

**April 6, 2009**

**Ryan Doran, Fairfield County Business Journal**

### **Ellen Glenn Golden: The Artist's Eye**

Ellen Glenn Golden, an architect from Greenwich, grew up in the Midwest, the daughter of an oilman. The family moved around from Oklahoma to California, and from Houston to Denver to Calgary ... all before Golden was in college.

"Growing up I always enjoyed the outdoors," said Golden. "I wasn't sure if I'd be going into something to do with nature or design."

Finally, as Golden was going into college, her family landed in Greenwich.

Golden received an associate degree from Stephens College and her growing design interest pushed her to pursue a Bachelor of Fine Arts diploma from Brooklyn's Pratt Institute. She also undertook additional studies at Parsons School of Design and the University of Washington.

"While I was at Pratt, I met my husband," said Golden. "I ended up staying here, even though I always thought I'd move back West. My heart was there in the mountains and the rocks."

Golden's many pastimes have spawned her love of nature and beauty.

She creates jewelry and works on her skills as a photographer and she paints in some of the remotest settings in the U.S.

After college, Golden immediately got a job at Skidmore Owings and Merrill Architects' New York City office.

"I was very lucky; at the time it was the largest architectural firm in the world," said Golden. "I had a wonderful mentor and even though there were about 200 people in the office, I pretty much had free reign of what to do in a relatively short time."

When Golden had her first child, she moved to Greenwich, not wanting to raise a child in New York City. She took what was supposed to be a temporary job at Sherwood, Mills and Smith Architects in Stamford. Her three-day agreement quickly spun into a full-time responsibility. Golden eventually became a principal at the firm.

"In 1996, Brad Perkins of Perkins Eastman, contacted us in various ways and we ended up entering into a trial marriage of the companies," said Golden.

"After the first year, it worked out very well, and we became part of Perkins Eastman."

Golden then became a principal at Perkins Eastman.

Golden and her husband have a home in Santa Fe and her jewelry is greatly influenced by the southwest culture.

"For years and years I collected Southwestern Indian jewelry and art," said Golden. "One day I said, 'Why don't I just make my own?'"

Golden began making her own necklaces in 2004 and has built a diverse collection. Some have found their way into the world of fund raising and around friend's necks.

"When you do that you can't think about anything else," said Golden of making jewelry. "It's a palette and you're creating."

Golden's creativity extends to painting, also. Her house is filled with examples of her work, mostly landscapes and natural scenes with pastels, oils and watercolors.

Golden's affinity for the presentation and composition of nature also extends into her photography.

"My kids say I have Nikon neurosis," she said.

Golden has gone on multiple trips to Yellowstone National Park, though much of her portfolio, catalogued in large binders, originates from journeys to the end of dirt roads and the start of remote beauty.

"A lot of times I'll just go away by myself for a week, just me and my camera," said Golden. "I'll go off and get lost. I could be a guide to so many places no one else goes. I'm not a very good sitter; I'm a doer. It enhances my architectural work. It's putting these things together, thinking three dimensionally. You can be adventurous."

In the spring of 2007, Golden was approached by Jim Rogers, then principal of Butlers Rogers Baskett Architects.

"He was my competitor," said Golden. "I had a great job and certainly wasn't looking for a job but it doesn't hurt to talk. The minute I met him it was like we had known each other for years; the chemistry worked."



Golden has since become the head of the interior design segment and a principal of Rogers' newly formed James Rogers Architects in Norwalk.

Golden, ever-hearing the call of the outdoors, hopes to be able to spend more time in the garden this summer and re-enliven her dormant green thumb.