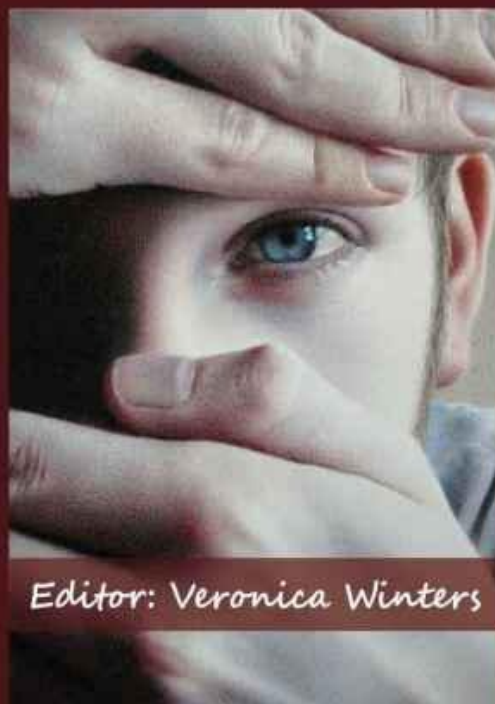




ART LESSONS

In Realist Drawing, Painting, and Beyond

Interviews and Step-by-Step Demonstrations with International Artists



Editor: Veronica Winters



**Art Lessons in Realist Drawing, Painting,
and Beyond
Interviews and Step-By-Step
Demonstrations with International
Artists**

Editor: Veronica Winters

VeronicasArt.com



K. Henderson, Red and Green, 30 x 40 inches

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To my son



Veronica Winters, Creatures of the Sea, 24 x 48 inches

I'm deeply grateful to an amazing pool of artists for their
contribution to this book.



Julie Impens, Collection: Christmas of the Dead, laser paper
cut, 8 x 12 inches, 2012

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Anne-Marie Kornachuk, Canada-oil painting



Weightless: Tsunami, oil on linen, 48 x 48 inches, 2013

Contact: AnneMarieKornachuk.com

Represented by: RJD gallery, NY, Miller gallery, OH and Trias gallery, Canada



Interview

With the B.F.A. from Concordia University in Montreal, Quebec (1993), Anne-Marie Kornachuk (b.1969) is an accomplished artist who has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions in Canada, the U.S., and abroad. She is known for her large paintings depicting floating, weightless, moving female figures outfitted in colorful silk gowns. Suspended in dark space, the beautiful fabric floats, curves, and turns revealing very little of a person wearing it, yet depicting the state of being of each figure wearing it. White, cream, crimson, orange, green, or blue, the curving fabric creates tension and emotional agitation that is, for every viewer, unresolved.

Did you have any teachers and artists who were/are inspirational to you? What sources do you use to make your creative juices flow?

I started drawing and painting in my final year of high school. My first drawing teacher at University of Manitoba (Winnipeg, Manitoba), Ivan Eyre, was incredibly important to my development. He taught me how to really see what I am looking at. I learned how to draw with him. Later, at Concordia University (Montreal, Quebec), Carol Wainio and Guido Molinari had a big impact on the way I think about making art. Wainio taught me how to think about what I want to say in my work and how I can effectively portray my ideas in a visual way. She also made me think about my place in the history of painting and to be aware of the history that painting brings with it. Molinari taught me how to construct an image to be visually successful.

I looked at (still look at) any and all art history books, and magazines like Canadian Art, Art News, Art in America, Modern Painters, American Art Collector as well as CD covers, films, TV, fashion magazines, and simply being open to the

world around me for inspiration.

What subjects interest you the most? How do you come up with compositions for your art?

I am most interested in painting figures. The majority of my paintings depict female figures wearing elaborately animated fabric. I find beauty in the form and color of the subjects I choose to paint. I strive to truly understand the logic of the light and shadow that create the form. This takes many hours of observation.

I choose compositions that create moments of harmony and moments of tension within the picture plane. I always want my paintings to work well on a basic compositional level, but the composition needs to contribute to the drama of the piece. I carefully place the edges of the figure close to the edge of the canvas to create tension. Based on my photos, my compositions are very considered and intentional.

In what ways is your art connected to or influenced by your lifestyle?

I am able to work full time on my painting, which allows me to concentrate on it with relatively few distractions. This in turn allows me to be calm, go slow, and look for a very long time. I live in a small community and I spend my days painting and horseback riding. Things are quiet. My process is slow and thoughtful as a result.

What is your creative process? How do you critique your work?

I have a notion of what feeling I want to express; sometimes I see a fleeting image of a gesture in my mind that I want to imitate. I get dressed up and act out what I imagined. My husband is my photographer. Because I am in front of the camera rather than behind it, the results are entirely unexpected and sometimes fantastic. I usually find a few images that intrigue me.

I use figurative gestures to speak about private or internal emotional reactions and experiences. The exaggerated fabric serves as a representation of the internal agitation of the figure. The drama of the fabric allows me to speak about “over-the-top” emotion without appearing to be overly operatic. My ideas come from my subconscious. The fleeting images I see in my mind and the images I am attracted by are glimpses into my own emotional world. I am very self aware, but the emotions I paint about come from a place that is non-verbal. I have had the experience many times of realizing I have been painting about an internal conflict long before I was able to verbalize it. At the same time, I want to create an image which allows space for the viewer to insert themselves in the moment, have their own responses, and make their own interpretations. This is why I don’t paint faces. I want my figures to be “every man.”

I critique my work by being anxious about it from start to finish. I slave over details. I wrestle with doubt the entire time. I look at my reference photo and the painting for hours. I am in problem-solving mode for the entire painting process. I do the best I can, and sometimes I feel happy with the result. When I am finished, I will ask my husband and friends for their opinions. When a painting is not working, I can usually tell. I come to a place where I can’t move forward because I know that it is a lost cause, at which point I cut my losses and move on.

What advice would you give to aspiring artists? What does the term “professional artist” mean to you?

My advice for new artists is to persevere. It is hard to make a living as an artist. It can be hard to stay motivated to make art. Through perseverance, you get everything that you need—your skills and art will improve by the simple fact that you are practicing your craft. The better your work becomes, the more likely success will follow. Also, put your work out in the world. Art is meant to be seen and experienced by other people. A professional artist is a person who makes art and exhibits it in

recognized art galleries.

In regards to your technique: describe what makes your art form and approach to it special.

I am influenced by Baroque painting and sculpture, and so the drama and dark theatricality that I love in the Baroque influences my choices and the way I paint. I work faithfully from my reference, relying on it to dictate form and color. I tweak the color through Photoshop and have two pictures to work from, one that is the right tone for the flesh and one that shows the intensity of fabric.

I start with a fairly detailed drawing, giving myself a good map to work from (step 1).

I begin by painting the flesh of the figure (step 2), next I paint the dress (step 3), and then the background (step 4). I always work with local color right from the start, blocking in the first layer in a quick and crude manner.

I lay the varying tones beside each other on the canvas, using a small flat or a round, and I use a fan brush to blend the colors together. My goal with the blocking-in is to describe all the areas of the painting and to cover the white. I always start on a white surface because I find a colored background distorting while I am searching for the colors initially.

After the initial quick blocking in, I work on the resolution of the image. I work in the same order, dealing with the flesh (step 5), the dress (step 6), and then the background (step 7). From here, I almost exclusively scumble the colors; the effect creates a more realistic depiction of form where the layers

underneath are allowed to show through the scumbled layers on top.

The initial layers are opaque and as I add the layers, I am carving out the detail of the form. The last layers are true transparent glazes. I use Windsor Newton Liquin Original as my paint medium throughout. I work in many layers, scumbling the colors back and forth so that lights migrate into darks and darks into lights. With this manner of working, using many, layers of glazes and scumbled areas, I am able to create a solid form. I feel as if I am creating a sculptural form on the canvas. I believe that this way of approaching the figure creates form that looks realistic and lifelike.

I use rounds and flats of various sizes depending on the area I am dealing with. My paintings are large, but I am using very small brushes in relation to the size of the canvas (sizes 0-8). The background is laid in with large flats, and I either tap the color together with a big fat round brush or I use a large fan to blend the colors. With the intentionally dark and intense background, I am looking to create an atmospheric space that works well with the figure and creates drama and contrast.



Weightless: Bloom, oil on linen, 30 x 30 inches, 2012



Weightless: Mad Tea Party, oil on linen, 28 x 42 inches, 2012

Demonstration: Mad Tea Party II, oil painting

Supply List:

* Paint medium: Windsor Newton Liquin Original

*

Canvas or Belgian linen

* Oil paint (artist uses Stevenson's brand); colors are listed in the steps

*

Brushes: flats and rounds, size 0–8; fans; for large spaces large rounds (size 24) and flats (1”).

Step 1: My process begins with an image in my mind, which leads me to taking photographs of my subject. I study all the photos and choose the images that grab my attention. Then I decide upon the composition and scale/size of the canvas.

After drawing the image on the canvas, I block in the figure using local color.

Then I build up the image using thin layers of paint, starting with opaque layers to refine the form and gradually moving to more transparent layers until the final layers are true glazes.

I do a fairly detailed drawing, using the reference photograph. I draw the image onto the canvas, breaking each section into pieces and connecting them like a puzzle. I paint the image in that way as well.

Step 2: I begin by blocking in the flesh. This is rough and quick painting. I lay the paint down and use a fan brush to quickly blend the colors. I am looking for the general shape and color in order to build on later.

Colors for the flesh: Titanium white, cadmium red medium, alizarin crimson, yellow ochre, burnt sienna, burnt umber, iron oxide black, Payne's grey, cobalt blue.



Step 3: I then block in the fabric. Using the same technique as I did with blocking in the flesh, I lay the paint colors down, one tone next to another, and use a fan brush on the edges to blend the colors.

Colors for the dress: Titanium white, cadmium red, alizarin crimson, yellow ochre, cobalt blue, phthalo blue, iron oxide black, Payne's grey, sap green, burnt umber, burnt sienna. I use the same colors throughout the painting process, so for each step the palette remains the same. One thing that took me a long time to understand is that realistic-looking color is often made up of a balance of warm and cool tones.

For example, a color that appears to be entirely warm, like red, often has traces of blue or black in it to make it a bit more subtle or real to life. I keep this in mind while mixing my tones.

For the lights of the dress, I use predominantly white, tinted with a bit of cadmium red, cobalt blue, and black. As I near completion, I am glazing with white to really brighten those areas.



Step 4: I block in the background.

Colors for the background: Titanium white, Payne's grey, iron oxide black, sap green, cobalt blue, phthalo blue, ultramarine blue, cadmium yellow medium.



Step 5: I resolve the form, starting with the flesh, by scumbling layers of color.

All the color of the dress lies in the shadows. There are many different tones within each shadow. In general, a mixture of white and cobalt and/or phthalo blue, with a touch of alizarin crimson, make up areas with subtle shadow (the shadows that look blue or blue-purple and are seen in the lighter areas of the dress).

Where shadows seem yellowish, I added a mixture of white, yellow ochre, and some burnt umber to a cooler tone of blues and blacks. When shadows look more red, I tinted with cadmium red or alizarin crimson mixed with some white for opacity. This all sounds very simplistic. I respond to color changes as I go, so I will start with one color and tint with small amounts of other colors to make a new but similar tone. On average, any tone I am painting is made up of about 5 or 6 colors, usually a balance of warm and cool tones. The shadows have smaller areas within them where different colors lie. I break each section of the shadow into smaller parts of color, paint those colors, and blend the edges to have a harmonious shift from one tone to the next.

I have observed that if you look at a shadow on a cool color (like white), you will see warm tones within it. And, in contrast, you will see cool tones within the highlights. I find this fascinating. It is really the opposite of what we are taught! I believe that in order to paint something that looks real, you have to be able to really see what you are painting and paint those shapes and colors, as opposed to using your intellect to paint things that way you think they should be. I do not paint by formulas; I only respond to what I am looking at.



Step 6: I resolve the dress by approaching it in pieces. I complete a piece and move onto the next, as if it is part of a puzzle.



Step 7: I complete my painting. I finish the background using large flat brushes, choosing tones which complement the colors found in the dress and bring intensity to the painting.



Weightless: Mad Tea Party II, oil on linen, 48 x 36 inches, 2013



Yellow Lake South, oil on linen, 24 x 24 inches, 2013



Color Field, oil on linen, 30 x 36 inches, 2013

Beth Sistrunk, U.S.A.-oil painting



Memories, oil on canvas, 48 x 36 inches, 2013

Contact: BethSistrunk.com
Represented by: Independent Artist



Interview

After having a successful eight-year career in finance as the Assistant Vice President, Operations Manager, Beth Sistrunk (b.1978) took a leap of faith, becoming a full-time artist in 2009. With her scientific background (biology) and exceptional organizational skills, this smart and dedicated young artist has already garnered many prestigious awards in the U.S.

and beyond, including Art Renewal Center's 2012/2013 Salon, NOAPS, and IGOR

juried exhibitions. After attending the Art Institute of Pittsburgh for graphic design and working in finance, she moved to Naples, Florida, to paint her enigmatic realist still lifes and large-scale

imaginative works. Her oil paintings exhibit not only precision, clarity, beauty, and perfection of light and form, but also an almost indefinite search for permanence and quality of the materials the artist uses in her art.

Meticulous and tenacious in her pursuits, Beth is able to achieve incredibly realistic textures, skin tones, atmosphere, and elaborate compositions.

Did you have any teachers and artists who were/are inspirational to you? What sources do you use to make

your creative juices flow?

It might sound cliché, but my first memory is of drawing with crayons in the car when I was about 2 years old. I spent most of my childhood and teens drawing both from imagination and life. I did not start painting until I was around 19

years old.

There are several artists whom I find inspirational, probably too many to mention: William Bouguereau, Elizabeth Gardner, John William Waterhouse, Jacques Louis David, Norman Rockwell, Alphonse Mucha, Albert Bierdstadt, Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, and Jean Dominique Ingres, to name but a few. Although I enjoy modern magazines and art-related books and publications from the 19th century, I wouldn't say that they are the only source of my inspiration. I find that it can come from almost anywhere. For instance, after visiting museums and looking at the paintings, I'm often very excited to work on my own creative vision. When it really comes down to creating, ideas for my paintings present themselves while I'm walking along the beach, hiking, or just in a relaxed and happy state of mind in general.

