

# Shirley Manfredi

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Shirley Manfredi's interest in Art began at an early age while growing up in Dunsmuir, CA. She had a passion for painting and drawing but those types of art classes were not offered at her high school at that time. It was in Manfredi's senior year that Ceramic art teacher, Mr. Don Brannon, referred her to take art classes at the local Junior College, College of the Siskiyous. That is where Manfredi's art education began. Manfredi enrolled in classes with Professor Bob Nugent and received an A.A. degree. Under Bob Nugent's direction, as well as conferring with her parents, Mr. Nugent encouraged her to continue with an art education at University of California Santa Barbara (U.C.S.B.) where Nugent had received his B.A. and M.F.A. In the Fall of 1979, Manfredi was enrolled at U.C.S.B. and in 1981 she graduated with honors with a B.A. degree in Studio Art.

After graduating from U.C.S.B. Manfredi continued taking courses at local Junior Colleges to further expand in her field. In 1994 she was admitted to Claremont College in Claremont, CA in the MFA program but had to decline enrollment. In 1995 she enrolled at University of California Davis for a year as a concurrent student. Manfredi was experimenting with different mediums and working primarily with non-representational abstract ideas before attending U.C. Davis. After taking courses from Cornelia Schulz and Conrad Atkinson her work took on a new meaning.

The Figure has now become prominent in her work as well as taking on a more "Narrative" meaning. As her paintings evolve bits of visual information are incorporated to present a dialogue with the viewer, offering an intimate glimpse into the subject rendered. Manfredi's first painting with the "Circus" subject matter is depicted in her 2008 painting "Wild Animal Trainer", a story of her son's first visit to the Ringling Bros. & Barnum and Bailey's Circus. Circus entertainers have continued to be an influence in her subsequent bodies of work. Her historical research of obscure and forgotten performers, entertainers and events has led to encompass not only the daring pioneering women who performed in the Wild West, Circus and Sideshows but to also include the daring and extraordinary women of the Revolutionary Generation who lived in equally phenomenal times.