

# Life Outside the Lines



*Mademoiselle Jane Adams would never have known her potential as a successful artist if a few silver lined clouds hadn't floated her way.*

BY SARAH MITCHELL

## *A Southern Belle is Born*

**Jane Demaris Adams was born in San Mateo, CA** in 1951 and spent most of her childhood in nearby Sunnyvale. When Jane was only 10, her father passed away, leaving her mother a widow with five children. Jane's aunts lived in Talladega, Alabama at the time and begged Jane's mother to join them there. So 13-year-old Jane found herself receiving quite the culture shock brought on by a move from California (in the sixties no less!) to the South. However, it didn't take Jane long to adjust to the new atmosphere and become a Southern belle. She still resides in Alabama today –in Homewood, a suburb of Birmingham—with her husband.

The only art classes Jane ever took were in Junior High School. Her college studies included a major in History and a minor in Psychology from Jacksonville State University. She never had any formal art lessons and is living proof that self-taught artists can be highly successful!

Jane has studied numerous books on art and says that there are several artists that have influenced her style. "The list could go on and on, but I particularly admire Toulouse Lautrec, Marc Chagall, Gustav Klimt, Claude Monet, Pablo Picasso, Frida Kahlo and the contemporary impressionists, Issac Maimon and Itzchak Tarkay," says Jane in her heavy, but gentle, Southern accent. "I also admire a lot of the eBay artists. I've collected quite a few pieces from them."



Lean On Me

There is a good reason for Jane's admiration of the eBay artists.

"I sold my very first painting on eBay. I was absolutely thrilled! I couldn't believe out of all the artists selling on eBay, someone wanted to buy one of my paintings! From there, it just took off. I began to believe that this was what God had planned for me. Forget the stress of HR Management and find my creative side. I've continued it and never looked back," says Jane.

### *A New Start in Art*

Jane had always loved painting and crafting, but for many years her main priorities were working full time and caring for her family, leaving her artistic side less attended to. Life works in funny ways though and Jane's life changed drastically within a short span of two months time – throwing her priorities into a quandary...

"I served as an HR Director for most of the 29 years I spent with a large company in Birmingham, Alabama," says Jane. "Then the unthinkable happened. As with many large companies, positions were consistently being removed. In 2004, my position was eliminated. A few months later, my husband was diagnosed with a rare case of Lymphoma. Unable to find work, and caring

for my husband, I would paint when I could to relieve the stress. I started painting women who were on the cover of Vogue or other fashion magazines from the 50's. I did a few of these types of paintings but just kept them for myself."

"I began to paint other women dining out, revealing secrets, pondering, etc.," continues Jane. "After almost a year of painting, I decided to take it more seriously. I discovered that I really loved to paint and that this would be my new career. I took the plunge and started to sell my art beginning January 1, 2005."

After Jane lost her HR director job, she felt like she experienced an identity crisis of sorts. When she would meet people socially, Jane would have to explain that she was unemployed when they asked what she did for a living.

"One day after painting for a year, I was asked the 'what do I do with my life' question again and this time I stated, 'I'm an Artist.' It felt right saying it and it also made me feel good about myself," reminisces Jane.

Jane describes herself as "driven" and not the type of person who can just sit around doing nothing and her approach to painting is no exception. "When I first started I painted day and night," says Jane. "I have since slowed down but still paint as often as I can." Jane has recently gone back to work in a "no stress" job to help pay the bills but considers herself an artist first and foremost.

### *Big Hair and Ruby Red Lips*

Jane was concerned that she might run into some copyright issues if she tried to sell the "In Vogue" art. She never thought she'd paint anything more than the magazine covers but soon found muses in the women in her life, such as her twin sister, her other sisters, aunts, and best friends. Her aunts in particular are "true southern belles."

"We all look like the ladies in the paintings – big hair and bright red lips!" laughs Jane. Each



All Trenchy in Vogue

woman in the paintings has different characteristics – no two are alike.



one of her favorites to listen to while painting. “I like to blast it but my husband tells me to keep it down!” admits Jane with a laugh. The music she picks usually depends on her mood at the time.

Jane thinks of herself as an Abstract Impressionist with a “dash here and there of whimsy. I feel my role as an artist is ‘student’. I am eager to learn more and more,” she says.

“Most of my paintings contain people and things that are asymmetrical,” Jane explains. “I’ve never been one to ‘stay inside the lines’, nor do I feel like a painting has to be perfect. Life is not perfect. Any imperfections in a painting are just me and how I felt when I was painting. My paintings usually consist of vibrant, electric colors. I like to paint the women’s hair in bright, unexpected colors and they all have ruby red lips.”