What subjects interest you the most? How do you come up with compositions for your art?

Although beauty is my ultimate goal, the captivating subject matter for my paintings changes and morphs over time. I spent a couple years painting sea shells and sea related narrative themes with still lifes but now I am more interested in creating symbolic narratives with figures that evokes an emotional response from the viewer. How do I determine subjects for my work? I simply paint what I love, or find to be beautiful and what I'm passionate about. I do try to keep within a theme so that I can maintain a cohesive body of work. If the subject doesn't fit within my current body of work, I write down the idea anyway in case it will fit into a future series.

In what ways is your art connected to or influenced by your lifestyle?

Life outside of art? When I'm not painting or drawing, I'm thinking about my next painting or series of paintings, or reading books from the 19th century written about painting and drawing. But in all seriousness, my love of the sea may have been what led me to live near the Gulf of Mexico and also down the path to seashell-themed still lifes. Thus, I would suggest that my desires and passions have shaped my lifestyle but my lifestyle itself does not necessarily influence my art, because for the most part, art is all-consuming. For me, it's one of those which came first, the chicken or the egg conundrums.

What is your creative process? How do you critique your work?

My compositions always begin with a narrative idea that I wish to express that was gained from a moment of inspiration. I then spend a few months thinking about how I can best tell the story and what the supporting elements of the composition will be. I write down all my ideas and put together sketches. If the painting is a still life, I go out and purchase the objects that I need.

For my figure work, I schedule a photo shoot with a model. From here I complete a couple of value studies to work out the final composition. I then create a couple of color studies to make sure that the composition also works in color and that the colors help to convey the emotion or set the stage for my narrative.

I'm always chasing beauty in my work; whether or not I will be able to achieve it remains to be seen. For me, a painting should be beautiful. It should captivate the viewer, if only for a few

seconds. And for those few seconds let them forget themselves, their worries, their troubles, and transport them to a place of beauty and peace. Furthermore—although it's quite challenging because I'm accustomed to painting and drawing from life—I also try to add a touch of fantasy through elements of my paintings that are created from imagination.

When it comes to critiquing my work, with every line I draw, I make constant judgment calls as to whether or not the proportions and angles are correct. With every brush stroke, I make sure that I am accurately portraying the proper hue, value, and chroma that will help to turn the form or create an atmospheric effect. Simultaneously, I'm also ensuring that the accuracy of my drawing is also correct as I am painting. I frequently step back to take a look at the painting as a whole to make sure that I'm not over modeling and to check my values with respect to other aspects of the painting.

What advice would you give to aspiring artists? What does the term “professional artist” mean to you?

My advice is to work hard on the fundamentals, especially drawing. If you wish to be a representational artist, time spent honing one's drawing skills in a disciplined manner is absolutely paramount. Once you have mastered the fundamentals of painting and drawing, you are free to let your creative vision take you anywhere you want to go. Also, paint/draw what you love, for your passion and dedication will always shine through in your final product.

Being a professional artist means many things to me. First and foremost, it means showing up and putting in a full day's work even when you don't necessarily feel like painting that day. It also means having a cohesive vision and direction for future work and consistently striving to build the necessary skills to make that work happen. I think it's also important to be able to effectively communicate to potential clients about your work at any time.

Furthermore, as part of an artist community that is open

Furthermore, as part of an artist community that is open to the public, I find it to be important to maintain a clean and organized studio so that I'm ready to present to potential clients at any time. I have one chance to make a good first impression, and I want that first impression to be one of professionalism.

In regards to your technique: describe what makes your art form and approach to it special.

For my paintings, I use a multi-layer technique. Painting for me isn't only just about turning form. I also like to capture texture and create depth and translucency; sometimes these things take more than one layer of paint to achieve. In this demonstration, I will talk about both my layering process and approach to a couple of different textures.

Before beginning, I placed my shadowbox and black velvet curtain on a bookcase and aligned my easel and painting panel with the still life stage in front of a northern facing window, as shown in the picture. (A shadowbox is a wonderful way to have complete control over your lighting in your still life composition.)



The Pendant, oil on basswood, 9 x 12 inches, 2012



Natural Beauty, oil on cradled birch panel, 24 x 20 inches, 2012



Essence of the Sea, aluminum leaf and oil on masonite, 18 x 24 inches, 2013

Demonstration: Recipe for a Beautiful Day, oil painting

Supply List:

* Paint medium: linseed oil mixed with walnut oil

*

Canvas or linen

* Oil paints (artist uses Rublev paints manufactured by Natural Pigments (NP) and Michael Harding oil paints)

*

Brushes: various filbert and round brushes of either bristle or synthetic sable, Robert Simmons Titanium filberts and rounds, blunted paint brush

*

Other: color shaper, 2B Wolff's Carbon charcoal Pencil, a 2'x2' still life shadowbox, nitrile gloves, kneaded eraser, mahl stick and easel, value scale, Gamsol, makeup sponges free of vitamin E from CVS, Gamvar, a cradled birch panel, blue shop paper towels, camera, and laptop.

Step 1: Designing the Composition

In this step, I will discuss the thought process behind composing the objects in my still life. First, I placed weathered barn wood and a slate roof tile into my shadowbox for the background and stage for my still life.

The colors of these two natural items harmonized well and I felt that also created a nice ambiance for the story. Next, I added all the bottles and seashells I thought that I would be using onto the stage and arranged them in a visually pleasing manner. I felt that the story could be best told if I added labels to the bottles to imply their contents. I also changed the size of the recipe card, as I felt it was too large for the composition. Although they were relevant to creating a recipe, visually I found the metal measuring spoons to be distracting and so I removed them.

Because this was a story about the sea, I needed a couple more sea creatures and therefore, I added the coral and the small white and pink Murex Ramosus shell. I like to repeat textures, shapes, and colors throughout my compositions in order to both lead the eye and create more visual harmony. The coral was a good match for repeating the spikes of the Murex shell, as well as being similar in color and texture to the sea urchin. The pink in the Murex shell also complemented the pinks in the bottle labeled "Liquid Sun Set," as well as the subtle pink in the sea urchin shell. The brown in the shell I used, to symbolize

a mixing bowl, harmonized nicely with the cork that I had tinted to match in a bottle across from it in the composition. The brown sea urchin spike in the same shell was also useful for symbolizing a mixing spoon.

I

replaced the small white and brown Murex shell for one that was more conical to lead the eye back into the composition and also repeat the similar shape of one of the glass stoppers. Finally, I moved the bottle labeled “powdered beach” to the left side of the composition to balance the bottles in both color and texture. I then adjusted my black velvet curtain over part of the front of my shadowbox so that it created a more interesting lighting effect on the objects.



I made sure that both the visually busy recipe card and highly textured weathered wood panels were in more shadow and would recede into the background, making the foreground objects more pronounced. At this point, I felt satisfied with my still life composition and was ready to move onto the next step of photographing my still life.



General still life set up, showing black shadowbox to control the light.

Step 2: Photographing

Photographing my setup provides two benefits. First, I found that using a photo reference allowed me to be more accurate in the drawing of extremely complicated subject matter.

Secondly, if my still life setup were to be moved or damaged by visitor or hurricane, I have a backup photograph that I could use to complete the painting.

I

placed a piece of tape directly below the still life staging area. This piece of tape would serve as a marker by which I would align myself to both the view the still life objects and also paint. This way I can ensure that my viewpoint would always remain the same when returning to my work after breaks, or on subsequent days, while I worked on the painting over the next couple of months.

Being very careful to make sure my viewpoint was precise, I then photographed the still life setup so that I could use it as a reference for beginning my preliminary drawing.



Step 3: Drawing

A

preliminary drawing (previous page) provides a roadmap for completing the subsequent painted layers. I drew a 1" x 1" grid very lightly onto the painting surface. I then utilized a kneaded eraser to remove all excess charcoal, leaving a very faint grid from which to begin my drawing. In Photoshop, I used the preferences option in the menu bar to place a 1" x 1" grid on my reference photograph as well. I then drew what I saw from my laptop's screen while double-checking it with what I observed from life. I would place small marks on my grid where major landmarks intersected the grid on my reference; for instance, where the edge of a bottle or shell could be found on its corresponding grid line. Toward the edges of my photograph, the camera lens always seems to skew and distort objects. For these objects, I then consulted the actual still life bottles in order to make an accurate drawing. Once I had established the major shapes, I put aside my photo and placed the remaining details through drawing from life. I used the kneaded

eraser to remove all excess charcoal. To clean the painting surface of oils from my hands and additional charcoal, I used a small amount of Gamsol on a facial sponge and gently wiped the surface.



Step 4: Underpainting

Terminology of painting: **Hue:** the native color of an object i.e., blue, pink, brown, etc.;

Value: how light or dark compared to the scale of black and white ranging in 1 at the darkest to 10 at the lightest.

Chroma: the intensity of the color i.e., dull versus bright in color.

Scumbling: method by which an illusion of translucency can be achieved by lightly applying an opaque or semitransparent layer of lighter in value paint over top an under painting of darker value.

Glazing: refers to the application of a transparent layer of paint over a carefully prepared underpainting to achieve beautiful jewel-like tones.

Here, I used a closed grisaille technique. A **closed grisaille** is an underpainting method that completely covers the painting surface using a combination of white, black, and brown. It is one way to effectively begin establishing value and edge softness relationships within your painting. Using lead white, oxide black, and cypress burnt umber, I premixed a string of grays that are slightly warmer than neutral, ranging from value 2 to value 9. I find that making the underpainting slightly warmer helps to impart greater warmth to the final painting. Here, I wanted to preserve my whites for greater luminosity in the seashells and labels; therefore, I did not tint the support before I began painting.

Starting in a foreground area of high contrast (the white shells and the slate), I began establishing my darkest and lightest values with a thin layer of paint and no medium with filberts and rounds. I then painted each adjacent bottle and seashell in turn throughout the still life setup, and finally, the wooden background.

With each object, I compared the values of my darkest shadows and lightest lights, as well as softened the edges using a small blunt paintbrush. I was careful not to make my underpainting too dark where I knew I would be applying a later glaze of dark transparent pigment to achieve the colors, especially in the glass. This completed the underpainting stage of my painting. I was now ready to move on to painting in full color.



Step 5: First painting

I began establishing color, texture, and softening the edges even more. I mixed a strand of neutral grays, values 1–9 as well as strands of blue-green (ultramarine, transparent oxide red, white), yellow (yellow ocher or cadmium yellow, burnt umber added for the darker values only, white), and pink (cadmium red light, white), values 2–8. The neutral grays are invaluable in reducing the chroma, or intensity, of my paint without altering the value.

There are different textures I achieve in my paintings. Each texture requires analysis and some strategic thinking of your subject matter. As each object interacts with light in a different manner, an object that is transparent and shiny (glass) will reflect a specular highlight in the shape of the light source as well as reflections of the surrounding objects. For the glass here, I did not paint the darker values as dark as they appeared in life. Because my glass was colored, I needed to be able to thinly glaze a transparent darker pigment over top of my light underpainting. Where the glass was reflecting my light source, I painted hard edged highlights and softened the edges only slightly with my blunted paintbrush.

The sand was both opaque and matte in appearance. To achieve its texture, I modeled the general 3-D shape of the pile of sand. I then created variety with granule size and value by placing small dots throughout. After letting it dry, I glazed the sand with a very low chroma brown tone. With a clean brush, I lifted off some of this glaze in the lightest areas and then added small white highlights to the light areas in slightly different hues. I also added some dark granules in different hues. I used a clean blunted paintbrush to gently soften the specs of sand for it to appear more cohesive and powdery.

When painting the ribbons, I used a Winsor & Newton Scepter

Gold brush size 0000. Painting with such a small brush aided in achieving the texture of the shiny strands of silk ribbons. I was careful with each brush stroke to follow the contour of the ribbon. For the darkest sections of the ribbon I glazed a very thin layer of paint over the underpainting. In the lighter sections, I utilized my pre-mixed blue-green pile of paint of the appropriate value and then adjusted the chroma down with the neutral gray of the corresponding value. Where the ribbon turned away from the light, I decreased the intensity of the color and reduced the value. I softened the edges with a clean blunted paintbrush.

The coral's texture is somewhere between translucent and opaque, with a matte rough surface. I first applied paint of the correct hue, value, and chroma over the coral. Then, using a clean Dynasty Black Gold Deerfoot stippler brush, size 1/8, I dabbed the painted surface to achieve a texture, but made it softer so that it would recede into the background more. I maintained a clean brush at all times and added paint of the proper hue, value, and chroma. The highlights applied to the coral were very diffuse due to its rough surface.

I

simplified and softened the background of the wood grain in order not to bring attention to it. I chose to paint only the most prominent ridges and cracks.

Once I had applied paint to this section, I took a small fluffy mop brush (Princeton Select 1/2" oval mop) and lightly dragged the very tip of the soft hairs over the paint until the wood grain appeared to be slightly out of focus.



Step 6: Second painting

Before beginning this layer, I added a couple of drops of walnut oil to a facial sponge. I was prudent to only apply the oil in the section in which I would be working that day. Using a clean sponge, I then wiped all excess oil from the painting surface. For this layer, I simply painted over each section one last time, subtly adjusting the colors and drawing as well as deepening the shadows and heightening the highlights where necessary. This concluded the painting.

Step 7: Varnishing

Varnishing is both an aesthetic and protective choice. I choose to varnish all of my paintings in order to protect them from harmful UV rays, as well as dust and other debris. Without varnish, dust and air pollution become permanently embedded in the top layer of the paint. I prefer to wait 3 to 6 months after my painting is dry to the touch so that I can clean it without damaging the last paint layer. Before I varnished the painting, I applied a little bit of Gamsol to a facial makeup sponge and gently cleaned the surface of my painting. This ensured that all fingerprint oils and dust was removed prior to varnishing. I applied 2 coats with a 1.5" Princeton Umbria Flat Wash brush. The Gamvar varnish imparts a glossy sheen that unfortunately picks up reflections from the room. In order to reduce the sheen, I add a third and final coat of varnish mixed with a small proportion of cold wax medium. This gives my painting a nice, even, satin sheen.



