



MEREL FEENSTRA

Merel Feenstra (1979) is a Dutch artist who currently resides and works in Neerijnen, the Netherlands.

In the captivating world of Merel's paintings, empowered nature is beautifully portrayed through everyday subjects. Her distinctive style showcases dynamic brushstrokes and vibrant colors, inviting viewers to appreciate the harmony and magic that surrounds them. Each artwork prompts a moment of contemplation, celebrating the joy of life and the tranquility found in nature.

Merel Feenstra has exhibited her work in various locations, mainly in the Netherlands. Some locations include: Blaricum, Amsterdam, Laren, Groningen, Leek, Asperen, Paterswolde, Huizen, Utrecht, Zeewolde and Eindhoven.

“I was born in 1979 in Hilversum, the Netherlands. Before I turned one, I lost my mother, and because of this I grew up in a rather gray and subdued environment. Fortunately, I was surrounded by the warmth of my grandparents. As a child, I was sensitive and insecure, but deeply connected to the natural world around me.

The mother of my best friend had a beautiful flower garden, and it was through her that I was first introduced to the joy of creativity. She helped me discover the power of painting — not only as a form of self-expression and individuality, but also as a safe space where I could retreat and feel at home. Despite this early connection, my insecurity held me back from fully embracing a creative path. After grammar school, I chose to go to university rather than pursue art school.

My academic studies weren't a great success, but my time as a student was rich in experience — not least because it's when I met the love of my life, Dirk-Jan. From that point, life became much more colorful. I built a successful career in communication and business events, which gave me confidence and fulfillment in a different form.

It wasn't until 2018 that I returned to my creative roots and began training at the Classical Academy of Fine Arts in Groningen. I completed the program four years later. During this period, Dirk-Jan and I moved to a farmhouse in rural West Betuwe. After the pandemic, I rented a studio nearby in the charming town of Asperen — a peaceful creative haven where I again began teaching painting classes to others. I also taught in the Royal Talens studio in Apeldoorn.

In 2024, I launched painting retreats in Spain — a country whose sun, food, and vibrant atmosphere deeply inspire me. The joy and energy of life there led us to make a big decision: in 2025, we officially began the process of emigrating to Spain to fully embrace this new chapter."

"Nature and its rich, colorful vitality lie at the heart of my work. At the moment, I'm deeply inspired by artists like Sorolla, Zorn, Sargent, Monet, Douwe Elias, Lorrain, Koekkoek, and Watteau, as well as the atmospheric photography of Hans Withoos.

I often turn to painters like Sam Drukker, Velazquez, Mancini, Holbein and Cornelis Le Mair for visual inspiration and technical guidance.

Currently, I'm working on a new body of work for a solo exhibition in Spain — a dream that feels both deeply personal and creatively fulfilling."



MEREL FEENSTRA

Born in 1979 in Hilversum, The Netherlands
Works and lives in Neerijnen, The Netherlands

EDUCATION

SINCE 2023

Starts organizing painting holidays and art retreats in the beautiful landscapes of Spain: www.schildervakantiespanje.nl

2022

Graduated Classical Academy of Fine Arts (Groningen) - vocational training

SINCE 2020

Resides and works in Neerijnen.

Merel starts teaching painting workshops in her studio in Geldermalsen and Asperen: www.schilderen-in-de-betuwe.nl

Foundation www.handgeschilderde-vazen.nl

2018-2022

Classical Academy of Fine Arts (Groningen)

Lectures of Paul Boswijk, Riny Bus, Elvira Dik, Xandra Donders, Sam Drukker, Tom Hageman, Keimpe van der Kooi, Mitzy Renooy, Piet Sebens, Svetlana Tartakovska.

Starts teaching painting workshops at de Kunststudio (Blaricum) and plein air painting weekends in Drenthe (Frederiksoord).

2017

Gooise Academy of Fine Arts (Laren)

Lectures of Humphrey Bennett

2013

Gooise Academy of Fine Arts (Laren)

Lectures of Humphrey Bennett

Since 2008

Starts working as an independent event manager www.interim-eventmanager.nl

Merel organized several business events in recent years including for: Bayer HealthCare,

Rijkswaterstaat, De Nederlandsche Bank, Robeco, Rabobank NL, GlobalCollect /Ingenico ePayments, Reader's Digest, DLL Group, KNZB, Shell, TAQA, Smit Boskalis, Fagerhult, Friesland Campina, Hilverzorg, AFM, BN International, Essent/RWE, Pokon, Kruidvat NL (Reckitt Benckiser), Jaarbeurs, The Wall Utrecht, Koninklijke Horeca Nederland, European Laracon Conference and Domain-Driven Design Europe.

2006

Gooise Academy of Fine Arts (Laren)

Lectures of Humphrey Bennett

2003-2008

Various marketing & communication jobs

1997-2001

Bedrijfsinformatietechnologie - University of Twente (Enschede)

Toegepaste Communicatie Wetenschap - University of Twente (Enschede)

No degree obtained

2001-2003

Webmaster @ TriMM Interactieve Media www.trimm.nl

1991-1997

Gemeentelijk Gymnasium (Hilversum)

Graduated in 1997



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EXHIBITIONS. ART FAIRS.

2023

Landelijk Atelierweekend - FALL EDITION

<https://landelijkatelierweekend.nl/>

November 11-12, 2023

Visitekaartjes Expositie - Galerie Paterswolde

<https://www.galeriepaterswolde.nl/expositie-visitekaartjes-editie-2022/>

November 22, 2022 - January 14, 2023

2022

Open Atelierroute West-Betuwe www.waardart.nl

@ Studio Merel Feenstra, Voorstraat 89-b, Asperen

September 17-18

September 24-25

Students from - [de Klassieke Academie Groningen](#) - show recent work in the Roomsterborgh in Leek

<https://www.roomsterborgh.nl>

June 23-26, 13-17 hrs @ Roomsterborgh, Roomsterweg 5-1, Leek

2021

Nationale Kunstdagen 2021

www.kunstdagen.nl @ Evenementenhal Gorinchem

November 6 - 7

2020

ADAF 2020 - Annual Dutch Art Fair, Amsterdam.

Sat. October 10 - Sun. October 11

ART Eindhoven 2020

September 12 -13

2019

ADAF 2019 - Annual Dutch Art Fair

Atelierroute Blaricum @ deKunststudio Blaricum

Solo exposition Lobby @ Hilton Hotel Brussel

ART Eindhoven 2019

Opening www.dekunststudio.nl @ Singel 17-i, Blaricum.

2018

Blaricum raakt je! @ Noolseweg 1, Blaricum.

Kunst Battle Zeewolde @ Open Haven, Kerkplein 8 , Zeewolde

Atelierroute Blaricum @ Huizerweg 13, Blaricum.

Kunst en Cultuur Markt @ De Krachtcentrale, Huizen.

Solo Exposition @ Foyer Louis Hartlooper Complex, Utrecht.

2017

Open bar for Art Lovers / Borrel voor Kunstliefhebbers

@ Restaurant Bruis, Blaricum.