“I like to play music while I paint and become totally absorbed in what I am doing,” Jane goes on. “I feel the painting comes to life after I complete the face. It’s like it says ‘Ah ha!’ and I feel the personality of the character, and know where I am going with the painting.”



Amelie

Music by Yann Tiersen (the soundtrack from the movie “Amelie”, in particular) is

Jane uses acrylics to paint with. She occasionally uses mixed media for her collages and has used oils in the past. She says she prefers acrylics because they are very easy to paint with and dry quickly. “When you are ‘driven’, it’s hard to wait on oil to dry...” says Jane.

## *Just How FAR an Artist Can Go*

Through her use of eBay for selling her paintings, Jane also discovered the Fine Art Registry, Inc.

“I noticed some other artists selling on eBay used FAR and I did some research along with some other online galleries who feature self-representing artists. I liked what FAR had to offer, especially the process of registering the art and the FAR tags that would help ensure provenance, copyright and ownership,” says Jane.

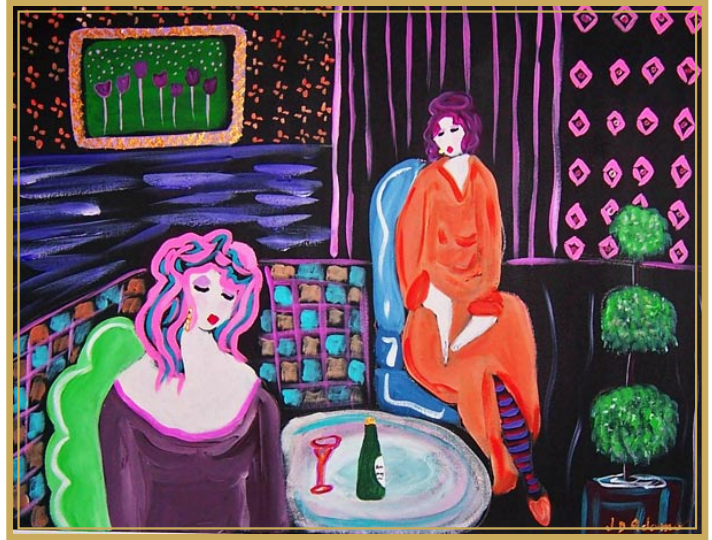
Jane has registered and tagged over 130 paintings on FAR and says the advantages are many. She has found that FAR has been a blessing as not only a way to protect her art, but also for marketing.



A lady who lived in New Orleans and moved to Florida after Hurricane Katrina bought *Viva la Jazz*. She said it reminded her of home.

“In addition to ensuring the provenance, copyright and ownership of my paintings, I use FAR as my art website. My business cards have my portfolio website address [www.fineartregistry.com/portfolio/invogueart](http://www.fineartregistry.com/portfolio/invogueart) on them so buyers and future buyers can visit the website and see a sampling of my art,” says Jane. “I truly believe it has helped my sales. When customers see you have taken the time to register your art, they know you are a serious artist. When I ship off a painting, I not only include a Certificate of Authenticity, but I also print out a copy of the painting/description on FAR so they can see how it looks online.”

“I really have enjoyed painting and FAR has really, really helped me in so many ways. Giving that little extra shows I’m serious and impresses people when I send info with it and the Certificate of Authenticity – people tend to really like it. I’ve never got any negative feedback. Still seems like a dream and unreal!” says Jane.



*Class Act*

Jane even has a story where FAR was needed and called into action to save her art!

“I recently had an instance where one of my paintings went missing after I shipped it to the buyer. It made it to their town but that was all. I was very upset because nothing like this had ever happened to me. I contacted the buyer and told them I would be reporting it as stolen on the Fine Art Registry. Thank goodness I was able to report this through FAR!” recalls Jane.

Jane’s missing painting is titled “Moulin Rouge 1889.” It has still not been returned. FAR has it posted as stolen and we remain hopeful it will be found! See the FAR gallery for a photo of it: <http://www.fineartregistry.com/cgi-bin/search.cgi?s=&p=&detail=2313>

FAR continues to be a big part of Jane’s success and future.

### *A Full and Fantastic Future*

Jane still remains in awe of the fact that people want to buy her art – she is very humble. But her success speaks for itself!

“I have sold approximately 130 paintings in just the last 19 months! Most of my paintings have sold on eBay, which has given me the opportunity to sell my paintings all over the world. I have also had a few commissions from local customers,” says Jane.

Jane sees her future continuing as an artist on eBay. Not only does Jane sell her paintings, but she has also branched out by making jewelry and pillows. The jewelry features the faces of the woman characters she paints.