Recipe for a Beautiful Day, oil on birch, 12 x 16 inches, 2013

David Gluck, Canada-oil painting



Bottles and Books, oil on panel, 11 x 14 inches

Contact: DavidGluckArt.com

Represented by: S. R. Brennan galleries, CA, Principle
gallery, SC, and M Gallery of Fine Art, SC



Interview

Originally from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, David Gluck (b.1979) is an accomplished oil painter working in the realist tradition. After receiving his Bachelor of Science in Art Education from Penn State in 2006, the artist moved to Vancouver Island, Canada, to enjoy the beauty of the region and pursue his artistic endeavors. An incredibly talented and self-motivated artist, David has already received many prestigious national awards, successfully competing with contemporary master painters. His awards span among Art Renewal Center's 2012-2007 Salon, Artist's Annual Magazine competition, Portrait Society of America competition, American Artist competition, and many more.

David is equally exceptional in both his drawing and painting. While his black and white classical drawings impress viewers with their elegance, softness, and accuracy of human anatomy, the artist's oil paintings appear even more real and atmospheric. For that he is grateful to his teacher Kevin Gorges, who taught the artist to become technically savvy, with the rest of it left up to Gluck's talent.

As David creates art, employing traditional old masters techniques, he paints in layers to achieve luminosity and textures he desires to depict. He sets up a still life in front of his easel with northern light illuminating the objects.

He relies on his drawings and color studies to paint in full color. Weathered wood, dark bottles, feathers, timeworn murky tools, and brown acorn leaves are often arranged around light skulls that seem to fascinate the artist the most.

Each subject asks to be felt. Colors harmonize beautifully

in every painting the artist creates. Subtle shifts in tones and hues is a hard skill to master and David seems to do it so effortlessly in his compositions.

In his portrait work, the artist is influenced by the 19th century Russian realist painters Ivan Kramskoy (1837-1887) and Ilya Repin (1844-1930), who are widely known and admired by the Russians. (While Kramskoy was the portraitist, Repin was famous for his painted social documentaries of the unprivileged and the poor. Both of them executed figurative works in the finest tradition of realist painting.)

David Gluck paints full-time and accepts commissions in his studio. His life is inseparable from his fellow artist, wife Katherine Stone. They are a power couple, together owning a quirky sense of humor that shines through their blog, titled "Painting stuff to look like stuff," on the pages of which they often share their painting process as well as life's lessons.

Did you have any teachers and artists who were/are inspirational to you? What sources do you use to make your creative juices flow?

Ever since I was young, I was always drawn to fine art. It was always the thing I was best at in my peer group and, being the smallest kid in class, sports were never that enticing. I was always that kid that could draw the best knights, ninja turtles, and armored vehicles of destruction, and I always received a lot of positive attention for it. I made my first real art sale in elementary school for enough money to afford an ice cream sandwich. This sort of thing probably kept reinforcing me to keep going with art and improving.

My wife (Kate Stone) has always been my biggest inspiration. We live in an area that is rather devoid of the arts, but it's always nice to know she is just a room away in case I need a fresh eye or simply want to whine about a rough painting day. (For inspiration) I have an unhealthy addiction to art books. It

makes moving not very enjoyable.

What subjects interest you the most? How do you come up with compositions for your art?

I cycle between still life and figurative work; switching back and forth when I get bored of one. My compositions and planning seem to take about as much time as the actual piece sometimes, depending on the complexity. I try to keep my subjects as universal as possible, but like most artists, I paint what I find interesting.

In what ways is your art connected to or influenced by your lifestyle?

My series on hunters, trappers, and fisherman is heavily influenced by where I live. Plus, I fish and hunt on the occasion, though the people I depict in my paintings are quite a bit better at it.

What is your creative process? How do you critique your work?

The creative process is rather random. An idea can come from a photo online, a person I meet, or an even better idea I steal from my wife. Every piece starts usually as an “inspiration” folder on my desktop, which includes everything from film references to old master paintings.

What advice would you give to aspiring artists? What does the term “professional artist” mean to you?

I would say try to get a mastery of every aspect of being a professional artist, from organizing your business model to creating your own website. The people who become professional artists after being students are the ones that weather the storm, so to speak, after art school. Most are quick to give up or become deterred, as many paths lead to nothing. Also, being a starving artist who lives off cheap pasta and is always late on bills is really not as glamorous as it sounds. One

trick is, when people keep telling you how you shouldn't be an artist, tell them you have a fall-back career as an astronaut if it doesn't work out.



Still Life with Meat, oil on panel, 16 x 18 inches



The Portrait of Tara, oil on panel, 12 x 14 inches



The Trapper, oil on linen, 24 x 30 inches

In regards to your technique: describe what makes your art form and approach to it special.

It is hard to say that my technique is truly unique, considering much of it has been passed down to me from the old academy system. I would say, as far as differences when compared to others, is that I use very traditional materials from Natural Pigments, from paints to supports. These materials help to dictate both my paint quality and color schemes. Almost none of the paints I use contain synthetic pigments (that help paintings last a lot longer than the average counterparts).

I used to paint on oil-primed linen, but today I make my own high-quality, archival panels using dibond. Dibond is a type of flat panel that consists of two thin aluminum sheets bonded to a non-aluminum core. It is inert, does not expand and contract like wood, is lightweight, does not absorb moisture, is easy to cut on any table saw, and is more or less puncture proof. It is also coated and can even be painted on directly. Dibond can be found at sign maker's shops and industrial plastics stores at a price comparable to high-quality plywood.

To adhere linen to panel, I use Beva 371 2.5mm film (glue). The film, which is inert, comes in a roll and is activated with heat (around 160F/71C). A dry mounting press is required to combine the adhesive, dibond, and linen together. (You can pick up a mounting press on craigslist). It takes about 5 minutes for the glue to adhere using the press. It is possible to make larger panels simply by pressing each half of the panel at a time.

Demonstration: Fisherman, oil painting

Supply List:

- * Paint medium: linseed oil or walnut oil
 - * Linen glued to Dibond
 - * Oil paints (artist uses Rublev paints manufactured by Natural Pigments, NP)
- Colors: blue ridge, yellow ochre, bone black, lead white #2, French umber, ultramarine blue, orange molybdate, nicosia green earth, orange ochre

*

Brushes: various filbert and round brushes of either bristle or synthetic sable

- * Other: 2B Wolff's Carbon charcoal pencil, kneaded eraser, mahl stick and easel, value scale, Gamsol, paper towels.

Step 1: Designing the Composition

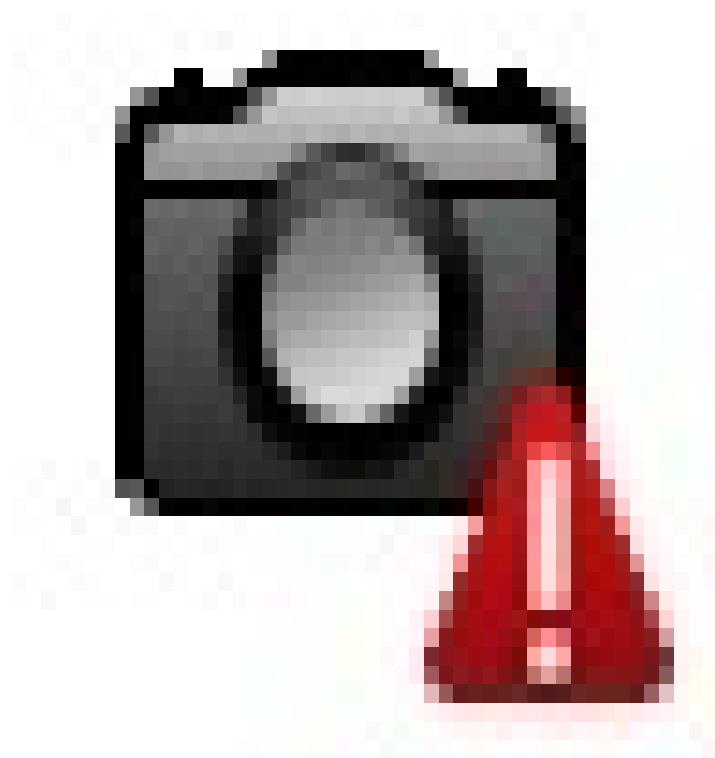
In this step, I complete the preliminary drawing in graphite on sketch paper that captures my idea for future painting. I often do the oil transfer of my outlines onto a previously tinted panel.



Step 2: Color study

After a drawing study, I complete a small color study in oil of my subject. There are no details painted at this stage, as I do basic modeling of the form (breakdown of light and shadow). The purpose of my color study is to figure out the color scheme/ choices for my future painting. It allows me to eliminate possible mistakes working large.

To create the atmospheric textural effects I usually get in my backgrounds, I use some OMS to move the paint and keep it transparent. The problem with this is that it creates a weak bond to the underlying paint layer and goes very matte when it dries. Adding some Venetian medium by NP solves the problem.



Step 3: Painting

In my first layer of oil painting—the ebauche (block-in in color)—I use basic colors pertinent to my subject (listed in supply list). Paint is layered quickly, with no regards to detail or edges. This step is similar to the color study I’ve done, but it’s completed on larger scale. The tinted canvas often shows through considerably at this step. When the previous layer is dry, I paint the second layer more opaquely, developing richer color, edges, and tones—first painting.

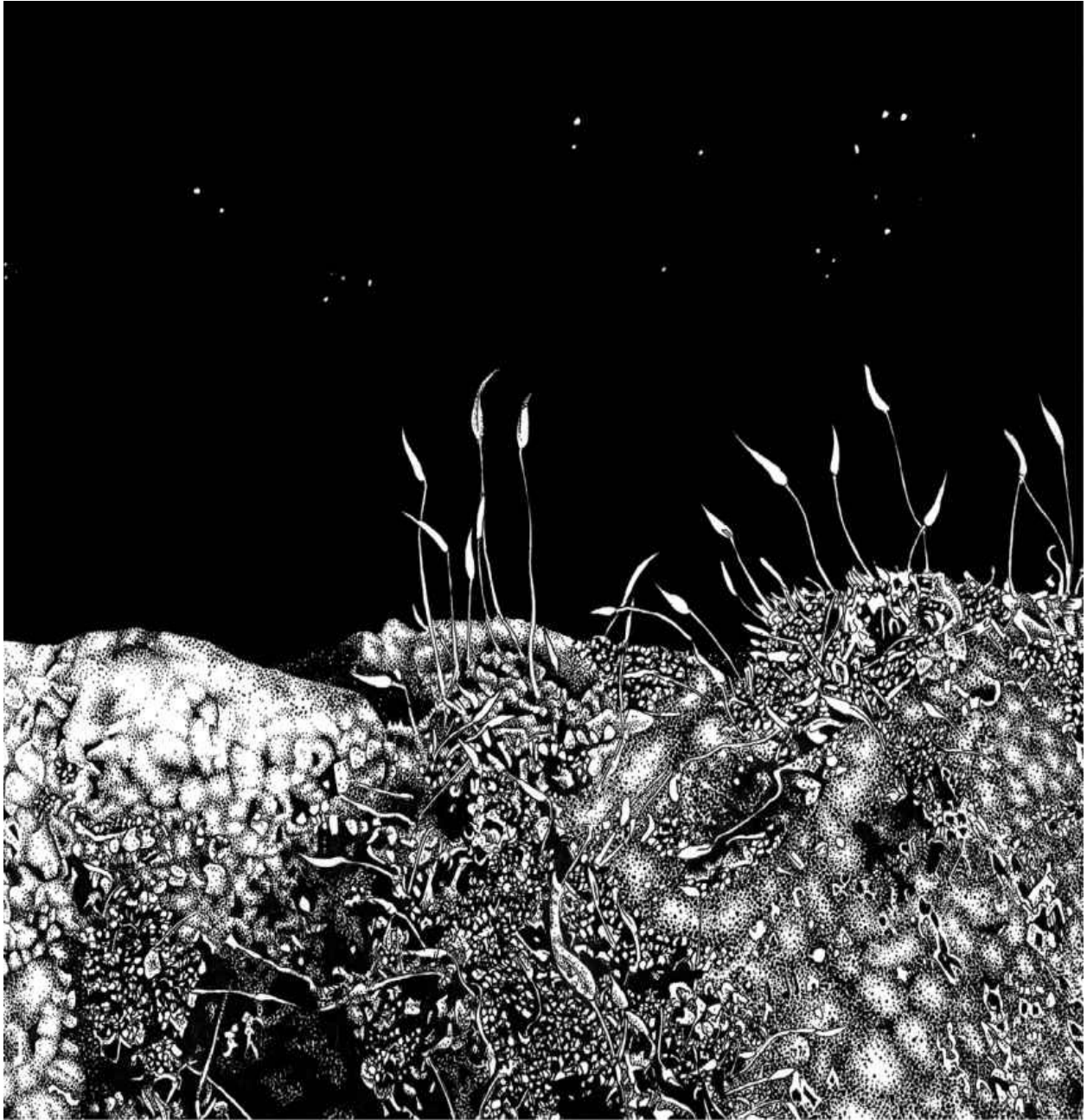


My final third layer-second painting-is about subtle refinement of form, values, and edges, softening them where appropriate.



Red Sky, the Fisherman, oil on panel, 26 x 30 inches

Helen Nodding, U.K.-pen & ink, mixed media



The Night Watch, cotton rag paper (digital), 30 x 30 inches,
2012

Contact: HelenNodding.com

Represented by: Studio Caparrelli, England



Interview

A recent graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne, Helen Nodding (b.1978) is a British multi-media artist. She received her MFA by Research in 2013, achieving a first class honors; her undergraduate degree was completed with honors in sculpture at Central St. Martins School of Art, London (2001). During her studies, Helen received several scholarship awards that helped the artist fund her pursuits, including the Fiona Myer award and Yulgibar scholarship in 2012, Endeavour Europe Award funded by the Australian government in 2011, and a few more.

