

Karen Mason

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Karen Mason expresses a unique contemporary flair in her landscape, floral and bird paintings, through the combination of vibrant texture and luminous atmosphere. The unique translucent atmospheric effects she achieves in her oil and acrylic paintings were influenced by her earlier study of watercolor washes and glazing techniques. Her large-scale multi-panel pieces resemble Asian folding screens and provide the flexibility to be re-arranged to suit their surroundings. Mason's paintings are on display in private and corporate collections across the United States, United Kingdom, Italy and France.

Having lived in the mid-west and on both coasts, Mason has long been intrigued by the saturated palette of coastal wetlands, lush landscapes and forested mountains. As she states, *"Nature's organic structures have inspired my work, allowing me to take more of a child's perspective in addressing the enormity of 'looking up' with the freshness of 'looking at' a world full of surprises found in new beginnings."*

Mason's Italian heritage and the influence of Asian design become evident in her paintings, where she combines the radiant passion of color with the tranquility of understated lines. This unique pairing invites you to experience pungent moments and delightful surprises against a quieted backdrop of exquisite detail and liquid atmosphere. She has family in Northern Italy and has traveled extensively throughout the country, spending afternoons painting street scenes in Florence and touring art museums and churches. The lure of the East comes through in her uniquely American Orientalist painting style, which balances the beauty and splendor of nature against elements of imperfection and change. Having worked with Japanese automotive companies to interpret historical and cultural motifs into contemporary formats, Mason now applies these same principles to her paintings.

Her latest *Slice Series* of large-scale paintings invite the viewer to step into embracing environments of radiance and lush tropics filled with birds and botanicals. These paintings communicate the moment you are caught up in the wonder of light and warmth as the tropical breeze brushes your face. Glimpse canes in a Tango dating dance and peacocks bathing in the radiant breeze. Capture a lush warm early afternoon as the sun warms the ground and stirs the emotions of brilliant tropical flowers in a bamboo-like forest. Mason is currently working on her next series, *Brilliant Birds* which looks at both the comical and graceful aspects of birds.

Mason's large-scale paintings have a unique vibrancy and luminosity, which is achieved through the application of thickly painted saturated oil colors over thin layers of acrylic glaze or collage. In this way she balances bold perspective and color with a translucency that evokes tranquility and space. In addition to her single-canvas pieces, Mason creates multi-panel paintings that can be displayed as a mural grouping or in small sets.

Mason's paintings are on display at the Art People Gallery in San Francisco, and at ACCI Gallery in Berkeley, California. She works with corporations to promote innovation through collaboration and sharing of knowledge. Most weekends you can find Karen Mason painting in her garden studio in Berkeley or working *plein air* in the California hills.