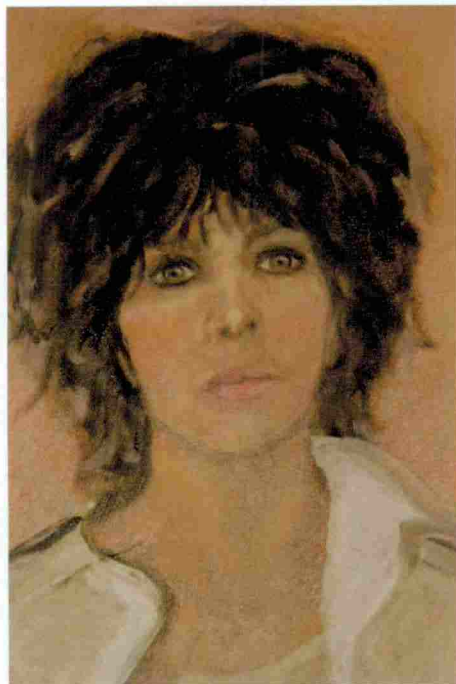


Sager Says



OUTSIDE THE LINES

Songwriter **Carole Bayer Sager** finds a new voice in painting.

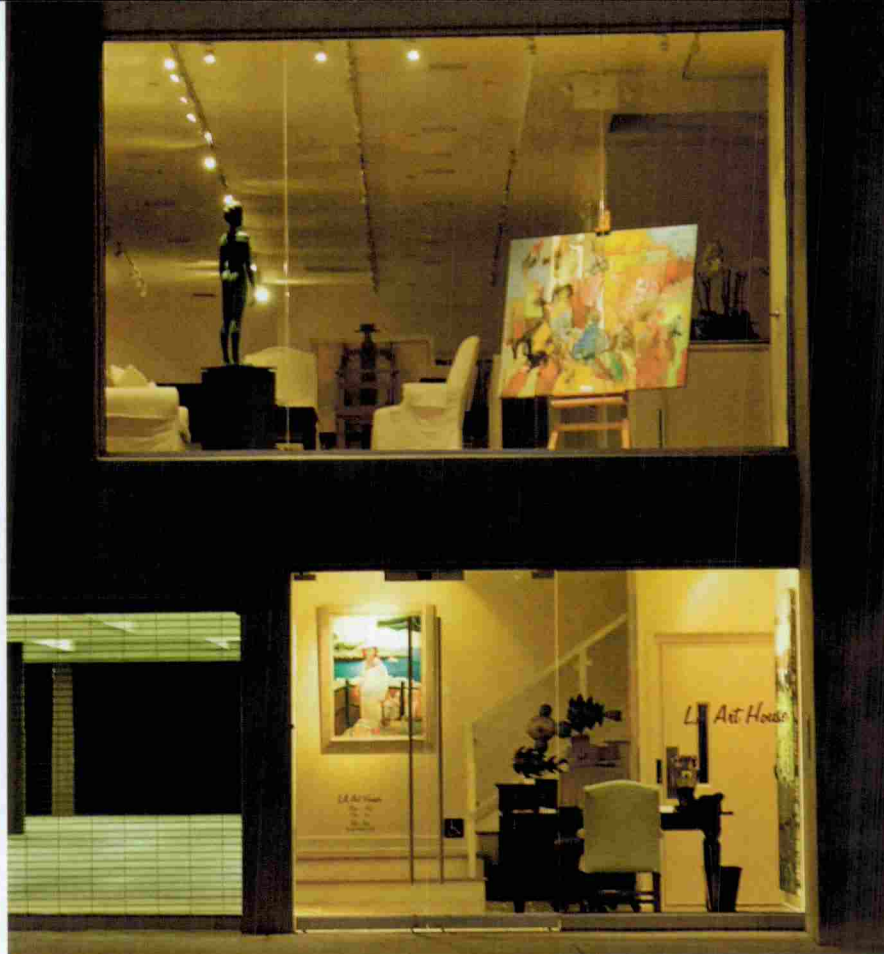
IF SOMEBODY HAD told me a year ago I would be painting as often as possible, with the same passion I once reserved only for my songwriting (creatively speaking), I would not have believed them.

But that was before my close friends Margie Perenchio and Ann Moss urged me to join them in painting on a regular basis at their atelier, LA Art House, which opened last September in Beverly Hills.

Margie and Ann had the idea to open a gallery for emerging artists, which would also serve as a creative place for artist friends to paint, exchange ideas, and meet other artists. It has now fully evolved into a gallery that donates all sales profits to the Hammer Project, benefiting emerging artists.

Margie and Ann had been painting for some time, and in the past I joined them occasionally, taking lessons from their teacher, Manny Cosentino—a fine artist steeped in realism. It was fun, but that's really all I thought it was. I was a dabbler.

Then my two friends built a space as beautiful as it is comfortable, as conducive to displaying artists' works as it is to providing them with a studio environment. Margie runs the



gallery, and Ann and I lend our support in as many ways as possible.

And I make art. I now have canvases spread all over, mostly oils, but also drawings in oil crayons, watercolors, charcoal, and pen. I love the feeling of putting paint on the canvas, falling in love with colors, mixing them with others, seeing the way they interact and change on the canvas. I love doing portraits in all mediums, and I love being a part of LA Art House.

In February and March we ran "Reality Check," an exhibition featuring four emerging contemporary realism artists. One of those artists, Frank Marshall, is currently a teacher of mine.

I'm also studying with another wonderful artist named Greta Waller, who was recommended to me by a man I like to call my mentor, Roger Herman. Until December, Roger was running the fine art department at UCLA. I met him through my friends, Bette Midler and her husband, Martin Von Haselberg, who collect his works in their New York apartment.

I was an instant fan and visited his studio in Los Angeles, eventually purchasing a work of his for our collection. When I began painting, Roger met with me and was kind enough to review my work. He has been helping me define myself and my focus ever since.

The more I talk about my love of painting, the more I discover many of my friends also once painted—and may begin again—and others are already fine artists, such as Maxine Smith, Kimberly Brooks, and Mindy Seeger. In fact, they all define themselves though their art as much as their music. Now I, too, am beginning to be able to call myself a musician/artist.

A month or two ago, Roger e-mailed me an article from *Esquire* called "Late Bloomers in the Arts." It confirmed what I already knew in my heart: It's never too late to do anything you believe you can do. *LA Art House, 8825 Beverly Boulevard, Beverly Hills, 310-205-0480; laarthouse.net.*



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: A self-portrait, oil on canvas; LA Art House at night; Sager's son, Christopher Bacharach—charcoal and gesso on paper.