While in her “Miniature Worlds” sculptural works Helen creates mini environments installed within cracks and interiors of the city, her poetic pen and ink drawings feature urban mini discoveries of cast shadows, moss, leaves, and cracks, with delicate life springing out of concrete.

Did you have any teachers and artists who were/are inspirational to you? What sources do you use to make your creative juices flow?

I have a clear memory of the first time I was praised for a drawing: it was of a nativity scene that I sketched during a long church sermon. The lady sat next to me and decided to make it the cover of the church magazine’s Christmas edition. Drawing was always something that I turned to for distraction if I was bored or upset for any reason.

I had an extremely eccentric and wonderful art teacher during my secondary education that would regularly sneak into her office for a cheeky cigarette or glass of wine. She would often tipsily scribble all over our drawings to demonstrate where improvements could be made. Her art historical knowledge was fantastic, and I only came to appreciate much later in life what an incredible introduction she had given me to the world of art. The first artist who caught my attention was Alberto

Giacometti. I was fascinated by his sensitive sculptures and intense painting technique. Not only did he seem to have a remarkable capacity to be able to capture the essence of the human condition, but his explorations of the figure in space really opened my eyes to a whole new way of seeing the world. I also discovered the book *Nausea* by Jean Paul Sartre. Within this novel there is a description of a chestnut tree that, again, completely shifted my understanding of how we perceive the objects of our everyday surroundings. In different ways, Giacometti and Sartre made me aware that we can feel an emotive or sensorial connectedness toward the objects of the world that art can help us to investigate in greater depth. I share a passion with writers such as John Ruskin, DH Lawrence, and William Wordsworth to explore the natural world and the symbolic potential it holds for us as a means to express pain and beauty as well as reflecting our thoughts, desires, fears, and emotions.

What subjects interest you the most? How do you come up with compositions for your art?

Taking the form of drawing, text-based works, urban intervention, and sculptural installation, my artwork seeks to re-inscribe the urban environment with fresh layers of meaning. In drawing focus upon overlooked aspects of the city's material, textural, and physical qualities, I encourage viewers to consider alternative vistas within the fabric of their everyday surrounds. I believe that it is possible to experience an alternative form of reality on a simple walk around the city. I come up with my artworks by going on walks and taking hundreds of photographs of overgrown nature, or scenes that seem to contain some form of symbolic meaning or uncommon aesthetic beauty. Using a traditional pen and ink technique to create the final works invokes a sense of history and, perhaps, adds a sense of weight or permanency to the modest subject matter.

In what ways is your art connected to or influenced by your lifestyle?

I have spent my adult life working in museums and art galleries, so I have a strong connection to art history that holds an important influence over my work. I am particularly drawn toward the attention to detail that can be found in Albrecht Dürer's prints, etchings, and woodcuts. Intricate details of wild nature are notable in the foreground of his mythological and Biblical scenes. I have also been influenced by a number of decorative objects of the Medieval and Rococo periods. I was obsessed by a Rococo mantelpiece on display in London's Victoria and Albert Museum's British Galleries (where I was a gallery assistant for two years). I spent hours staring into the curves, labyrinths, twists, and wiry folds of the foliage of the fireplace; the object seemed to allude to the way in which overgrown nature playfully engages with architectural form in the outside world.

What is your creative process? How do you critique your work?

I document my experiences via notes and photography and use these as the basis from which to create studio-based works. Using Photoshop to crop and alter the contrast of the photographs until I am satisfied with the composition, I then either sketch, trace (or a combination of the two) from the photographs and begin working into them from there. I'm often looking for a decorative quality in the initial photographs that I can build upon and exaggerate through interpretation. The process of critique is fairly intuitive and generally involves asking myself the questions if it works compositionally and if the work actually adds anything to the photograph.

What advice would you give to aspiring artists? What does the term "professional artist" mean to you?

Stick to your guns. It is very easy to lose faith in yourself if you don't receive instant gratification for your work or get signed

up to a gallery immediately.

Try not to become too concerned with what seems fashionable at the moment or alter your work to fit in with this. Remember that fashions peak and trough very quickly, so it is best to invest your time in making work that you actually believe in. This is really the only way you will find the motivation to pursue a career as an artist.

Also, don't be disheartened if you can't solely make a living off your art; only a lucky few actually can. Most artists make up their income with part-time or even full-time work. It's great if you can find work that can feed your inspiration. For me, working in a museum has been a great way to maintain my passion and knowledge of art.

The term professional artist means somebody who is serious enough about their artwork to pursue it as a career, despite the setbacks and compromises that this may entail.

In regards to your technique: describe what makes your art form and approach to it special.

The technique I use often involves a number of stages but heavily relies upon my photograph as a starting point. What makes it special for me is the magical transformation that can occur by translating a terrible or banal snapshot on my iPhone, into something full of detail and labour intensity.



Sous Le Pavés, pen & ink on drafting paper, 11 x 8

inches, 2012



A Soft Strange Gloom Pervades, pen and ink on drafting paper,
14 x 16 inches, 2013



Something lurks in the shadows, pen and ink on drafting paper,
14 x 16 inches, 2013

Demonstration: Hole In the Wall, mixed media

Supply List:

- * 2B

graphite pencil, eraser, ruler, black acrylic paint

- * Rotring Isograph pens (varying nib sizes)

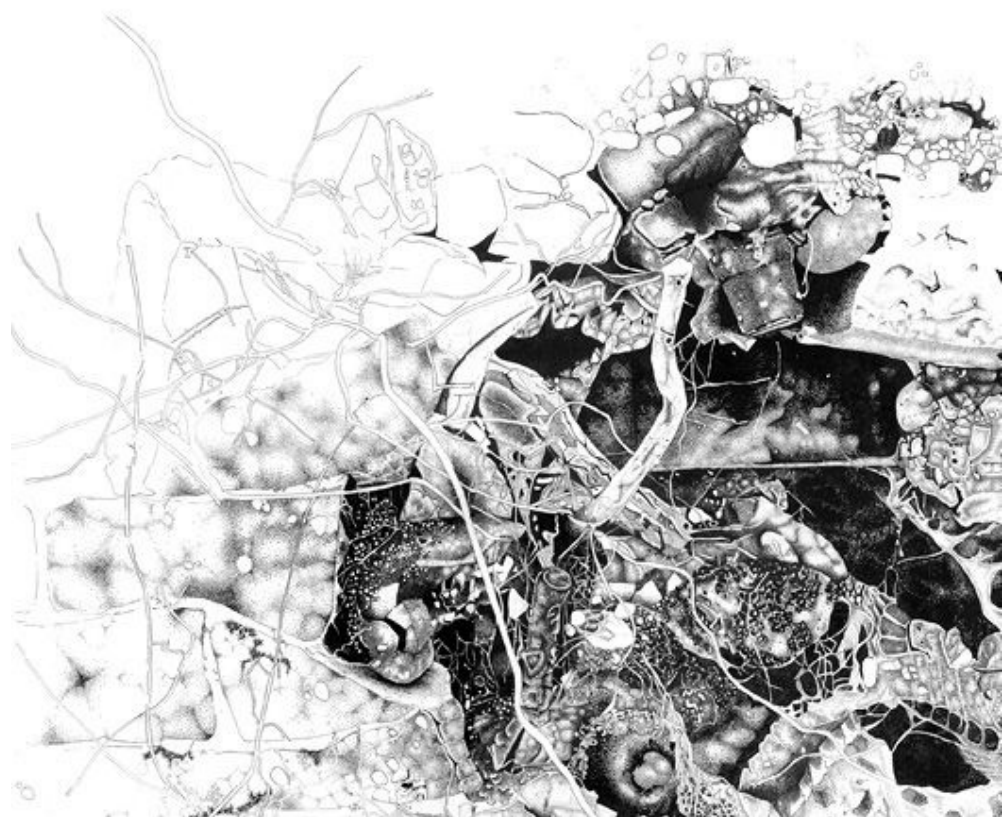
- * Black flocked paper, flock 1 x sheet Bristol board, cotton rag paper (for digital printing)

- * Other: a computer, Adobe Photoshop, a large format printer

Step 1: Photography and outline drawing

I took a snapshot of a crumbling wall that I spotted on my way home from the studio, then de-saturated the image and altered the brightness/contrast in Photoshop. Using this photograph, I sketched the image onto the Bristol board in pencil.

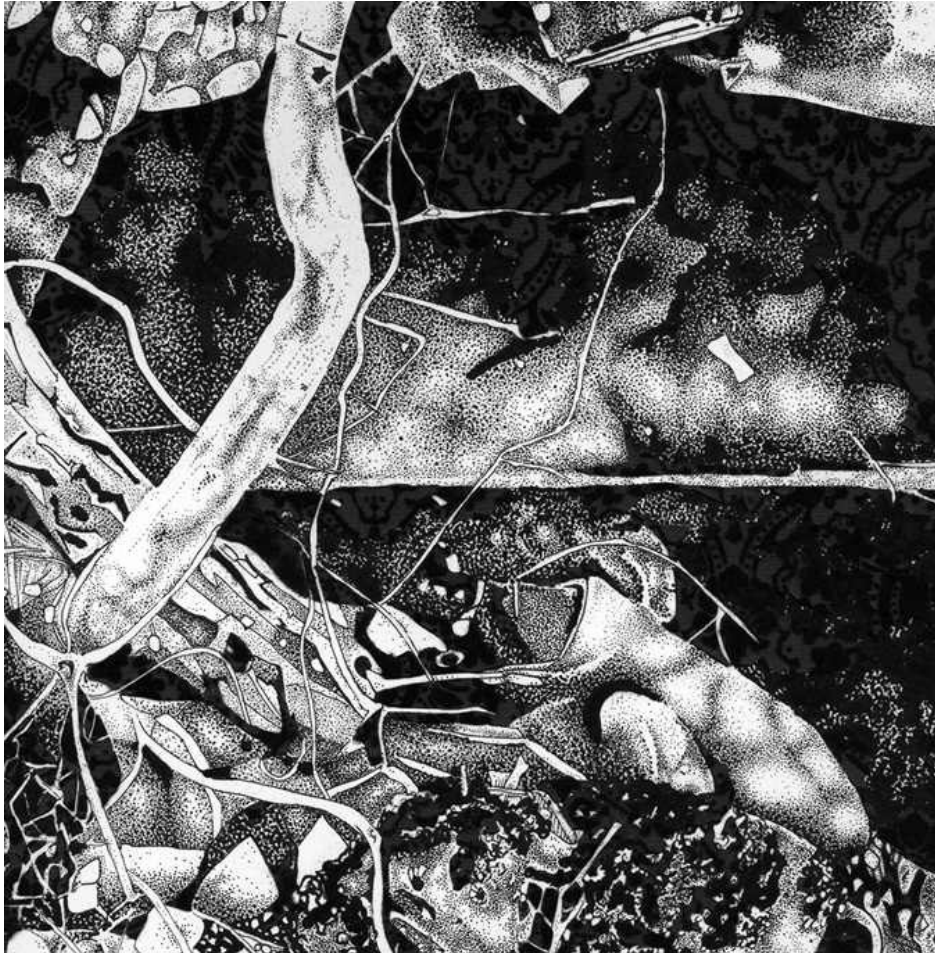






Step 2:

Next I worked into the drawing using a variety of pen and ink techniques, including cross-hatching, lines, and dots (using varying sized Rotring Isograph pens).



Step 3:

The completed image was then photographed and scanned into the computer.

The scanned image was then worked on in Photoshop; this process involved both cropping the image and digitally enhancing it in chosen areas. A final version of the image was then printed out onto cotton rag paper using a large format printer.



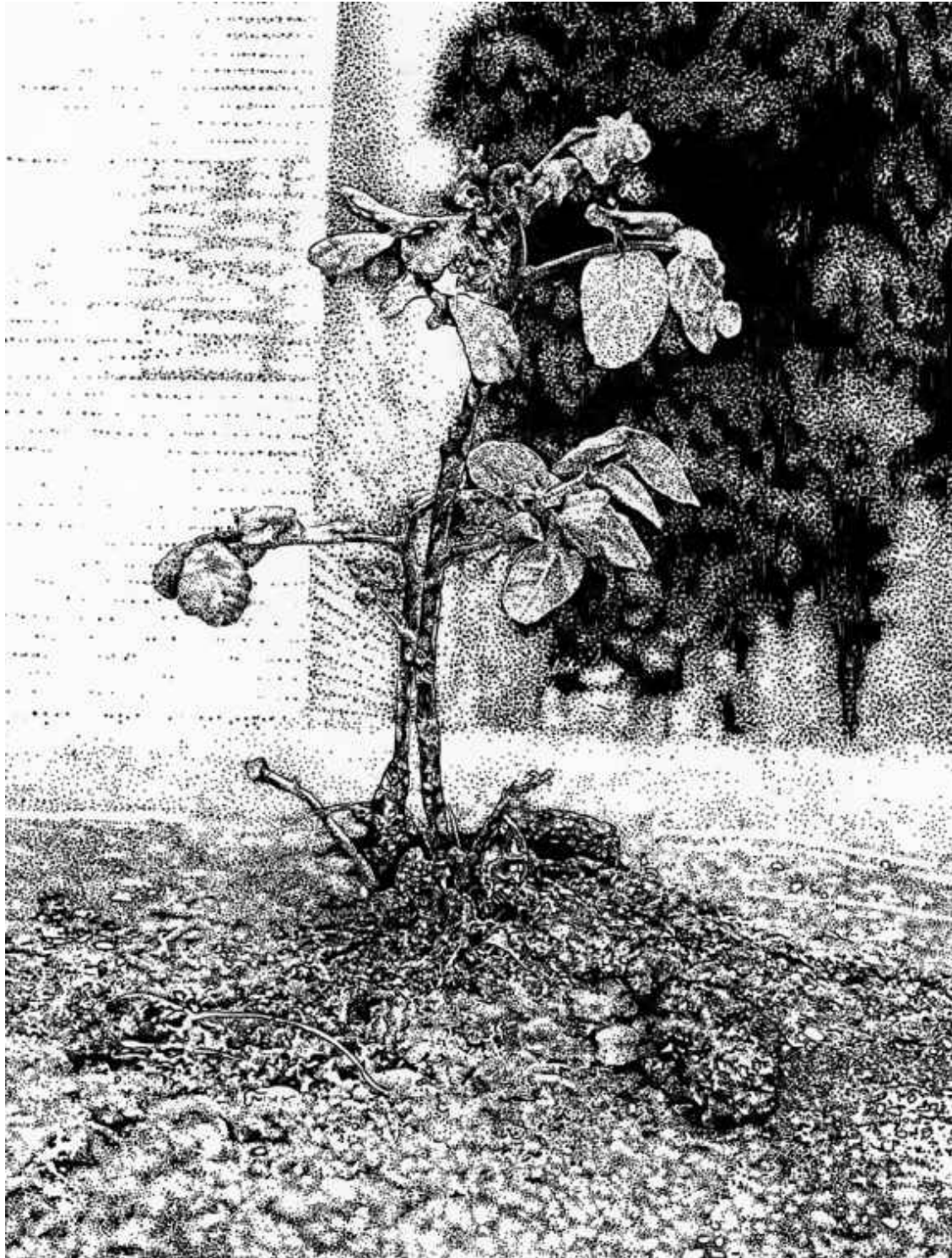
Hole in the Wall, pen and ink on drafting paper, 23 x 23 inches, 2013

Step 4:

I then printed out the larger, digital version of the drawing onto cotton rag paper and began to work into it again with Rotring Isograph pens. During the process of enlargement, some of the fine details of the pen work are lost and the digital

printout, on its own, can feel pretty flat; hence, the second stage of pen and ink work.

