

## Mel Rea

Mel Rea is a multidisciplinary artist whose work explores abstraction, emotion, and the natural world through a dynamic layering of mediums. Originally trained as a ceramic sculptor, she earned her BFA in Ceramics from Kent State University, creating large-scale figurative works known for their intricate details and imaginative narratives. Influenced by cultural traditions—particularly Egyptian and Japanese dress—her sculptures often blended myth, history, and fantasy.

After nearly two decades working with clay, Mel transitioned to painting, inspired by a discovery of beeswax in her grandmother's basement—remnants from her grandfather's beekeeping days. This moment reconnected her with nature and led her to encaustic painting, an ancient technique using molten wax. The tactile qualities of encaustics—its carving potential, luminous layers, and satin finish—offered a natural evolution from her sculptural work.

Today, Mel works across encaustic, acrylic, pastel, gouache, and oil stick, embracing a vibrant, gestural approach. Her abstract compositions are built from layered lines, color fields, and expressive mark-making that suggest, rather than define, forms—hinting at botanicals, movement, or mood. Rooted in Japanese aesthetics and a lifelong love of animals and the outdoors, her paintings reflect a deep sense of play, romance, and reverence for nature.

Mel believes in the power of thought to shape reality, and her work is a practice in mindful creation—channeling warmth, humor, and connection without the need for literal narrative.