

# Melinda Sinclair

Abstract painter

*I paint my experience of the ongoing energy flow, the state of flux, we're always in: its elemental nature, its momentariness, and the possibilities it holds for the next moment. Calligraphic lines, layers, value contrast and elemental colour echo the energy imprint of a moment – whether slow-moving or a mere flash, chaotic or elegant, disturbing or beautiful.*

*My visual language draws on imagery from elemental forces – water, air, fire, earth. Through evoking something of the essence of these familiar elements, my paintings help ground us in the reality of our lives here and now as physical beings. At the same time, the abstract nature of the paintings can help remind us that we are also cosmic beings participating in much larger energy flows.*



## Biographical information

Born: July 17, 1953, Cape Town, South Africa

Lived and worked in the Cape Province, South Africa, until 1995

Moved to Canada in 1995; currently living and working in Toronto, Canada

## Career overview

For more than four decades I've been involved in learning and facilitating learning: first as an academic linguist, then as coach educator, designer of leadership learning experiences, and as executive coach to a large number of leaders in a variety of industries. This career has brought me up close to many fascinating facets of our world, and to a wonderful group of people all motivated in some way to make a positive contribution to their world. My work with leaders involved in moving science forward – whether as scientists, engineers, project managers or institutional leaders - has been an especially gratifying part of my professional journey.

As a late life artist, my life and professional experiences greatly inform the way I think about my art, and how I go about my painting practice. Painting is for me a natural extension of how I've always engaged with the world, both personally and professionally: through attentive noticing, curious exploration of the deeper underlying structure of things, and intentional integration of logic and imagination in sense-making.

The themes and ideas that capture my attention as an artist are the very themes and ideas that have been the focus of my professional work throughout my career: Making sense and finding meaning in the midst of uncertainty, complexity, change, flux. And maintaining a sense of possibility and hope even in the face of darkness.

**Academic (research and teaching):** General Linguist (University of Stellenbosch) of Stellenbosch, South Africa, 1978-1994)

**Executive coach:** PeopleDynamics Learning, 1998 to present (working with a wide range of Canadian and international organizations and leaders, with a special focus on knowledge-based and science-oriented environments).

**Coaching educator, designer of leadership learning experiences:** Adler International Learning (Now: Adler Graduate Professional School), PeopleDynamics Learning Group (1998 - 2020) (lead designer, facilitator, and mentor for several innovative, in-depth, immersive learning experience for both professional coaches and leaders).

**Painter:** 2023 to present (including a mentorship with artist and mentor Marianne Mitchell)

## Education

Formal education played a big role in shaping my thinking capabilities, in ways that continue to impact me in multiple ways. However, at this life stage what I've learned has mostly been shaped by three other factors. This is true for me in my professional life as coach, as well as my path as a painter.

First, reading is a means of shaping thinking. I read (and listen) voraciously, guided by a deep sense of curiosity about the world and what it means to be a human on our fragile blue planet. My reading spans across a wide range of topics and perspectives, guided by pure curiosity as well as desire to make deeper, more complex, connections. Such self-directed reading and study is now also an integral part of my art practice. Second, to teach is to learn deeply. I've been teaching, facilitating and coaching for more than four decades now, and have also had the opportunity to create multiple deep learning experiences for others. What I've learned through these experiences is invaluable, and contributes greatly to any life wisdom I have gained. Third, I am primarily self-taught as far as skills and capabilities go. Most of the skills and capabilities I have developed and used during my professional life have been developed not through formal training, but through self-directed learning and experimentation. While this may not always be the most efficient path, it suits my inclination to lean away from convention and towards creativity and innovation. It has meant that I always felt quite free to be imaginative, experimental, and even edgy in my work. This approach to skill development carries over into my painting practice.

D. Phil., General Linguistics (University of Stellenbosch, South Africa) (1985)

Coach-related training and education (incl. Positive Psychology, Adult Development, Mindfulness, Leadership, Team Effectiveness, Interpersonal Neurobiology) (1995 onwards)

Art mentorship (Marianne Mitchell) (2023-2025)

## Contact details

[Melinda.sinclair@gmail.com](mailto:Melinda.sinclair@gmail.com)

Tel 647 205 8857

Instagram: melinda.sinclair

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