

ARTIST, TREASURES BOOKS ON ART, COOKING

# Ann Pibal



MICHELE MCDONALD

**By Amy Sutherland**

GLOBE CORRESPONDENT JANUARY 04, 2014

Artist Ann Pibal lives in Vermont, but she still has a home in Brooklyn, NY. This fall she started to discover audio books, which make the drive go faster and have gotten her more into fiction. The abstract painter is the winner of the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum's 2013 Rappaport Prize, an annual award of \$25,000 given to a contemporary artist with New England ties.

**BOOKS:** What are you reading currently?

**PIBAL:** I am an admirer of the writings of artists Philip Guston and Gerhard Richter and wanted to puncture back into the 19th century. I discovered “The Journal of Eugene Delacroix,” the French 19th-century painter. It’s incredible. He had an almost eerie ability to see how his work will be seen in the future. It’s really inspiring.

**BOOKS:** What other artists’ writings have you read?

**PIBAL:** Anne Truitt’s “Daybook.” It’s such a moving account of making art in the context of a daily life. I was so struck by it that I got angry I hadn’t read it before. Where were the people who should have told me about this book?

**BOOKS:** Do you read beyond art?

**PIBAL:** Most of my reading is art related. My studio is filled with art books. They are almost like friends. Everything from books about design and architecture to books by the painter Barnett Newman. I’ve been really looking at “Color Moves” by the Russian artist Sonia Delaunay.

**BOOKS:** Do you have a big library?

**PIBAL:** I have an enormous library. My family never had a lot of extra money when I was growing up in Minneapolis but there was always money for art supplies and books. I still have that. Even when I can't afford it I buy any book that I want. I have stacks and stacks of books.

**BOOKS:** What's on top of the stacks?

**PIBAL:** I've got a book on the contemporary artist Jorge Pardo published by Phaidon ; a book about Forrest Bess, who was kind of an outsider artist, by Clare Elliott ; and a beautiful catalog for a 2002 exhibit at Centre Pompidou in Paris of plant drawings by Ellsworth Kelly and Henri Matisse.

**BOOKS:** Do you know any artists without a big library?

**PIBAL:** No. It goes with the territory. Artists may lean toward being collectors. I'm often trying to deaccession stuff in the rest of house but the book collection goes untouched. I have a couple of books that are really valuable. I thought I should put them up for auction but I couldn't do it. One is a rare catalog, "3x An Abstraction," about the work of Agnes Martin, Hilma af Klint and Emma Kunz. I will never sell that.

**BOOKS:** Do you collect any other kind of books?

“

*I discovered 'The Journal of Eugene Delacroix,' the French 19th-century painter. He had an almost eerie ability to see how his work will be seen in the future.*

**PIBAL:** We have an elaborate collection of gardening books, everything from how-to-grow-a-carrot to books on the history of gardening design. We also have a lot of cookbooks. They are also very visual like art books. I still buy them though when I cook I usually just log on to epicurious.com. I just bought "Cooking at Home with the Culinary Institute of America." Other than art, I think I've read all of Joan Didion's books. I'm also interested in a naturalist called Carl Safina. I liked his book about industrial fishing, "Eye of the Albatross," and "Voyage of the Turtle," about leatherback turtles. I'm not naturally passionate about fiction though I have tried. However, I did listen to the audio version of the recent novel "A Dual Inheritance" by Joanna Hershon and liked it. I read some poetry. I know a lot of poets. My

friend Camille Guthrie's newest book, "Articulated Lair," is inspired by the work of the artist Louise Bourgeois.

**BOOKS:** What are you going to read next?

**PIBAL:** I'm on sabbatical next year. I've been cooking up this idea about flying to Buenos Aires and driving back. I have a copy of "The Savage Detectives" by Roberto Bolano. Maybe I need to read that.

Amy Sutherland