

Anne Wehrley Björk is an American artist working in both painting and drawing.

Björk grew up in Northwest New Mexico near the World Heritage Site and prehistoric Anasazi Indian ruins of Chaco Canyon, where much of her artistic vocabulary originates.

After receiving her BFA from the University of Oklahoma, she moved her practice to Paris. She later completed her MFA in painting and drawing at the University of New Mexico, where acclaimed artists such as Agnes Martin, Joan Brown, Susan Rothenberg, and Deborah Butterfield were frequent lecturers.

The ruins, sandstone walls and pathways of Chaco Canyon, together with the Roman arches, and colonnades meandering throughout Parc Monceau in Paris, are etched into Björk's mind, creating the abstracted shapes that are found in her paintings, and also influencing the flowing lines of her figure drawings.

Björk paints in the spontaneous, additive and subtractive style of the Abstract Expressionists, using acrylic paint, graphite, and oil stick on raw canvas.

Each canvas is stretched and pinned directly onto the studio wall, where the hard surface is used to control the lightness or darkness of the painted and drawn lines.

These drawn gestural lines of varying weights, ranging from heavy dominant graphite to pale distant lines, provide a wide range of mark making throughout the work.

In the tradition of Cy Twombly, these energetic, free flowing lines, whose subject matter is the drawn and painted lines themselves, have had a profound impact on Björk's work.

Melded with acrylic brushwork, these marks create a palimpsest of added and subtracted images with ghosts of former areas remaining.

Open spaces of raw canvas reflect the vastness of the New Mexico landscape. They also provide a resting area for the eye, allowing the viewer to travel throughout the composition.

Fluent in French, Björk regularly travels throughout France. Albeit highly contrasted to the barren terrain of New Mexico, it is not the terrain that inspires much of her color palette, rather the light of Collioure, where the likes of Cezanne, Matisse, Derain, and Picasso also received their inspiration.

Björk has also traveled extensively throughout China over the past decade, and teaches figure drawing at Shanghai University. Her students are fascinated by the freedom of the drawn Western line, not recognizing the connection to the ancient calligraphy in their own culture.

Figure drawing is also a regular part of Björk's artistic practice. Every week she draws live nude models, capturing the unique qualities of each, female and male, young and old.

Björk's work can be found in prominent collections, both public and private, across the United States and Europe.