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## A View From the Easel

“I have come to welcome spontaneity.”



Lakshmi Rivera Amin 21 hours ago

## Stephanie Reiter, Park Ridge, New Jersey



### *How long have you been working in this space?*

Six months.

### *Describe an average day in your studio.*

Painting for me is about capturing the light and time of the day. My favorite place to paint is outdoors en plein air. And when I cannot, my studio offers a safe, serene haven away from harsh winter elements or hot summer heat. I usually set up some interesting, beautiful flowers arranged to display some form of tension, space, and light. I tell Alexa to play the best of Beethoven and I am off expressing and reacting to nature indoors.

### *How does the space affect your work?*

I have a beautiful north light with high vaulted ceilings that allow me to have the clearest seeing place. My collection of art books and artwork surrounds me, giving me comfort and inspiration.

### *How do you interact with the environment outside your studio?*

I live in a beautiful community that is wonderfully landscaped, where I walk my dog several times a day and connect with nature. I teach nearby at a local art school, the Art School at the Old Church in Demarest. I teach five-year-olds once a week, inspiring them to hold on to their individual, innate art spirit. And I teach adults liberate and abstract nature in oils with a palette knife.

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### *What do you love about your studio?*

The best thing about my studio is that it is mine and I have grown comfortable to stand alone in it and transcend, go to heaven, and come back with a postcard. Many days, I am able to set up, react, express, and transcend, and have some evidence to prove it. My intention is to leave my mark on the board and hopefully translate that experience to the viewer with a leap of the imagination and spirit, reminding them of the magic and beauty in the world, that we just need to stop and take a moment to look at it.



### *What do you wish were different?*

I wish that I had an elevator because it is on the fourth floor. But right now, that is not a problem.

### *What is your favorite local museum?*

I live 45 minutes from New York, so my favorite museum is The Met. But locally I would say the Edward Hopper House in Nyack, where I am a member and currently in a show.

### *What is your favorite art material to work with?*

My favorite materials are oils, painting on birch wood with a palette knife. As I have grown into my painterly predilections, I have come to welcome spontaneity. On an ideal painting day, I am able to let go of some control and let the painting happen without over-managing it. Ideally something happens that's surprising and better than I could have planned. I can become completely lost in the moment, escaping and succumbing to my painting process. I majored in sculpting at Boston University, and still consider myself a sculptor first. But the immediate, transcending joyous qualities of painting better suit me now. People can feel the enjoyment in the paint.