



3 OCTOBER 2022

## Tracy Everly, Artist

Listen to this article  
0:00 / 9:20 1X

I was born in 1968 in Philadelphia. I started drawing at a young age and took painting classes as a teen. I left painting behind for a number of years and studied English Literature instead, earning Bachelor's and Master's degrees.

I returned to painting in my early twenties and haven't stopped since. I am mostly self-taught. My fierce determination and love of painting guided my education, including studying with individual painters and classes at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

I use oil paint to explore the fleeting experience of being human. I observe, paint, and distil different moments into a simplified form that is ultimately meant to capture the remains or accumulation of an experience as it slips away.



"I wish I had known the importance of following my own path and staying true to myself - and how hard that sometimes is."

Tracy Everly

Tracy Everly, **LinkedIn** (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/tracy-everly/>),  
**Instagram** (<https://www.instagram.com/tracyeverly/>)  
(<https://www.instagram.com/pauloj.mendes/>) and **Website**  
(<https://tracyeverly.com>)

Galleries that show my work include Morpeth Contemporary in Hopewell, New Jersey, Sugarlift (online), and Edgewater Gallery in Middlebury, Vermont. I also currently have work included in a group show of contemporary landscape paintings at the Figure Ground Gallery in Seattle.

Awards include an *Award of Distinction from the American Impressionist Society* and two *Bucks County Resident Artist Awards* from the Bucks County Plein Air Festival, among others. My work has been included in both regional and national exhibitions. I teach online and in-person workshops across the U.S. I live and work in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

### What is your favourite social media platform, and why?

Instagram because it's so visual and easy to connect with people.

### Tell us about you and your current role or area of interest.

I paint to interpret, explore and share. Painting is my way of being in the world – trying to make sense of my time here. Most of my paintings are about the passage of time and the fleeting experience of being human and wanting to grasp and hold on while knowing that to grasp is to lose.

I don't aim to capture one static moment or every detail. Instead, I observe, paint, and distil different moments into a simplified form that is ultimately meant to capture the remains or accumulation of an experience as it slips away.

My life as an artist continues to grow and change, and my body of work also changes. I left a corporate job as an editor three years ago to paint full-time. Prior to that, I had painted in-between work and life. I am fortunate to be able to spend my time drawing, painting, and exploring.

I spent more than 20 years drawing and painting from life, which is crucial. I now sometimes create paintings from drawings and/or photos. My work lately focuses on two distinctly different motifs: still lifes (mostly flowers) and landscapes with buildings.

### **What do you like about your career or area of focus?**

What I enjoy most about making art is that it invites me to pay attention to the world around me deeply and personally. Painting requires deep focus and being in the moment, which I find enjoyable.

Making art challenges me mentally, physically and spiritually and sometimes pushes me up against my limits. I think of the creative impulse as a living thing that grows and changes in unexpected ways. But that's also what makes it so rewarding. I've also come to enjoy and be humbled by how other people connect with what I do in a way that's personal for them.

### **What is the best advice you have ever received?**

I have a few. To paint the paintings that I want to see in the world. Also, to ignore both the highest praise and the worst criticism because both can be equally damaging.

### **What inspires you, motivates you, or helps you to move forward?**

What motivates me and helps me move forward is my internal drive to create the paintings that I need to create. I paint to please myself first and hope that, in so doing, I create work that's real and that others will connect with.

It's easy to get discouraged when I'm not painting well or if I share work and it's not well-received. But I try to remind myself that what's important is the body of work as a whole - not any one painting.

Failed paintings are a necessary part of the process. I trust the process and that it will take me where I need to go if I can remember not to get too caught up in any individual failure.

### **What are you proud of in your life so far?**

I'm proud of my honesty, integrity and tenacity. I tend not to think of accomplishments or things I've done, as those are less important to me than how I interact with people. The tenacity is more personal, perhaps, but it applies in many situations. I don't give up easily and prefer to keep trying to find a new way through whatever challenge I'm facing.

### **What is your preferred way to meet new people/network?**

I still prefer to meet people in person organically. However, it's also fun when a social media interaction carries over, and I get to meet the person in real life. I've made quite a few friends that way. For me, networking has to be based on a real shared interest or connection. It has to be real to be meaningful.

### **What skills or qualities do you feel have helped you?**

Drawing skills are critical for me, as are other foundational skills such as composition, understanding and utilizing colour, and paint handling. Those are important even when I'm loosening my grip on pure representational painting.

The willingness to take risks is at the top of the list of important qualities for my work. Risk-taking comes in many forms and can be scary. And even when it doesn't result in a successful painting, the gain is always worth it in the end.

I'd also say that tenacity, which I mentioned earlier, is critical. Painting is hard. The tenacity carries me through.

### **What do you wish you had known when you started out?**

Great question. I suppose I wish I had known the importance of following my own path and staying true to myself - and how hard that sometimes is.

### **Who do you most admire in business, academic or creative circles and why?**

Certainly, there are many I admire in the art world. But, I'll limit myself to just a few whose work and qualities I admire and who I've had the good fortune of learning from.

- Stanka Kordic for her trust in herself and the process.
- Peter Van Dyck for his personal vision and dedication to carrying it through.
- Christopher Gallego for his clarity and sincere presence.
- Jon Redmond for his authenticity and integrity.

