens moved from Leamington Spa to Coventry. Life in Coventry was rewarding from the point of view of finding an artistic community, and she exhibited regularly with the self-named Dream Illustrators and the Hillfields Artists' group.

After finishing the Craft Materials course, Stevens worked increasingly with found objects ranging from broken glass to polystyrene. She also held two solo exhibitions in a small gallery above an art shop in Spon Street, Coventry, which charted Stevens's maturing artistic expression – in using broken glass in many of her works, for example, her style had literally crystallised.

After a short interlude between 1994 and 1996, in which Stevens lived in Brighton and exhibited with a local Gallery, she left the UK for Hungary in order to work as a teacher of TESOL. However, her creative activities continued and, in recent years, she has become more and more involved in the alternative Budapest art scene – a scene that tends to follow a more inclusive approach with regard to self-taught artists.

Since early 2020, the pandemic has put much of this collaboration on hold. However, since the end of 2021, Stevens is now represented in part by the Szentendre-based MiDo Galéria. Since then, she has taken part in an auction event in Szentendre and an exhibition in Vecsés, a town just outside Budapest.

Stevens' current output consists of abstract mixed-media collage pieces, some of which are on paper, using a marbling technique onto which squares or triangles of other materials are added. She also uses canvas rather than self-created boards to create other, larger compositions which often incorporate cutouts from her paper-based collages. In both cases, her aim is to create highly textured pieces that capture light through the interplay of opaque and reflective surfaces, thus creating a range of impressions on viewers. Recently, this work was discussed and written about as part of a thesis by Adrienn Demeter, which can be accessed on her website: <http://lyndastevens.com/thesis-on-lynda-stevenss-artwork-by-adrienn-demeter/>

Stevens' most recent work has focused more on experimenting with paint alone. Acrylic and enamel pours are used as a background for splatter techniques, to create works intended to evoke deep space, starry firmaments and nebulae.

The drawing sections feature Stevens' original forms of expression, focusing on the juxtaposition of colours and patterns in each composition. Her life drawing work is also featured on this site.

Finally, one of Stevens' most important achievements has been the creation of a full 78-card deck of tarot cards, along with a 40,000-word booklet, which took over a decade to complete. Recently, each card has been edited and self-published.

## **Artist Statement**

I see my creative path as being one with no absolute destination – the process of creation is as important to me as the result.

In my work I often like to explore the tensions between chaos and form – and how chaos can break up stagnant forms into something more dynamic, or how form can bring beauty out of what was inchoate. Thus, sources of inspiration might include city encroaching on country and vice-versa, the dynamism of volcanoes, oceanic tides and so on. However, as the creative process for me mainly comes about via a process of psychic automatism, so that it is guided by an ebb and flow of subconscious impressions, both inner and outer landscapes tend to be superimposed upon one other in any given composition.

My pieces may be layered, worked and reworked again, so that an inner alchemical process runs through as a theme in all my works. This means that each piece is further altered and refined into something very different from what it might have been in the first place. I have sometimes used materials that might otherwise be perceived as rubbish – glass crystals from broken cars/buildings, gypsum, melted polystyrene and so on.

More recently, I have also used metal foil, geometrical shapes cut from older collages, clay in which patterns can be imprinted, and crack paint. The layers of my works often represent memories encoded in newer and older layers, adding more and more complexity to each surface. The layers are also intended to create a sense of age or erosion within my larger pieces.

I especially prefer to work with translucent and reflective surfaces where the shimmer of gold, silver, copper or iridescent paints capture light, sometimes alongside glass and/or beads. This interplay infuses my works, being interactive with the environment and the effects of light.

My abstract drawings are sequential in the way that a musical composition might be.

My life drawings seek a more accurate likeness of the model in terms of proportion and pose, whilst imbuing each image with my own, unique style.

## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

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### **Work Experience**

**1996-1998**

**Corvin Mátyás Gimnázium**

Native Teacher of English, working with teenagers from 14-19, helping to prepare for their oral finals

**1999-2000**

**Business Language Schools**

Teacher of Business English

**2000-Present**

Self-employed teacher of Business and General English, at all levels of English. I carry out proof reading and occasional translation, and my spheres of business activities also include creative work.