Finally I added texture and further detail to the work by using a variety of mixed media including paint, flock, and textured paper: maximizing the decorative quality of the work and adding a new dimension.



Nature's Quiet Revolution, pen and ink on drafting paper, 8 x 11 inches, 2012

K. Henderson, U.S.A.-oil painting



Foiled Again, oil on canvas, 30 x 40 inches

Contact: FineArtOils.com

Represented by: Mountain Trails Gallery, UT, Mountain trails Gallery, WY, Warrior's Work, SD, Spirits in the Wind, CO, Red Willow Gallery, AZ, Heritage Gallery, AZ, Lovetts Fine Art, OK, Cavalier Gallery, CT, and Chasen Gallery, VA



Interview

Born and raised in Oklahoma, K. Henderson currently resides in an isolated rural area in the Sacramento Mountains of New Mexico. Unlike most of us, K. Henderson lives “off-grid,” powering her home with solar energy. Her surroundings and collections become inspiration for her art that includes Western figures, toys, and drink and food desserts. With a lifetime career devoted to the arts, she creates over 50 paintings a year for her collectors, painting incredibly rich realist still lifes of food and desserts. K. has recently completed her 1,400th painting!

While she has received over 100 Best of Show and First Place awards in national juried shows, her recent accomplishments include a Purchase Award at the ARC

Salon, 2nd place at the Hubbard Museum of Western Art Biennale, People’s Choice award at Richeson 75 International exhibit, and many more. The artist has been featured in numerous magazines and publications, including Southwest Art Magazine, Western Art Collector, and American Art Collector, as well as several books featuring her cowboy-themed paintings.

Did you have any teachers and artists who were/are inspirational to you? What sources do you use to make your creative juices flow?

I’m largely self-taught, but I started painting many years ago as I attended an art school in Tulsa, Oklahoma, while I was still in high school. My inspiration changes from day to day; as I’m

living in a rural area, it limits my exposure to galleries and museums. But I spend hours on the Internet discovering new artists and old favorites.

What subjects interest you the most? How do you come up with compositions for your art?

I love still lifes. I'm a thrift store junkie and I'm always finding new objects I want to paint. With my striped fabric paintings, I start out draping or folding the fabric to come up with an interesting composition of opposing directions. I then add transparent glass objects which also reflect the stripes. Or I add silver bowls, goblets, or pitchers. They not only reflect the stripes but duplicate the objects around them.

In what ways is your art connected to or influenced by your lifestyle?

The area where I live is rural, with real cowboys, Indians, coyotes, deer, elk, and big pine trees. Cell phones don't work and the nearest WalMart is over 50 miles away from my house. Such a lifestyle lends itself to observe nature and record the cowboys, Indians and things that I collect.

I love collecting things (especially odd things). My collections include over 300

different copies of the book Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, silver and glass objects, and toys, games, and marionettes. I also collect vintage board games. I would have to live to be 300 years old to include them all in my paintings.

What is your creative process? How do you critique your

work?

Still lifes, of course, start with setting up the objects. If possible, I set them up outdoors on a small table. I take many photographs with my digital camera and view them in Photoshop. Viewing the still life as a photo gives me a new perspective. I move the objects around a lot. I add objects, take them away, or do whatever needs to be done to come up with a good composition. I create my contemporary realism oil paintings from the photos I take, but I also keep the objects on hand so I can view them “in real life.”

What advice would you give to aspiring artists? What does the term “professional artist” mean to you?

New artists: Ask as many questions as you can from successful artists. Try to improve with each

painting, and take any criticism with a grain of salt.

Professional artists: Words have specific meanings. The dictionary defines ‘professional’ as “engaged in a specified activity as one’s main paid occupation rather than as a pastime.”

In regards to your technique: describe what makes your art form and approach to it special.

I do my preliminary drawing on tracing paper that is the same size as my canvas. When I’m happy with that, I transfer the drawing to the canvas using a transfer paper or homemade carbon paper.

I then block in the colors pertinent to my still life. The rest of the painting is just adding layers of color. I usually have 3-5 layers of paint on the canvas, adding more detail and depth with each layer. Each layer of paint is allowed to dry before adding the next layer.



Who Was That Masked Man? oil on canvas, 30 x 40 inches



Midnight Snack, oil on canvas, 30 x 40 inches

Demonstration: One fish, two fish, oil painting

Supply List:

- * Paint medium: liquin original
- * Linen or canvas
- * Oil paints (artist uses various brands)

*

Brushes: various filbert and round brushes of either bristle or synthetic sable

*

Other: transfer paper, tracing paper, pencil, kneaded eraser, mahl stick and easel, Gamsol, paper towels.

Step 1:

I draw the outlines on tracing paper that matches the size of my future painting. A close observation of forms and light is necessary to achieve the realism of form. The drawing must look as accurate as possible before switching to painting it. After the drawing is on the linen, I block in the colors using thin layers of oil paint. I use the medium to dilute the oil paint and to make it flow easier.

Bristle brushes are good for the initial block-in.



Step 2:

After the first layer of paint has dried, I start adding detail: fish, glass on right, and some shadows in the fabric.

I

follow the exact pattern on fabric: how it curves and folds as I strengthen the stripes.

To make glass appear transparent, I copy major lines that create dark passageways (lines) inside the glass and paint them with a mix of red and black. Highlights on the glass cut across these lines as they sit on the surface of red vases, not on fabric.



Step 3:

Each layer of paint is allowed to dry before I proceed to the next layer of paint.

I keep adding dark layers, highlights, and details until each form is complete and it has 3-5 layers of paint.

Notice that highlights on objects follow the shape of each one. If the glass is rectangular in its shape, the highlight cuts straight across the form. If the vase is round, the highlight curves, following its shape. Because the fish is more complex and consists of several basic shapes within it, the fish has several varied highlights.



Step 4:

At this step, I glaze the same colors over glass and fabric. I adjust minor shifts in values and color. Notice that reflected objects are slightly less detailed. Smaller and finer brushes are used here.



Step 5:

I strengthen and add fine highlights in glass. I add bluish shadows into the fabric to describe volume. Varnishing of oil painting is done in 6 months, after it's dry completely.



One Fish, Two Fish, oil on canvas, 30 x 40 inches

Tanja Gant, U.S.A.-colored pencil painting



Girl without an earring, colored pencil and graphite, 16 x 13 inches, 2012

Contact: TanjaGant.com
Represented by: Independent Artist



Interview

Originally from Bosnia, Tanja Gant (b.1972) is a nationally known award-winning portrait artist. Her distinctive colored pencil portraits captivate viewers with their highly unusual placement of figures or faces on paper. Such arrangements of young children and teens look neither melancholic nor sweet. They are skillful interpretations of life where the unexpected vantage point, anatomical accuracy, and the softness and realism of skin tones are simply fascinating.

The gaze of every individual is emotionally different and opens up a conversation to interpret and wonder about that person's life. It looks like a best-kept secret, where Tanja is able to create such work with just Bristol smooth paper and Prismacolor Premier colored pencils. The artist produces very few drawings per year.

Tanja Gant won Best in Show in Richeson 75 International Figure/Portrait Exhibition in 2012 and was a finalist in the International Artist Magazine's People & Figures 2013, the International ARC Salon 2012/2013, and The Artist's Magazine's 2013 Annual Art Competition. Tanja also won the Best Drawing Award in the International Guild of Realism's 8th Annual International Juried Exhibition.

Did you have any teachers and artists who were/are inspirational to you? What sources do you use to make your creative juices flow?

I've been drawing from the moment I learned how to hold a pencil. It started with cartoon characters and progressed to portraits while I was in high school. I've always had a need to

express myself using visual images, long before I was aware of their significance. I am self-taught. Growing up in the '70s and '80s in Yugoslavia, I didn't have easy access to art books or magazines and the school curriculum focused mostly on art theory. One of the first magazines I fell in love with when I moved to America, and still read cover to cover, was The Artist's Magazine.

They cover every genre, every medium, and offer indispensable tips.

What subjects interest you the most? How do you come up with compositions for your art?

Even though I love all forms of art, I am most passionate about portraits. That one snapshot in time can tell a lot about a person or leave the viewer wondering and asking for more. The subjects of my drawings are my friends and family members. I prefer compositions that happen naturally, the ones that are not staged, even though I will arrange them accordingly, when necessary, in order to better relate the story. I like to keep my compositions relatively clean of unnecessary detail and viewed from a different perspective. I believe that my compositions and the technique I use, that allows me to achieve a very smooth look, are what distinguish my work.

In what ways is your art connected to or influenced by your lifestyle?

My art is directly influenced and inspired by the people who are close to me. They are a wonderful mixture of personalities and always willing and gracious to be subject to my experimentations.

What is your creative process? How do you critique your work?

The ideas for my art come from everyday life. It can be a simple gesture, a glimmer in the eye, or light hugging the form just so. My goal is to infuse my portraits with personality, to make them speak on their own, and in order to do that, I try to create compositions that compliment them best. Ultimately I am my own toughest critic. I always analyze my drawings, even after they're finished, thinking about how I can make the next one better.

What advice would you give to aspiring artists? What does the term “professional artist” mean to you?

The term “professional artist” has been the subject of many a debate. The degree in art and great sales certainly help, but I think it's important to find your own voice and follow it, always. Take a class, join a group of like-minded people, try something new, experiment. And don't forget to have fun!

The road to being a professional artist is not always easy. It takes hard work and dedication, but the results are incredibly rewarding.

In regards to your technique: describe what makes your art form and approach to it special.

My technique is pretty straightforward. It requires only paper (smooth Strathmore Bristol paper), colored pencils (Prismacolor Premier), a good pencil sharpener, and occasionally an eraser. I take pictures of my relatives and friends, posing them when necessary.

Since I work from photographs, I use Photoshop Elements to slightly adjust the values and colors. I transfer the image directly onto the paper either free hand or using the grid. For the initial outline, I often use regular mechanical pencil to create outlines, which I then erase almost completely so the lines wouldn't show through later. (Graphite lines interfere

with light or white colored pencils and become even darker than the original line when shaded over with pencils.) It is imperative to get the initial sketch exactly right, because larger mistakes can't be corrected once colored pencil is applied. I also pick out all the colors beforehand for each section separately (skin, shirt, pants, pavement, and so on).



Galen, colored pencil, 12 x 24 inches, 2009



Scarlet, colored pencil, 16 x 13 inches, 2012



Speak No Evil, colored pencil, 10 x 8 inches, 2013

Demonstration: Noesis, colored pencil painting

Supply List:

*

Mechanical pencil

* Staedtler Mars plastic eraser and Faber-Castell Perfection 7056 pencil eraser

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Bristol smooth Strathmore drawing paper—300 series

* Prismacolor Premier colored pencils (specific colors are listed in steps)

* iPoint by Westcott pencil sharpener

*

Photoshop, computer, and photo camera

Step 1:

For the initial outline, I use regular mechanical pencil which I then erase almost completely so the lines wouldn't show through later.

I make sure the anatomy and all shapes are correct before I begin shading.

At this stage, I pick out all the colors for each section separately and list them in order in which I use them.



