

Rachel Collins

Rachel Collins considers herself a representational painter of natural and manmade abstract form. Although she grew up in a home in New York state where her mother taught oil painting, design and composition, she did not pursue art on her own until she reached her mid-thirties. By then she had graduated from Middlebury College with a degree in French, obtained a master's degree in library science from the University of Wisconsin, and worked for several years as librarian, archivist and museum curator at the Baha'i World Centre in Haifa, Israel.

Upon her return to the States in 1990, an interest in natural science illustration led her to an internship in the Department of Entomology at the Museum of Natural History. But eventually watercolor, originally taken up as a once-a-week hobby in Israel, became her primary medium. Her interest in natural science subjects has continued, but with a fine arts focus. A strong interest in music has led over the past several years to a series of paintings with a music theme. Her work has hung and taken awards in a variety of nationally competitive watercolor exhibits, and she has had solo shows in galleries at art centers, colleges and universities, and other institutions in the Washington, DC area. She has been awarded signature membership in the National Watercolor Society, the Watercolor USA Honor Society, and the Transparent Watercolor Society of America, among others. An extensive article about her series of paintings of animal vertebrae appeared in the June 2009 issue of *Watercolor Artist* magazine.

Rachel Collins is a juried member of the Torpedo Factory Artists Association, and as such paints regularly in her studio in the Torpedo Factory Art Center in Alexandria, VA. Her paintings are always on display in her studio, which is open to the public most days of the week, and she is happy to have people stop in, ask questions and watch her at work. She enjoys teaching classes and workshops in watercolor at The Art League School in Alexandria, and workshops of varying lengths elsewhere in the United States and abroad. She has regularly spoken about and given demonstrations of her watercolor approach and technique in the Washington area and elsewhere, mostly notably at the Library of Congress and at the Baha'i Academy for the Arts in England.

Rachel Collins lives with her husband in southeastern Fairfax County, Virginia; they have two adult children. Outside the art-making world, Rachel currently serves on the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Mount Vernon, Virginia.