### **Education**

**University of Warwick 1981**

BA (Hons. English/Italian Literature, 2.2 (This degree also included a course in The History of Art)

**Leamington College of FE 1983-1985**

Diploma in painting and drawing, with distinction

**Coventry University 1987-1989**

Certificate in Craft Materials

**Goring College of FE, 1995**

Cambridge Certificate in FE

After graduating, entering the workforce proved to be difficult, but I continued to educate myself in Art, as well as through community jobs that included designing placards for the community as well as booklets and toys to be used as educational aids in schools. From the late 80s to Early 90s. I also taught part-time courses in popular subjects at both Warwick University and Coventry University

### **Additional Information**

Slides of two sketchbooks, created for the Sketchbook Project based on Brooklyn New York can also be viewed on Sketchbook Project via these links:

<https://www.sketchbookproject.com/collection/597>

<https://sketchbook-project.meteorapp.com/library/S93139>

Catalogues of works involving larger mixed-media pieces, of a series of colour collage compositions, alongside a more recent one showing gold-painted textural collage pieces on paper can be ordered from the website at blurb.com, here:

<https://www.blurb.com/b/3200567-journey-of-the-pearl-by-lynda-stevens>

In 2020, my full 78-colour Tarot Deck, alongside the 40,000-word book and an oracle made up of paper collages completed between 2005-2020 was made available on Gamecrafter, here:

<https://www.thegamecrafter.com/games/the-chalice-tarot-deck-jumbo-version-with-booklet>

## **Exhibitions**

### **2021 – Present**

Representation through the virtual MiDo Galéria, via their [website](#). Events to date have included a group exhibition at the Bálint Ágnes Kulturális Központ at Vecsés in November 2021, followed by an auction of artworks at the Offline Center in Szentendre in December 2021.

### **2020 –2021**

Solo exhibition hosted on invitation by the Orfúi Társaskör Egyesület, Baranya County, Hungary. Due to the pandemic, the exhibition could only be viewed virtually and then only in small numbers, until the finissage of June 2021.

### **2019**

Group Exhibition of the Drawing Artists Group, organised by Peter Fekete, at the APA / Ateliers Pro Arts Art Center / A.P.A.Galéria, Horánszky Utca 5, Budapest.

### **2018**

The Golden Thread: Solo Exhibition at the Corinthia Hotel Gallery, Király Utca 43-48, Budapest.

### **2018**

Fény és Sötétség (Light and Darkness): Solo Exhibition at the Jaschik Almos Szakközépiskola, Budapest, April 2018, where I also worked as a part-time English teacher for three years.

### **2016-2019**

Vad Kiállítás: Exhibition of Wild Artists, October 2017-January 2019.

These one-nightly exhibitions have taken place monthly at different venues within Budapest, featuring works by both local and foreign artists.

### **2016**

Cafe Vian, Budapest, March: newer works hosted for one month.

### **2016**

48 Galéria, Váci Utca, Budapest: Group exhibition of life drawing works and assorted pieces, organised by Peter Fekete.

### **2015**

Kredenc Bisztró, Rottenbiller Utca, Budapest, November 2015, hosted via MoMo, 'Pearl of Great Price' solo exhibition of recent works.

### **2014**

Műszai Cultural Centre, Blaha Lujza Square 1, Budapest, November 2014: 'Now and Then' titled solo exhibition of larger mixed-media works.

### **2012**

Ékezet Galéria, Hajos Utca 41, Budapest, September 2012: Golden Topographies Solo Exhibition – presenting a collection of new mixed-media pieces on canvas as well as on paper.

**2011**

Gozsdu Udvar and Café Vian, Budapest, solo exhibition via Artoon.hu – subsequently this work was shown at several other venues within the city via this organisation.

**2010**

Picasso Point Kavézó, solo exhibition mixed-media Pieces via the Memento Mori Foundation.

**2009**

'Regeneration', solo exhibition at the Peter Mansfield Gallery, Budapest XXI.

**2002**

Solo exhibition of current works at a gallery in Vác, Hungary.

**1998**

Művelődési Központ, Budapest XI: 'Pearl in the Oyster' Solo exhibition of mixed-media pieces.

**1994-1996**

Brighton: Bear Cave Gallery, participating in several group exhibitions.

**1982-1992**

Coventry: took part and exhibited in several group exhibitions with the Hillfields Artist's Group from 1982-1992. Two solo exhibitions at the Spon Street Art Shop Gallery, Coventry: 'Vistas,' 1989 and 'Magma' 1992.