Step 2:

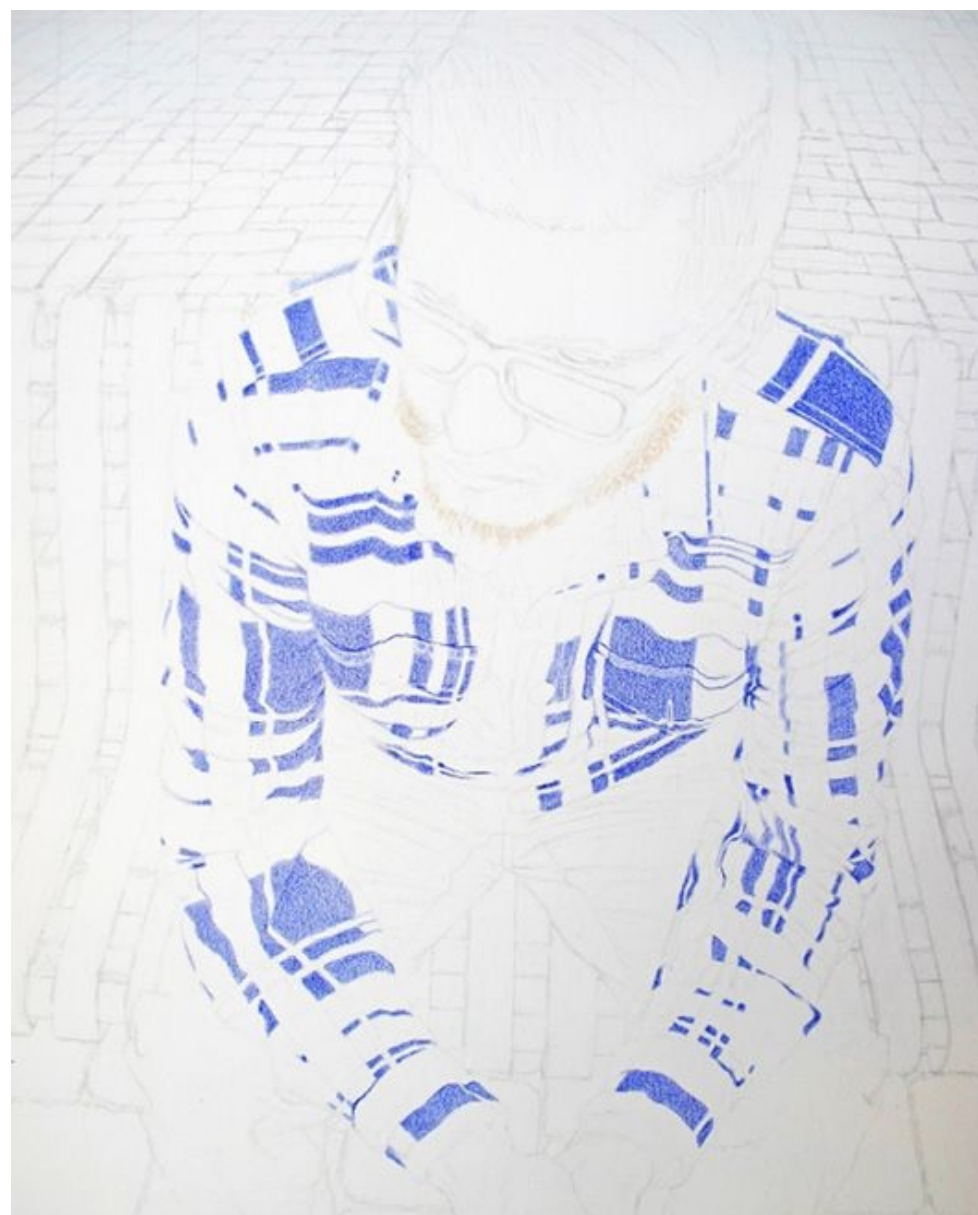
I

started with the shirt because it was the most challenging part. I usually finish the face first, but in this case I knew I had to get the plaid pattern right before I could move on to the next section. I applied violet blue first, and a hint of light umber on the beard.

Colors for shirt:

Reds: orange, scarlet lake, violet blue

Blues: periwinkle, violet blue, warm grey 90%, jade green, goldenrod, warm grey 90%, black



Step 3:

I

continued developing the pattern on the shirt by applying periwinkle, more violet blue, jade green and goldenrod in the blue areas, layering them in different combinations to get the different hues.

For the red areas, I used orange, scarlet lake, and violet blue, applying them in the same manner. For the buttons, I used pure black.



Step 4:

Next I worked on the face and hands and mapped out the hair.

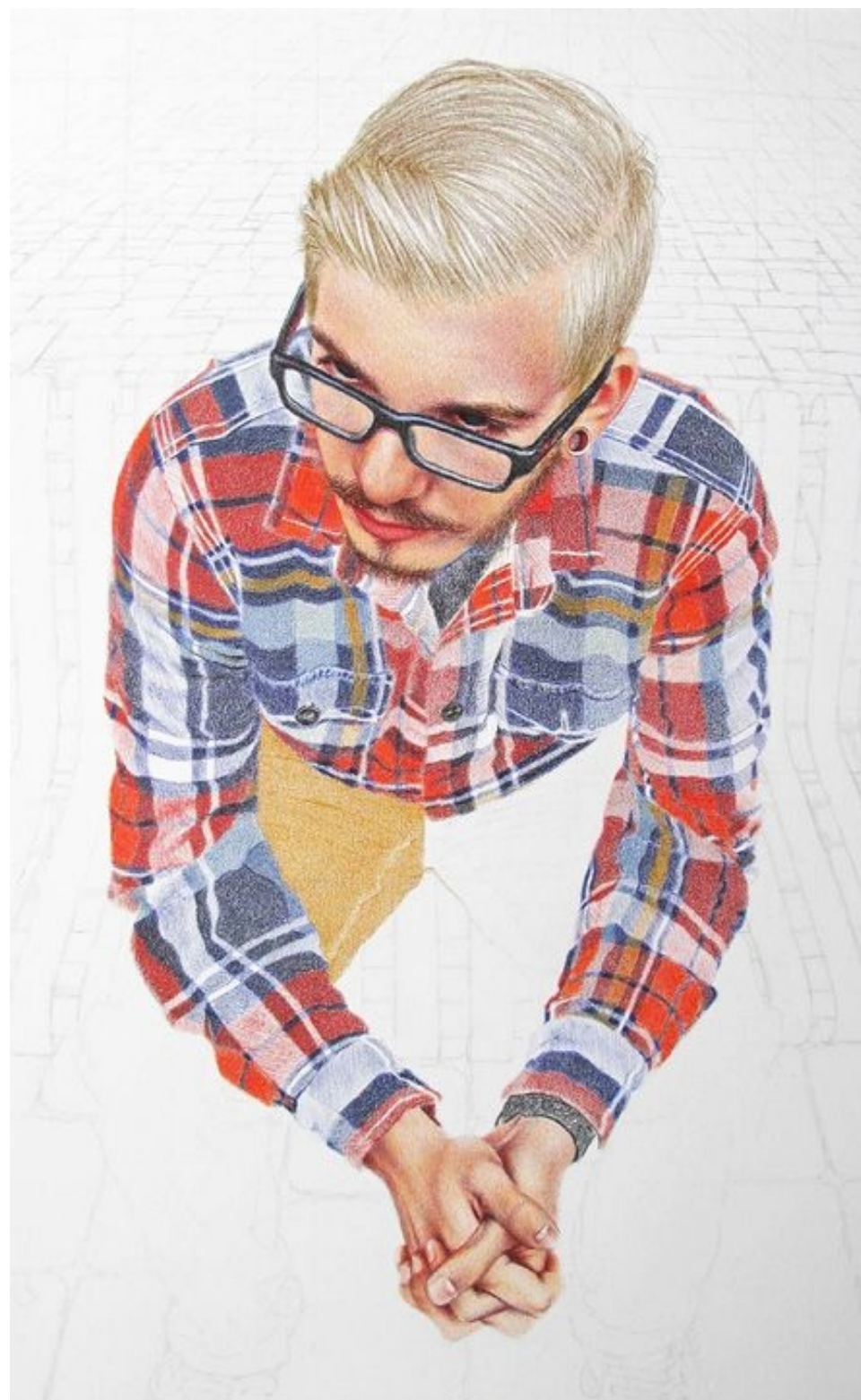
Colors for the skin: I used peach, beige, deco orange, nectar, scarlet lake, violet blue, and dark umber.

Colors for the lips: on the lips I applied peach, crimson red, Tuscan red, and a touch of dark umber.

Colors for the eyes: the eyes were done in Copenhagen blue, dark umber, and black. For the eyeglasses, I used blue slate (the highlights), warm grey 90%, and black.

Colors for the mustache: the mustache and beard were done with a mixture of bronze, light umber, henna, Tuscan red, and dark umber.

I also started working on the pants by putting down a layer of goldenrod.



Step 5:

Colors for paints: I continued to define the pants by adding mineral orange, light umber, orange, and terra cotta.

For the hair, I used the same colors as for the mustache. At this point, I decided I should start working on the bench and the shoes. I mapped out the values on the bench by using blue slate. For the shoes, I used cool grey 30%, cool grey 90%, a little bit of goldenrod, and Tuscan red for the red stripe.



Step 6:

I

finished the bench by applying Mediterranean blue, warm grey 90%, violet blue, and black.

Colors for the background:

For the background (the pavement), I put down a smooth layer of warm grey 20% first.

Next I applied warm grey 50%, peach beige, and warm grey 90% in circular motion.

The cracks in the pavement were done in black and warm grey 90%.

I also applied warm grey 90% and black to the shadows on the shirt and pants, and hair.



Noesis, colored pencil, 12 x 22 inches, 2012

Ann Kullberg, U.S.A.-colored pencil painting



Summer Sunday, colored pencil, 16 x 20 inches, 2006

Contact: AnnKullberg.com
Represented by: Independent Artist



Interview

Ann Kullberg (b.1956) is one of the founders of the colored pencil movement that has originated in the U.S.A. in late eighties. She is also the creator of the first colored pencil magazine, titled today as Ann Kullberg's magazine for colored pencil artists.

No wonder she thinks of herself as a teacher and "connector" rather than a working artist. A wonderful portraitist and a colored pencil activist, Ann Kullberg is a published author of many art books, who engages with her students via various workshops and with her clients via portrait commissions.

Although the artist's B.A. is in English Education (1979), Ann has never stopped educating in colored pencil! Ann's favorite pencils are the Prismacolor Premier and the Stonehenge printmaking paper. These materials allow the artist to develop the layers of color and detail so appreciated by her collectors. Ann Kullberg's work features children and siblings who are relaxed and at play with their surroundings. Bright, glowing light envelopes forms and brings sweetness to children's faces. They become a quick snapshot, a record of passing-so-quickly childhood captured in soft, confident strokes of the artist.

Did you have any teachers and artists who were/are inspirational to you? What sources do you use to make your creative juices flow?

My mother reports that I was drawing constantly by the time I was 4 years old. I remember being fiercely protective of my coloring books as I child because I colored in them so carefully and my little brother always just scribbled and "ruined" the book for me! My parents provided crayons, pastels, and inexpensive watercolor sets for me as a child and I was always happy to see my artwork on the front of our refrigerator. I didn't seriously start drawing, though, till I was 31, after I discovered colored pencil.

I have never taken an art class, so I didn't have any art teachers who inspired me, but when I was first introduced to Mary Cassatt by a roommate in college, I fell seriously in love. I have spent hours and hours poring over Mary Cassatt calendars and books, studying every nuance. When I finally saw an original Mary Cassatt at New York's Metropolitan Museum, I stared at one piece for nearly an hour. I am still completely entranced by the freshness of her sensitive portraits.

What subjects interest you the most? How do you come up with compositions for your art?

I have always been drawn to the human form and the face. I'm a people person and I find them endlessly fascinating as a subject, especially children. As a commissioned children's portrait artist, in my mind, my "client" is always the child, rather than the parent. I always try to include a scene as a background for the portrait that will mean something to the subject years down the road.

For instance, I'll have her stand in front of the front door of her house, or on a porch step, with a favorite stuffed animal. My portraits are unique in that I developed the "vertical line technique" that speeds up the drawing process while also keeping the painting a little bit loose.

In what ways is your art connected to or influenced by your lifestyle?

Colored pencil is pretty much my life. My travels center on teaching colored pencil, my days are centered around working on my colored pencil magazine and books, products, and website. I'm pretty much drenched in colored pencil in some form or other every day of my life. I have taught my Colored Pencil Portraits Workshop in 44 states, 4 countries, and 12

cruises over the years, and look forward to letting colored pencil art and artists guide my journey forward. It has led me to fabulous places so far and I can only expect the future to be brighter still.

What is your creative process? How do you critique your work?

As a commissioned portrait artist, I take my own photos to work from. What I am generally looking for is a photo that tells a story that shows the subject with a flattering yet natural expression that captures their personality, and that has strong light. I love the deep contrasts that sunlight provides. I often think of light as my “true” subject. Super light highlights and very dark shadows make me very happy.

I don’t do anything in particular to critique my own work, but I do go by my gut. When my middle feels relaxed, I know an area is finished. If it feels tight and uneasy, then I work a little more until the uneasiness is gone.

What advice would you give to aspiring artists? What does the term “professional artist” mean to you?

To new artists, I would say to try as much as possible to enjoy the process of becoming a better and better artist. Celebrate small improvements, small accomplishments, and rewards. Find support locally or online and remember it is supposed to be fun, even though art is actually hard work! Learn from different sources, but be aware that the end goal is to find your own style and your own voice eventually. I think that drawing skills need to be honed first; color, technique, and style will follow. And remember, no one starts out a fabulous artist—it’s the result of hours and hours of skill building and practice.

In regards to your technique: describe what makes your art form and approach to it special.

Soon after starting with colored pencil, I found a printmaking paper called Stonehenge in a local art store. I’d tried several

other papers, but once I found Stonehenge, there was no looking back. It is a perfect paper for my technique since it will take literally dozens of layers of pencil. Prismacolor also seemed to look richer on the Stonehenge compared with other papers I'd tried.

