

## Artist Statement

### Jo Sherwood

Leaving Holland and eking out a hand to mouth existence in the aftermath of World War II gave me a first hand appreciation of the world's isolated and disenfranchised cultures. Inspired by these experiences, my paintings document cultures that totter on the verge of extinction in the wake of globalization.

I have painted on location in Peru, Guatemala, Bolivia, Mexico, Swaziland, Turkey, and Egypt. My latest work captures the Miao people of southern China.

As a Westerner in China, I noticed that much was expressed without words. Whether it is the music of Lusheng pipes or the rustling of traditional silver headdresses, I am able to marshal all the senses to add depth to my work. When the light and weather are just right I am immersed in a rich cultural paradise that provides me with great inspiration for my work.

I work in oil because it endures and I want to capture the indelible qualities of these disappearing cultures. When I paint on location, I use the plein air, alla prima technique.

I believe there is nothing more beautiful than the human figure, whether it's a farmer working in a field or a classical portrait. Painting on location focuses my attention on the essential natures of people and produces a sublime strength that can only be expressed by painting the human form.