

DAWN SAUNDERS DAHL

Our world is overloaded with imagery, and we are left with little time to evaluate and digest our surroundings and the people who inhabit them. We are visual people and communicate through expression, gesture and perceive emotion through color and line. My artwork creates my own record of my passage through place and time. My paintings and drawings portray an extraordinary intimacy and rich reference to our present, our history and for Canadian portraiture in the 21st century.

I was born in Edmonton, Alberta and resided there with my family for my first six years. In 1980 my family and I moved an hour south east of Edmonton to Camrose, Alberta eventually settling on a small acreage. Living on the acreage, I learned to appreciate the quiet, open land, where my mother would tell me stories about my grandparents and how hard they worked for their land. This upbringing made me eager to continue to work hard and tackle large projects. During my first year at Red Deer College my mother married a dairy farmer from Stettler, where I continued to live the farm life during summers at home.

In 1993 I attended Red Deer College I was fortunate enough to be taught by three people who still influence the way I perceived life and art. The painting instructor at RDC was Anna Loseva, who was born in Russia and had an intense education specializing in Old Master painting and drawing techniques. Charles Wissinger and Will Truchon were my sculptural influences during my time at RDC. Every year they would bring in national and international artists to give artist talks, critiques and demonstrations. Daily interactions with these various visiting artists proved to be invaluable lessons about life and art.

After three years at Red Deer College I attended the Alberta College of Art and Design in Calgary. In 1998 I received a Bachelor of Fine Art degree majoring in painting. In 1999, I received the Bachelor of Fine Art degree majoring in ceramics. After graduation I have continued to make art work in my home in southwest Calgary. In 2007, I participated in a National Portrait Competition, as well, I was one of the winners in a farm photography contest sponsored through the Royal Bank. In 2010, at the Red Deer and District Museum, I will exhibit my project entitled "Central Alberta Farm Women" - a portrait exhibit honoring today's Farm Women.