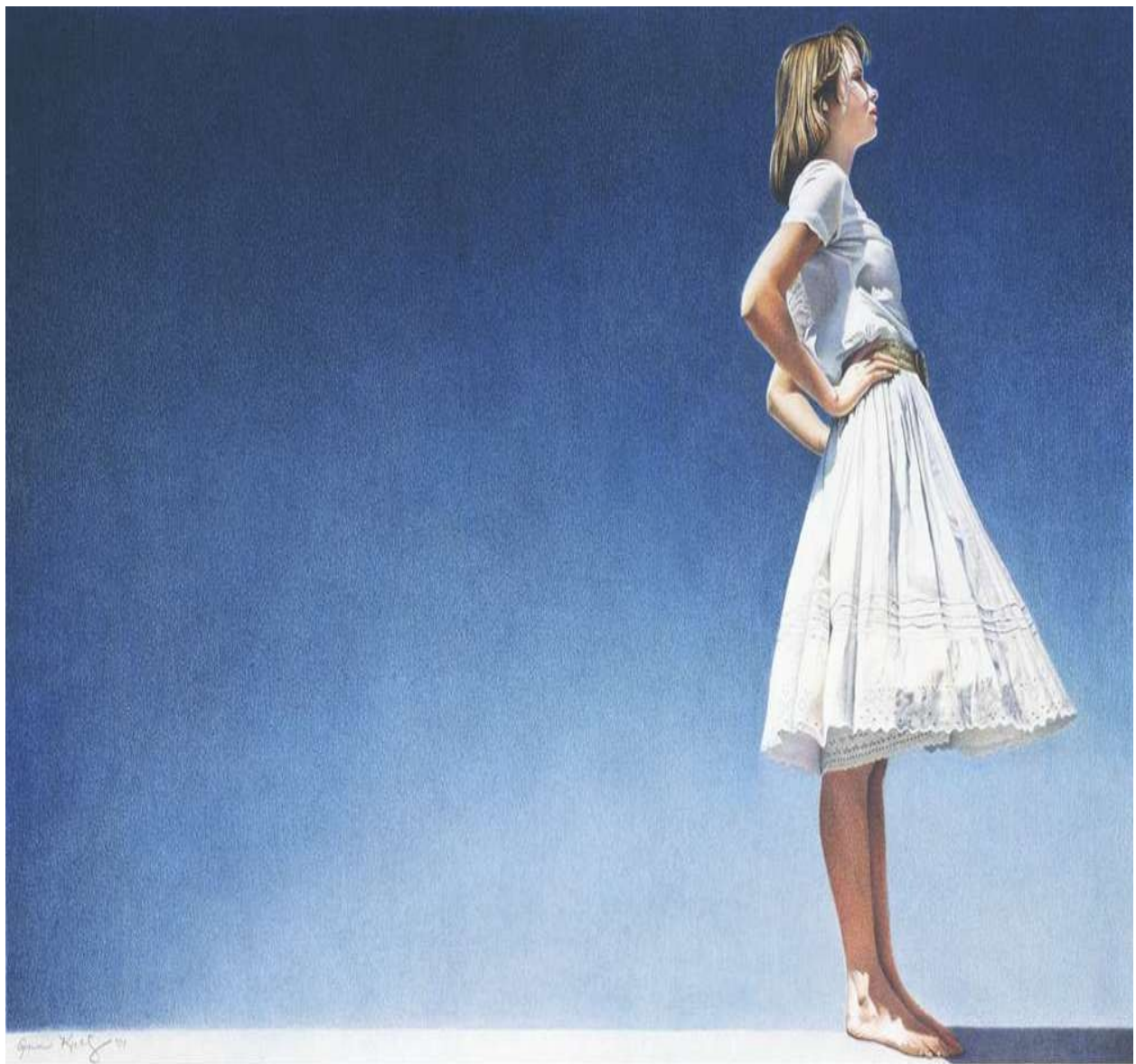
About 3

years into my colored-pencil path, I developed my vertical line technique to speed up the process and have been teaching this technique for nearly 15 years.

In the last few years, I've started playing a little with different techniques and different surfaces, which has been a lot of fun, but a little scary, too.

It's harder to work outside your comfort zone!

Also, I find the deepest satisfaction from introducing new artists to colored pencil and broadening a more seasoned artist's handling of portraits. I am thrilled by the way colored pencil as a medium has blossomed over the years since I began in 1987, and seeing the spread across the globe is especially exciting for me. I look forward to seeing what's next with this "lowly" medium.



Broken Rules, colored pencil, 14 x 20 inches, 2004



Kate, colored pencil, 16 x 20 inches, 1996



Not Everything is Black and White, colored pencil, 26 x 18 inches, 1996

Demonstration: Evey Sleeps, colored pencil painting

Supply List:

- * #2 graphite pencil
- * Reusable adhesive
- * White Colourfix sanded paper
- * Prismacolor Premier colored pencils and Caran d'Ache NeoColor II
- * Small brush
- * Pencil sharpener
- * Adobe Fireworks, computer, and photo camera

Step 1:

For this portrait of my first granddaughter, Evey, at 1

month old, I took the photos while she slept because I loved the little worried look she always had when sleeping and because I loved her little lips and the beautiful light.

I

always start shading with my background. In order to speed things up, I used NeoColors shading in the background. Then I used a slightly damp brush to liquefy the pigment in these colored pencils to quickly fill in some of the space.



Step 2:

Over the NeoColor washes, I applied much darker Prismacolors. I used warm tones—burnt ochre and terra cotta, and greenish tones—olive green and sepia.

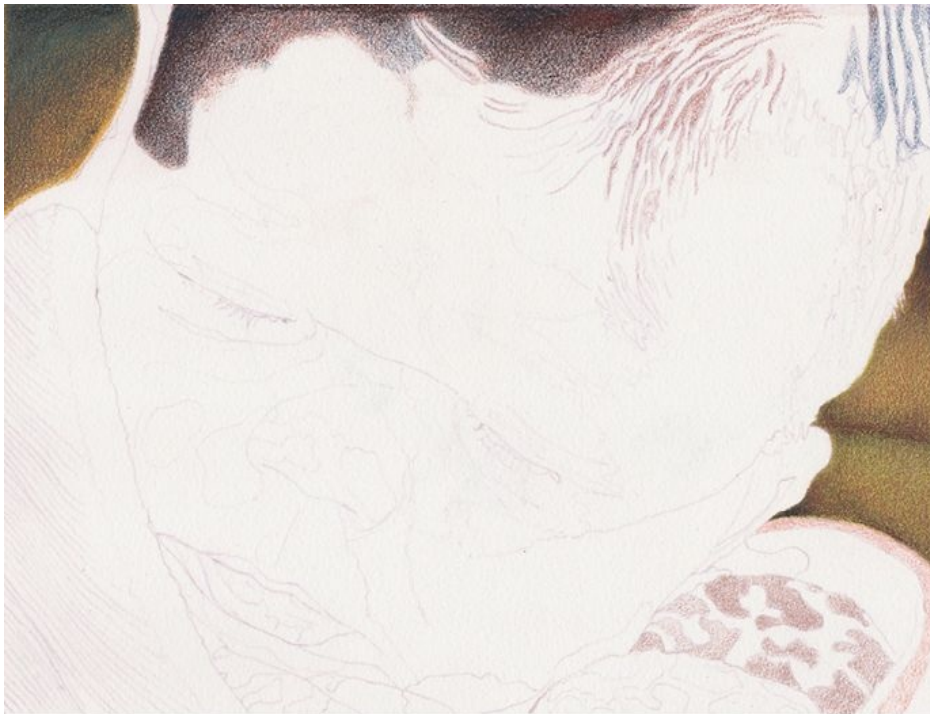
I like to get my darkest darks in first, so I next began working on the upper left side of her head that is in deep shadow. I applied terra cotta with a medium pressure, then followed that with layers of indigo blue and dark umber. I used clay rose on her pajamas.



Step 3:

I

continue to work on the background, putting in a few yellow washes on the blanket. I start to map in the darker sections of Evey's face with deco pink and peach. I definitely don't want to steal any thunder from Evey's pouting face, so I keep the background/foreground colors quite muted and gray.



Step 4:

The most important element to me, in the whole portrait, is that adorable pouty mouth. I start laying in the darker tones with blush pink, pink and a little carmine red. I also use a thin line of raspberry on the bottom of her lower lip.

I start to build up the darker skin tones with a mix of skin tones-jasmine, blush pink, peach, and yellow ochre. I start her eyes with a thin line of burnt ochre.

I

realize that I am not going dark enough with this piece, so I further darken the background elements and the darkest areas of her forehead with dark umber and black.

I now have to start bridging the gap between the very dark shadowed skin tones and the mid-tones by darkening with pink, goldenrod, and clay rose.





Step 5:

I keep bridging that gap. I've used terra cotta on her dark shadows, blending into the dark umber sections. I'm really enjoying the Coloursoft surface, as it seems easy to blend two sections together with a fair amount of pressure.

I

finish her mouth. I used carmine red and raspberry to darken and then fill in the mid-tones with pink rose and blush pink.

I

continue to model skin tones with the yellows, pinks, and grays, making sure I leave direct highlights of pure white.



Evey Sleeps, colored pencil, 8 x 10

inches, 2013

Step 6:

This final stage is all about blending and refining. I work until the transitions between dark and mid-tones are smooth. I find that using a lighter pencil over darker tones works well to blend on Colourfix paper.

My last step is the eyelashes. I use a super sharp light umber to lightly draw them, then take a beige pencil to “sink” them in so

they don't look so drawn on. After the beige, I darken a few of them again with light umber.

Pleased, I sign and date the portrait, which is always a good feeling. Finished without blowing it!

Karen Hull, Australia-mixed media



Grandpa Elliott, colored pencils on mat board, 12 x 16 inches,
2012

Contact: KarenHullArt.com
Represented by: Independent Artist



Interview

Karen Hull (b.1965) is an Australian mixed-media artist who had worked as a registered nurse for twenty-five years before turning to art full time. Having no formal education in art, Karen exhibits an amazing talent, completing works in a range of mediums that include coloured pencil, scratchbord, gouache, graphite, soft pastels, acrylics, watercolours, ink, and even Corel Painter. No matter the medium, Hull's artwork follows the same principles—realism mixed with humour that puts a smile on any viewer's face. Her images of little creatures and animals, captured on scratchbord with Inktense pencils and colored pencils, have unusual angles and points of view where birds, mice, and even snails seem to have a conversation or a special activity amongst themselves. Creative and fun, these images contrast Karen's more serious photo-realist still lifes and portrait art.

Having a range of work with the unexpected combination of mediums, the artist shares her knowledge with everyone, offering how-to kits and step-by-step demonstrations on her website. Karen Hull is a member of the Australian Society of Miniature Art (NSW), the International Society of Scratchboard Artists, the Australian Guild Realist Artists, the Colored Pencil Society of America, and other organizations. Her work can be found in both public and private collections around the world, as well as on a series of coins created for the "Coin Club of Australia." In 2013, Karen was one of four artists who were the first to be awarded Master Pencil Artist Status by the Pencil Art Society. Karen's art has been featured in many art magazines and books, including Australian Artist Magazine, Ann Kullberg's Magazine For Colored Pencil Artists, Colored Pencil Magazine, and so on.

Did you have any teachers and artists who were/are inspirational to you? What sources do you use to make

your creative juices flow?

I began drawing as soon as I could hold a pencil, from the age of about two. I drew all the time as a child, and then put the pencils aside as a nursing career and raising four sons took up all my time. My passion for art was rekindled about seven years ago after a family holiday where we visited several art galleries, and from then on I was hooked!

I don't have any formal education in art, but have a huge library of art books and magazines. There is no single artist that has been a source of inspiration, but I am drawn to artists that employ unique techniques to achieve creative realism, and the Internet has been a wonderful source of discovery when it comes to researching art and artists.

What subjects interest you the most? How do you come up with compositions for your art?

I love to create artworks that combine realism with the unexpected, whether it be a touch of humour, or an unlikely situation. I base many of my compositions on photos I have taken of our own birds and pets, or at zoos, and then spend time daydreaming about how to anthropomorphise the little critters from these reference photos. I also love to capture close-ups of human emotion and love the beauty of an imperfect face.

In what ways is your art connected to or influenced by your lifestyle?

People often ask if they can come and see my studio, but I fear they would be sadly disappointed—it is a drafting table placed right in the middle of our combined lounge / dining. I work best with the hustle and bustle of the family around me, and this somehow feeds my creative juices. We live at the base of the Blue Mountains and I draw a lot of inspiration from the nature that surrounds us, from sitting quietly and watching our own abundant menagerie of pets or from observing my family as they go about their business. Life itself is my greatest

inspiration.

What is your creative process? How do you critique your work?

My creative processes start with one or multiple reference photos. I use the transparency of drafting film as a tool to work out my composition, taking elements from different references and moving them around until I am happy with the overall look. I work in a range of mediums and surfaces, and the decision to use one or other combination of media will influence how I visualize the final artwork should appear. Technically, I am a perfectionist, which is something I am trying to overcome, as I am almost always dissatisfied with the final outcome of any artwork I complete. On the upside, my aim with most of my artworks is to leave a smile on the viewer's face and, when I receive feedback that reflects this, it makes it all worthwhile. I don't spend a lot of time reflecting on or critiquing my work, unless it is a commission, as I am always impatient to move onto the next project.

What advice would you give to aspiring artists? What does the term "professional artist" mean to you?

Professional artist to me means that you work full time as an artist, deriving the majority of your income from your art. I would advise new artists who are wanting a career in art to work at being unique and to be aware that up to 50% of their time should be taken up in marketing themselves, whether online, at exhibitions, writing articles, running workshops, joining and participating in art societies, and promoting themselves.

In regards to your technique: describe what makes your art form and approach to it special.

No matter what media I use, most of my artworks reflect the quirky realism that I love to create. For this demonstration, I have shown how I combine my first love, colored pencils, with

my second love, scratch art. Both mediums allow a high degree of detail, but by combining them, it is possible to achieve fabulous contrasts, vibrant color, and intricate detail to achieve incredible realism.



