

## MaryKay Klein

I grew up in New Jersey where I spent my childhood days playing and creating in mud and sticks. Using nature as my palette, I discovered that beauty and delight are everywhere.

After completing a degree in Fine Arts (with grad work at Rutgers and, later, the University of Denver), I became an art teacher in New Jersey. I took great pleasure in helping children revel in the freedom of creating unique works of art that only their capable, enthusiastic hands can fashion.

In 1972, my husband and I came west to Colorado to raise our two daughters. The majestic beauty of the mountains and surrounding landscape, so different from the topography I encountered throughout my life in New Jersey, greatly influenced me. Once setting down roots in Colorado, I continued to pursue my calling to inspire, working right here in Littleton for the rest of my career as an art teacher.

Back in the 1970's, before the housing developments began closing in, I would wander the fields surrounding our Littleton home, picking up found objects and incorporating them into my art pieces. Even my children (and our romping yellow lab) joined in the fun, helping scout out natural elements (including large, sculptural sticks ~ courtesy of the dog) on our walks along the Highline Canal. Many of these objects were arranged into 3-dimensional works, and became focal points on a sweeping white wall in our home. It was an unconventional collection, but represented quintessential "Colorado" to me, and prompted frequent inquiries from curious visitors about how the pieces came to life and what inspired me to create them.

Being a tactile person, I am greatly interested in texture, and bringing that element into my work is one of the most thrilling parts of creating. I have enjoyed working with a wide variety of mediums: marble; found metal objects {one of my daughters distinctly remembers helping me carry home some old, rusted train track nails}; downed tree trunks that I carved with a chainsaw and gauges; and clay used for sculptures and pottery. My sculptural focus being mostly on smaller, indoor pieces. However, I've done many outdoor garden pieces, including mini garden fountains. As for pottery, my mugs and dinnerware sets have been blessed to grace the tables of family and friends.

My accomplishments and affiliations are as follows:

- Artwork shown in Trenton, NJ galleries
- Sculpture at D.U. exhibit
- BAS relief exhibited at the Wildlife Experience Museum
- Murals in both Moody and Peabody Elementary schools
- Mural in the Stewart Building in downtown Littleton
- Member of the Colorado Art Education Association, the Paint Box Guild, the Littleton Fine Arts Guild, and the Depot Art Gallery.

I am honored to be an exhibiting member here at The Depot Art Gallery. Thank you for reading my story and viewing my work. If you happen to acquire one of my creations, I thank you sincerely and hope it only adds to your surroundings.