

PAULA MADAWICK



Paula Madawick was born in Fort Worth, Texas into the artistic home of leading industrial designer Tucker P. Madawick and textile designer Lois Long. When Paula was four, she, her mother and brother moved to Brooklyn, N.Y., and then to Rockland County, N.Y., where life itself became a study of the avant garde. Her formative years were formative indeed. Living with her mother and stepfather, the filmmaker Emil de Antonio, cultural forces such as John Cage, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg and Merce Cunningham, friends of Paula's family, were a constant presence and strong influence.

At 17 she moved into New York City, had a brief semester at the School of Visual Arts, quit and became artist's assistant to Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg, and continued her art education through life experience such as tending bar at Andy Warhol's parties in the Factory. While immersed in the pop art world, she retreated into respectability and married John Cage's cousin in 1965. Fifteen years later she divorced and restarted her art career.

Her early influences gave her the freedom to think and pursue art without conventional constraints. In 1980, Paula began drawing abstracts using colored pencils. She also began taking photographs. Ten years later, she drew her first colored pencil landscape from a photograph she had taken, a photograph of a de-construction, the remains of a collapsed, two hundred foot concrete retaining wall, scattered across an acre and a half of hillside. Paula found even with the limited size of her 4" x 6" photograph, the enormity of the site made it necessary for her to draw large and she did; a three by eight foot drawing on watercolor paper with water soluble colored pencils and monkey hair brushes. She titled the drawing: *East of Nine West, Summer*. She photographed and drew the three other seasons in the same large scale and many smaller drawings of the location.

The camera became an extension of her eye. She would photograph a unique situation, a situation she knew would change tomorrow, and record details she would need later to explore the intricacies involved. She would use lens distortion and color printing distortion to her advantage. She edited her photos through improvisation, using everyday techniques to enlarge an image on black and white copy machines, slice and dice the enlargements, and image the composition, the drawing, in color. She now uses a color copier but does not rely on the color of the copy. Her realistic drawings are a culmination of a chance happening, current technology, old-fashioned paste-up and rendering experience.

Big, small, realistic, abstract, drawn or painted, Paula continues exploring the genre of landscape, her subject choice unusual, the media varying widely, her craftsmanship formed by a lifetime immersed in, and practicing: Art.

In 1997, Vivian Raynor of *The New York Times* reviewed Paula's work and stated, "Her choice of style smacks of a rebellion against rebellion." Paula continues the rebellion; look closely.

