

Jeanne B. de Sainte Marie

author - illustrator

About Jeanne

**"I should like to rise and go
Where the golden apples grow..."**

Robert Louis Stevenson

Probably it's no surprise that my first book was about a migratory bird (The Christmas Stork). I've migrated back and forth over the Atlantic Ocean so many times, that I've stopped counting. The art of writing and illustrating is another kind of journey. It's a personal one, influenced by experiences - remembered or forgotten.

My journey started in the U.S. where I was born to parents with French Canadian ancestors. Now that I live in Paris, I seem to have completed the round-trip of my ancestors!

As a child in Michigan, I loved the changing seasons and their rituals: swimming and lakeside picnics, spring lilacs and painted eggs, back to school and the fire of fall colors, Christmas trees and ice-skating. I hoped that I would not turn into one of those grown-ups who hated snow. And I didn't - I do still love snow and my work is faithful to my childhood dreams.

I've always been a daydreamer. My brothers and sister teased me for sitting and staring out of windows. I dreamed of crawling into a **Jessie Willcox Smith illustration** with a window seat for reading. I wanted red hair like the heroines in my books. I imagined magic places, treasure boxes, flying with birds and strolling on castle grounds.

In the real world I did interesting things and saw magic places, too. My mother took me to **Cranbrook** and other museums and gardens.

My father worked as a materials engineer at Chrysler and brought home fabrics, modeling materials and magazines. I hoarded them, cut them up and created artwork, school projects, dollhouses and clothes.

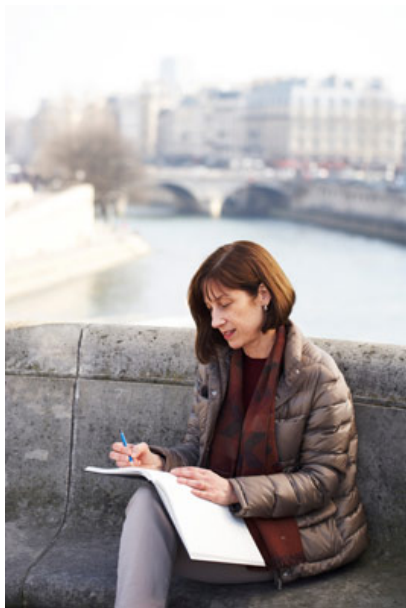


Photo: Michel Perez

The next step was **Fine Art and Textile Design at the University of Michigan** and at the **Ecole des Arts Décoratifs in Paris**. Then I designed colors and materials for cars, Jeeps and buses in Detroit. In France, I designed for Renault. Until recently, one of my fabric designs adorned the seats on Paris city buses.

My wings took me to Europe, Japan and North Africa.

My professional voyage continued.

I free-lanced, creating Advent calendars, CD covers, posters and periodicals.

One day when my sons were young, I came across a handmade book that I had made and illustrated when I was 12. It is my version of the poem, *Travel* from a favorite childhood book: Robert Louis Stevenson's, *A Child's Garden of Verses*.

And then I started dreaming again. I dreamed of and worked at creating my own books that would be published and that would open windows to new worlds. Each time I sit at my drawing board a new journey begins. Again.