### **Outside of your professional/work area, what hobbies or interests do you have or what other areas of your life are of real importance to you?**

My family and friends are more important to me than anything, so I enjoy spending time with them when possible. I also enjoy gardening, wandering outdoors in search of wildlife, exploring historical sites, and reading.

### **Has the pandemic had a positive or a negative effect on you and/or your business, and how have you managed it?**

Overall, it's been mixed. In-person events, which are so important for viewing art, were postponed or cancelled, which was disappointing and certainly hurt. In-person teaching also came to a halt. But opportunities to teach online blossomed, so I shifted my focus there, which allowed me to learn new skills and connect with people from all over the world. That helped carry me through and was unexpectedly wonderful in many ways.

More broadly, the pandemic helped me clarify priorities, as it did for many of us. That's always a positive.

### **Do you have a mentor, or have you ever mentored anyone?**

I've had a few mentors over the years who I've worked with from time to time. Those relationships naturally change depending on where I'm at in my own process. But then, sometimes, I circle back to them from time to time, over the years.

As far as me mentoring anyone, I'd say that I've loosely mentored a few people, but not in a formal way.

### **What advice would you have for someone looking to get into the same area of work or interests?**

My advice would be to focus first and always on learning fundamental skills (drawing, composition, colour). That's really important. To recognize that this is a lifelong journey, so to be both patient and realistic.

To identify what you want from it. If you can, identify people whose work you admire and learn from them. To be authentic and to build an ongoing and sustainable art practice. The work has to come first, always. And it has to be true to you.

### **What do you feel is the most common reason for people failing or giving up?**

I'd say people fail or give up commonly because they lose patience and/or haven't yet developed resilience. It takes years to learn to paint and even longer to develop a personal language. It can be hard when you are not able to paint as well as you'd like.

Believe me; I know this from experience. And there's really no end to the challenge. Of course, the further you go, the harder it gets, in some ways. But it also gets more rewarding, but you must stay with it long enough for that to happen.

### **Is there a phrase, quote or a saying that you really like?**

I love quotes, so there are many. But I'll limit to just a few.

"May you live all the days of your life" - Jonathan Swift.

"I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work" - Thomas Edison.

"What falls away is always. And is near." - Theodore Roethke's poem The Waking.


### **What companies, brands, or institutions do you like or do you think are getting it right?**

I'm a big fan of Gamblin. Gamblin offers quality materials, and I appreciate that they offer so much in the way of education. I point people to their website for information all the time. Other companies I think are getting it right include Natural Pigments, New Wave, RayMar Art, to name a few. In addition to offering quality materials, the business seems personal to them, which is important to me.

### **How do you define success, and what lessons have you learned so far that you could share with our audience/readership?**

For me, success means creating work that I like and that also feels like me. The "feels like me" part is tricky because it doesn't adhere to any formula and what it looks like changes. Success also means having people connect with what I'm doing.

When someone tells me that seeing a painting of mine evokes a feeling in them, I consider that to be a success. The lessons I have learned around this are really to create from a personal place of honesty. Faking it or doing work to please others doesn't work for long. You have to stay true to yourself.

 (<https://www.facebook.com/sharer/sharer.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Ftheglobalinterview.com%2Finterviews-season-55%2F2022%2F10%2F3%2Ftracy-everly-artist>)

 (<https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?url=https%3A%2F%2Ftheglobalinterview.com%2Finterviews-season-55%2F2022%2F10%2F3%2Ftracy-everly-artist&text=>)

 (<https://www.linkedin.com/sharearticle?mini=true&source=the+global+interview&summary=&url=https%3A%2F%2Ftheglobalinterview.com%2Finterviews-season-55%2F2022%2F10%2F3%2>)



PREVIOUS

Graciela Moore, ICF Certified Transcendental Hope Coach, Song of Myself Coaching LLC

(/interviews-season-55/2022/10/3/graciela-moore-icf-certified-transcendental-hope-coach-song-of-myself-coaching-llc)

NEXT

Siobhan Walsh, Consultant, Siobhan Walsh Consultancy

(/interviews-season-55/2022/10/3/siobhan-walsh-consultant-siobhan-walsh-consultancy)

## The Global Interview

Interviews with creatives, leaders, and thinkers



Support us with a coffee (<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/globalinterview>)

Publishing is thirsty work, please support us by buying a coffee, we appreciate it!

Supported by our patrons on **PATREON** (<https://www.patreon.com/theglobalinterview>)

Join the community and become a patron today.

[home \(/home\)](/home) | [interviews \(/interviews\)](/interviews) | [services \(/services\)](/services) | [about \(/about\)](/about) | [contact \(/contact\)](/contact)

[info@theglobalinterview.com](mailto:info@theglobalinterview.com)

Global HQ, Dublin 2, Ireland

Copyright © 2022 | The Global Interview | All Rights Reserved

[T&Cs \(/terms-and-conditions\)](/terms-and-conditions) | [GDPR \(https://theglobalinterview.com/gdpr\)](https://theglobalinterview.com/gdpr) | [Privacy \(/privacy\)](/privacy)



Helping you to find interesting information.

Supported by our patrons on **PATREON**  
(<https://www.patreon.com/theglobalinterview>)