

# FAMILY TRAITS



PHILIP  
BARLOW



ELIZABETH  
BARLOW



Philip Barlow, *Pooh and Me*

“HE WAS SO PROUD OF ME... HE WAS ALSO A LARGER THAN LIFE PERSON WHO WAS NEVER AFRAID TO HOLD BACK. I WANTED A TEACHER WHO WOULD CRITIQUE MY WORK AND HE DID THAT FOR ME.”

—ELIZABETH BARLOW



Elizabeth Barlow, *See*



Philip Barlow, *Bon Appetite*

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Twenty-five years ago, when Elizabeth Barlow decided to get serious about painting and return to art school, she turned to her father Philip for advice. Philip—an artist known for his crisply refined still-life paintings—offered some hard-earned wisdom. “Watch the best people,” he offered; “Then find the best student in the room and sit behind them.” It was just one of many great pieces of advice he would offer Elizabeth before his death in the Fall of 2018.

Philip Barlow, who earned his B.F.A. from the University of Utah in 1955, owned a graphic design business, but was also a serious painter from the start. “He was always active in the art world and showed at galleries and institutions throughout the time he had the business,” says Elizabeth. “As children, we were always going to galleries to see his paintings — we even took family vacations to visit his galleries.” Barlow’s artistic output included landscapes and still lifes in oil that are assured and tangibly realistic. Some—like his painting “Liar”

which depicts a toy Pinocchio and Raggedy Ann having a moment on a well-stocked bookshelf—hint at Barlow’s wit and probity. A versatile artist, Philip also worked in acrylic and watercolor and served as the President of the Utah Watercolor Society. The possessor of a strong sense of intellectual independence, Barlow once stated that one of his major life lessons had been to “listen to my critics but learn to ignore them.”

Elizabeth Barlow makes paintings that share the burnished perfection of her father’s canvases. A specialist in still life painting whose “Portraits in Absentia” memorialize their subjects by presenting their most cherished possessions, her work has a tenderness that is uniquely hers. Then again, the tenderness might be said to be grounded in the love of family, something that her father mixed in with the artistic advice he so often offered. Elizabeth has kept an “Alchemy Journal” that includes snippets from the coaching he offered via email in response to photos of works in progress.



Elizabeth Barlow, *Yin Yang*



Philip Barlow, *Cherry Tomato*



Philip Barlow, *Cherries*

For example:  
"THE BACKGROUND IS PERFECT — FANTASTIC —  
DON'T CHANGE IT — PLEASE"

Or this:  
"GREAT DESIGN — FANTASTIC CONCEPT. YOU HAVE  
REALLY TAKEN A BIG STEP OUT OF THE BOX."

Along with broad encouragement, Philip sometimes helped Elizabeth solve the knotty problems of particular paintings. For example, when a "Portrait in Absentia" involved painting the interior pages of a bible, complete with text, Elizabeth called her father to find a way to simplify the task. "What am I doing wrong?" she asked after several false starts. Philip had an answer: paint the

"text" as rectangular areas of light grey interspersed with tiny white verticals to divide up the "words." His suggestion worked perfectly.

When compared, Philip and Elizabeth's paintings certainly have notable connections. One that stands out is their shared commitment to technical skill and subtlety. Another is that both show an interest in telling human stories in their still life paintings without depicting actual human figures. That said, both artists show distinctive individual interests. Elizabeth takes more chances with composition, experimenting with scattered and irregular forms and compositions. Her work is a bit "warmer" emotionally while Philip's often displays a certain tension and reserve. Contemplating



Elizabeth Barlow, *Blaze*

Philip's slightly menacing Jack O'Lantern beside one of Elizabeth's wistful "Flora Portraits" would make this point quite well. This mix of complimentary and overlapping ideas and approaches made for mutual admiration between the two.

"He was so proud of me," Elizabeth recalls. "He was also a larger than life person who was never afraid to hold back. I wanted a teacher who would critique my work and he did that for me." Philip also sent ideas for paintings, which Elizabeth tended to resist, but his excitement about her work was a constant source of inspiration that meant a great deal. The recipes he sent for mixing paint helped too: "Dad's Grey" has a dash of cadmium yellow in it.

More than anything else, he was the artist whose shoulder she looked over—and leaned on—as her art moved towards maturity. Philip, besides being Elizabeth's father, was also the best student in the room of her life. Their paintings, seen together, represent an exchange of ideas and affections that Elizabeth continues to carry into the future through her own work.

—John Seed  
Professor Emeritus in Art, Mt San Jacinto College



Elizabeth Barlow, *Old School*



Philip Barlow, *Raggedy Ann and Friends*

Cover:

**Philip Barlow**, *Outside of Inside*, oil on canvas, 11 x 14 inches

**Elizabeth Barlow**, *Ode to August*, oil on linen, 18 x 24 inches

Inside Flap:

**Philip Barlow**, *Pooh and Me*, oil on canvas, 16 x 20 inches

Inside Panels:

**Elizabeth Barlow**, *See*, oil on linen, 12 x 12 inches

**Philip Barlow**, *Bon Appetite*, oil on canvas, 24 x 24 inches

**Elizabeth Barlow**, *Yin Yang*, oil on linen, 24 x 30 inches

**Philip Barlow**, *Cherry Tomato*, oil on canvas, 12 x 16 inches

**Philip Barlow**, *Cherries*, oil on canvas, 12 x 16 inches

**Elizabeth Barlow**, *Blaze*, oil on linen, 18 x 24 inches

Back Cover:

**Elizabeth Barlow**, *Old School*, oil on linen, 24 x 24 inches

**Philip Barlow**, *Raggedy Ann and Friends*, oil on canvas, 18 x 24 inches

# ELIZABETH BARLOW

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or to commission a painting,  
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