

## Cynthia Markert

What is it that inspires the ethereal women that grace Cynthia Markert's paintings? Bits and pieces from my life, declares the artist. My twenties, my thirties, strong female role models. It is my sister, my mother, and my feelings about intimacy and spirituality.

Markert has had a continuing fascination with the period between the 1870s and the 1930s, a period during which female identity and gender roles underwent tensions and transformations. Her subject matter is drawn largely from the New Woman of the 1890s and the flapper of the Jazz age in the 1920s. Another facet of Markert's work is the use of reverse writing in her paintings, including her signature. Left-handed, she became fascinated with the design potential of this technique, and has incorporated it in her work for over twenty years. Markert mixes acrylic paint, oil sticks, ink, pastels, pencils, and different types of varnish on wood panels to achieve her delicate images of strong women.

Born in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, Markert attended the University of Tennessee, receiving her BFA in studio art with a minor in Women's Studies. Her work was exhibited in the Fine Arts Pavilion in 1982 at the Knoxville World's Fair. She also represented the thirteen artists displayed at the fair's Candy Factory. In 1985 she moved to the Washington D.C. area. In eight years spent in Alexandria, Virginia, Markert showed in several galleries, while also pursuing her second love of singing jazz, moonlighting at the Henley Park Hotel in downtown D.C. In 1993 she returned to Knoxville, which fondly claims her as our artist.

Markert's work is represented in the archives of the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington D.C., the Stanford University Department of Lively Arts, the University of Tennessee Department of Theater, and various jazz clubs and galleries. Her bio is included in the 2005 edition of Who's Who in America.

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