“They had noticed one of my paintings on eBay,” explains Jane. “Luckily, this is a painting I had decided to keep for myself. It is titled ‘Springtime’. This is such an honor to be recognized as an artist. The name of the book is ‘SWAG - Southern Women Aging Gracefully’. So, here I am, a Southern woman, hopefully aging gracefully, and my art on the cover of this book! It all still seems like an awesome dream!”

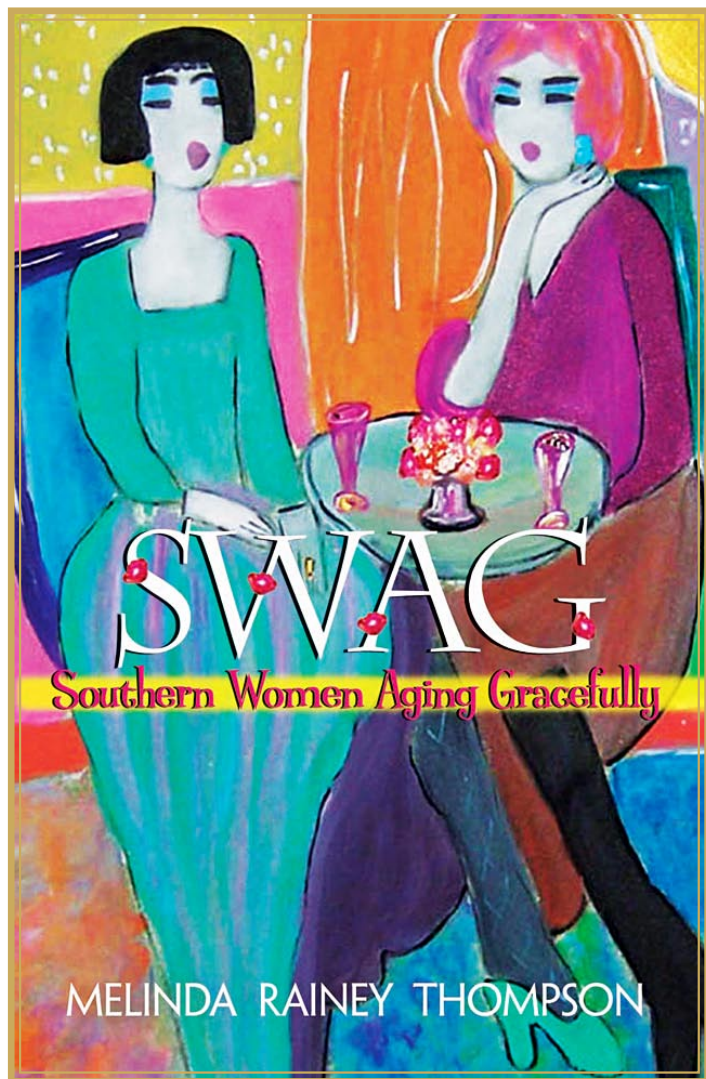


Jane with jewelry

Jane says she is surprised at who has interest in her work at times. “Art is so subjective. People see things differently,” says Jane. “I didn’t know who would like what I did. I figured it’d have to be someone like me. It’s been

weird – some people have almost been like group followers that I’ve sold paintings to – buying several pieces! In fact, a lot of men have bought my paintings...and the pillows. I don’t know why, but they have! And I’m not complaining. Just a variety of people all over!”

Moreover, Jane currently has five paintings on display at the So-Oh Fine Art Gallery in Lincoln, Nebraska. And as if all this weren’t enough, just this year Jane was contacted by a publishing company asking to feature one of her paintings on a book cover!



Jane’s painting *Springtime* as a book cover

### *Something to Celebrate*

“If someone had told me a few years ago that one day I would be an artist, actually selling my work and having a book cover, I would have thought they were crazy,” says Jane. “Painting is now such an important part of my life. I am constantly thinking of different characters I would like to include in my portfolio.”

"In June of 2005, my husband underwent a bone marrow transplant and in January 2006 he was in remission," Jane went on. "I knew I had to paint something to celebrate. In February, I decided to paint a 2 ft x 2 ft collage on birch wood and include prints of most of my woman characters positioned around tables drinking wine, all in all having a good time and celebrating. I also tucked in an altered character-type photo of my husband and me from our engagement party, twenty something years ago. I titled the painting/ collage 'Something To Celebrate'. I listed it on eBay

with a very high reserve because I really never intended it to sell; I just used the auction as a way of telling everyone how happy I was. Well, it sold for \$850.00 to a wonderful customer in Canada! I couldn't believe it!"

"This is just the beginning of my art career. I look forward to spending many years with a paintbrush in my hand creating more whimsical characters to add to my family. Thank you, FAR, for being a part of this new career!"



*Something to Celebrate*