



**Susan Nicholas Gephart**

[www.SNicholasArt.com](http://www.SNicholasArt.com)

Professional Artist and Instructor

Artist Statement



Focusing on the landscape and striving for a personal approach, my goal is to see beyond the obvious and capture a mood or essence of what is felt. All my life, I have been inspired by the color and beauty of our fragile earth environment. I strive to capture and convey a spiritual message of nature's important connection to humankind. Working on location outdoors, 'en plein air,' whether in pastels or oils, allows for spontaneity and directness. Responding to the sound, smell, and light of the environment influences each interpretation. The essential elements of these paintings are color, shape, sense of atmosphere, and the emotion of the moment.

During the process of creating, the idea of 'Fear No Art' is a reminder to me that it is okay to step into unknown territory, take risks and allow for discovery. There is an inner peace and balance in response to my mind's interactions to the landscape that continually rejuvenates my love of painting Sky, Water and Earth.

Since early childhood, I have felt completely comfortable in the solitude of "The Forest," a place where a sense of peace is felt. While painting in the woods, all the senses are attuned to the smells, sounds, and feelings emoted in response to experiences, such as dappled light on fall leaves.

Expansive tranquil or stormy skies of the "Cloudscapes" series provide colors, contrast, and spatial relationships not found in the wooded areas. This large body of related pieces, spanning from the early 80s to present time, fulfills an appreciation for atmospheric weather conditions, endless and ever changing, with possibilities for new compositions in pastels and oils. The Central PA Mountains and skies have been the prime source of inspiration for this series.

The series that I call "Passages" began during my five year residence in Howard, PA, where many an evening or early morning was spent painting in pastels, the awesome aerial view from the town's dyke. Layers of mountains—moving off in the distance—fronted by the lake—inspired a deep fascination for capturing the atmospheric elements of obscuring moisture.

Pastels enabled a quick response to an ever changing view, and hundreds of paintings through all seasons. The information gathered from pastels laid the groundwork for large studio oil paintings. For me, the "Passages" series symbolically represents our changing life and passage in time.