Hitching a Ride, colored pencil on mat board, 9 x 12 inches, 2013



Full o' Beans, colored pencil, white ink on black mat board, 9 x 12 inches, 2013

Demonstration: the Promise, mixed media drawing

Supply List:

* 9x12

inch Ampersand Scratchbord

*

Ampersand kit of Scratchbord tools, which include different bladed knives and some steel wool

* Derwent Inktense Pencils: golden yellow, cad. orange, burnt orange, poppy red, fuchsia, deep rose, dusky purple, iron green, ionian green, felt green, light olive, oak, sepia ink, Payne's grey

*

Chinese ink

*

Colored pencils (Caran D'ache Pablo): khaki green, olive grey, olive black, golden yellow, Naples yellow, reddish orange, brownish orange, umber, salmon, scarlet, carmine, rose pink, dark carmine, aubergine, malachite green, dark green, bluish green, moss green, olive, ruby

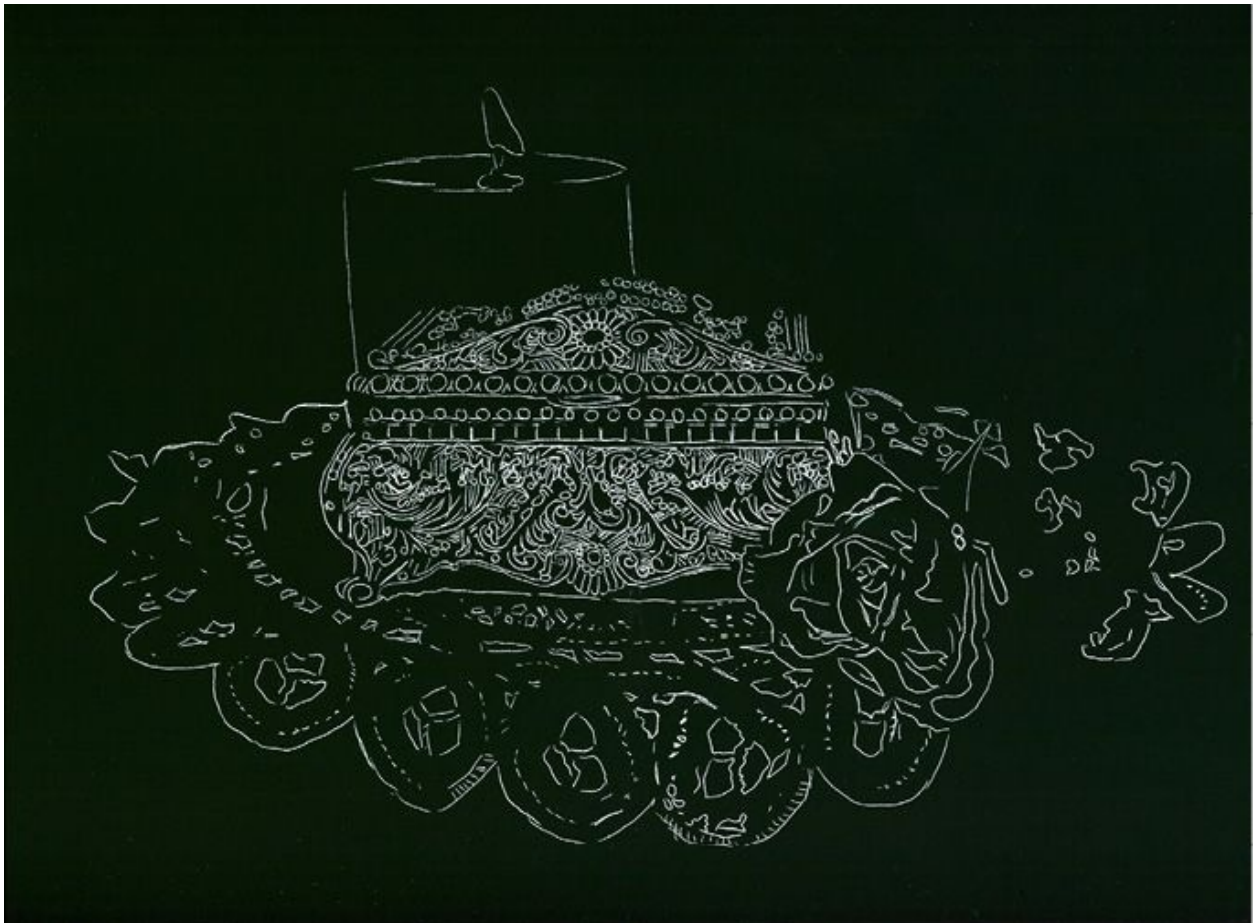
red, brownish beige, sepia, granite rose

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Other: kneaded eraser or Blue tac, cotton gloves, soft brush for brushing away dust particles, 0 paintbrush, tracing paper or drafting film and white transfer paper, varnish of choice.

Step 1:

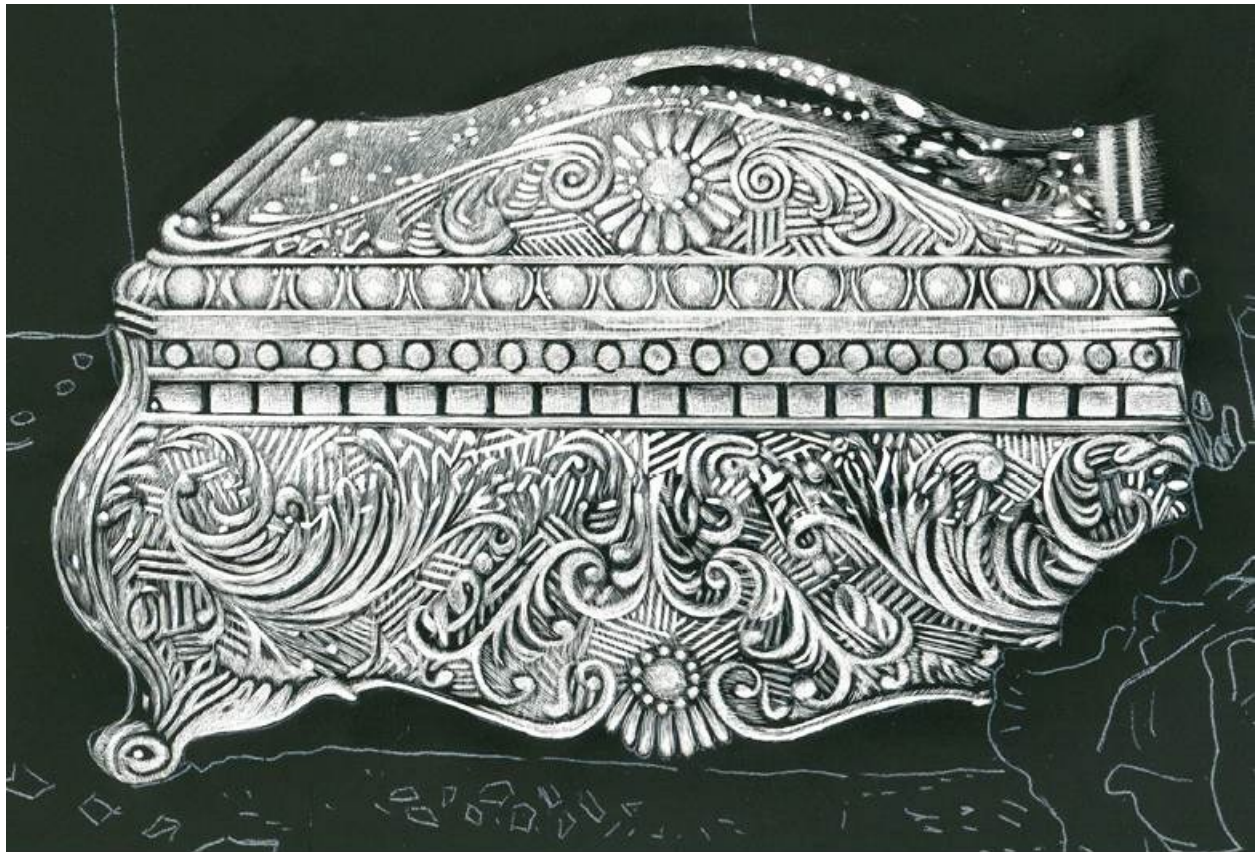
Use your favorite method to transfer your image onto the Ampersand Scratchbord. I used drafting film to finalise my initial drawing and then used white transfer paper and a fine needle to transfer the image to the Scratchbord.



Step 2:

In this step, use whatever tools you have on hand to scratch into the black ink of the Scratchbord to reveal the white clay beneath.

For this intricate box, I used mostly an 11 scalpel blade and tattoo needles (available on Ebay.)



Step 3:

The first layer of color is added using Derwent Inktense pencils. I use a fine, just-wet brush and take the pigment from the nib of the pencil and then carefully add it to the detail of the box. The Inktense pigment has the advantage of filling in some of the grooves created from the scratch art, providing a smoother surface for the colored pencil to adhere to.

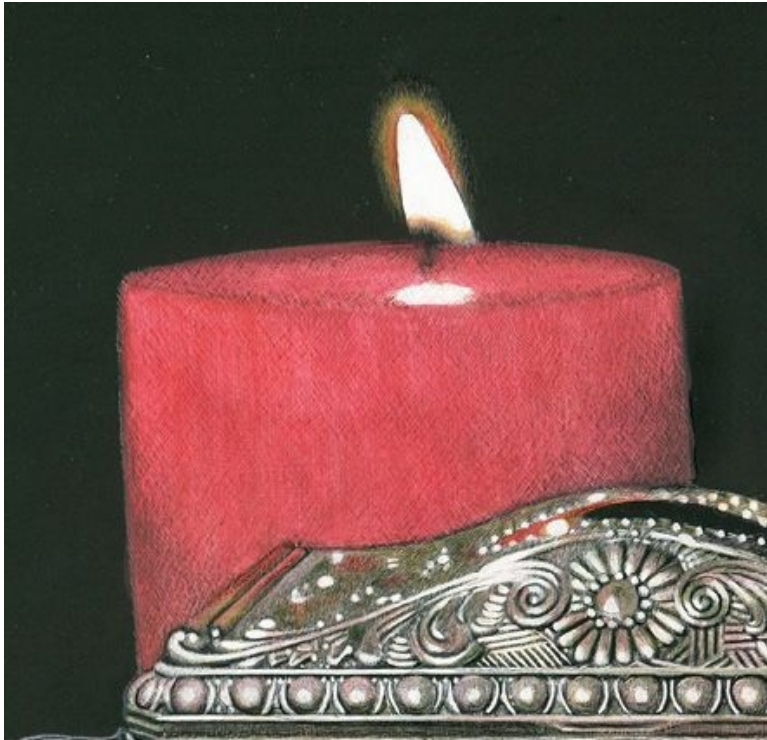
You can use the colored pencils without doing an initial layer of Inktense, but you will find that more pencil dust is created and that the pigment doesn't adhere quite so well.

The colored pencils are then used to add vibrancy and give more definition. The Inktense pencil color is more matt in appearance and the colored pencils will give your piece a bit more shine.



Step 4:

The candle had an initial layer of Inktense, followed by the colored pencils and, because I still wasn't happy with the vibrancy of the red, I then applied a layer of acrylic ink over the top, which gave the candle a more waxy appearance.



Step 5:

The rose was completed in the same way as the box-scratching to remove color, adding Inktense pencil pigment, and then adding further color with the colored pencils.

When it comes to scratch art, it is much more difficult to recreate smooth surfaces, and so the box ended up being the easiest part of the whole artwork. If at any point you feel that too much black is showing through, even after you have added color, you can scratch into the color and then re-apply it.

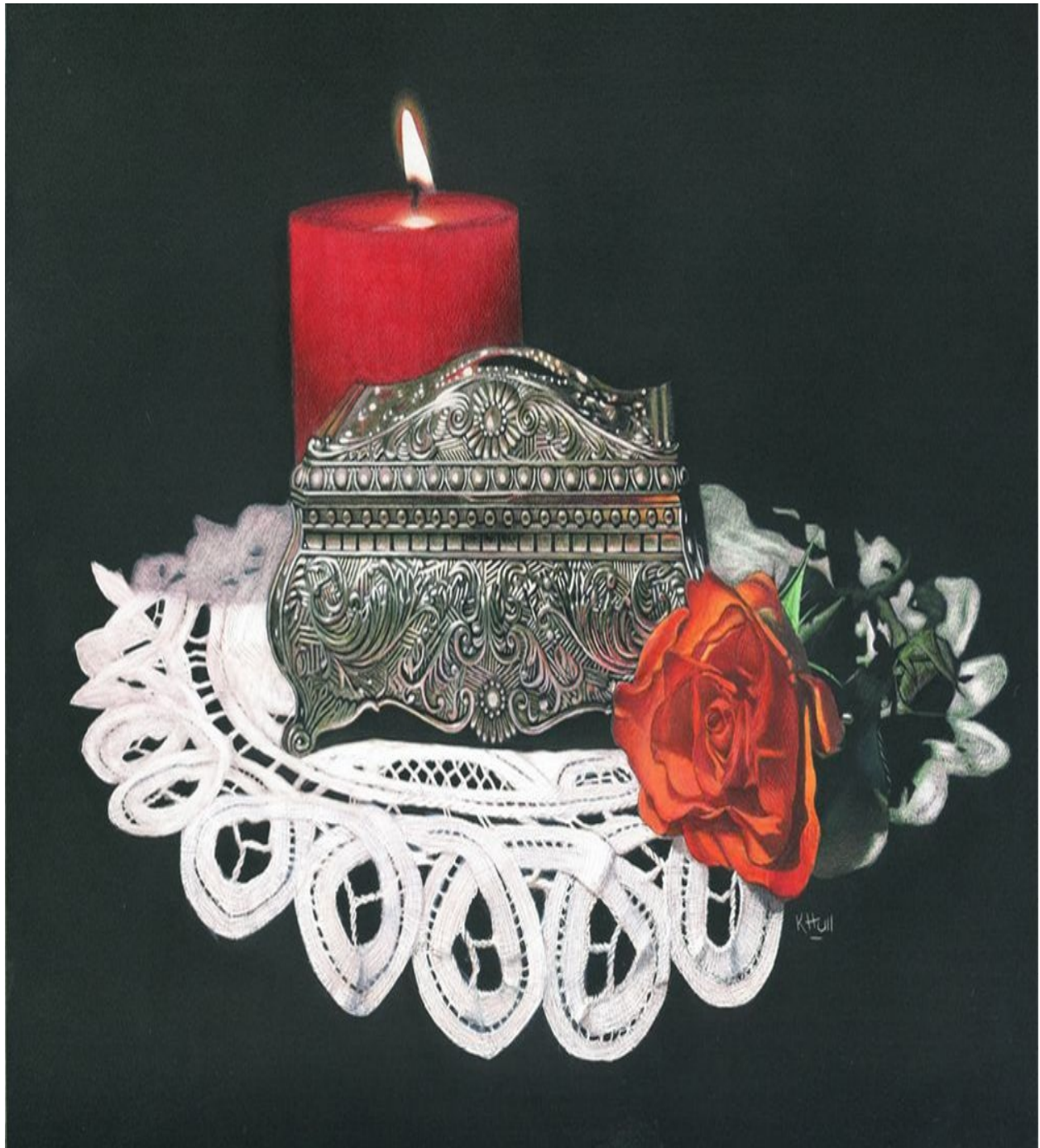


Step 6:

Most of the doily was done using scratch art alone, with the shadows and detail added using Inktense pencils. Once you are happy with the completed artwork, I recommend applying 6-7 coats of your favorite spray varnish.

* A 27

step-by-step tutorial is on the artist's website.



The Promise, scratch art, Inktense pencils, colored pencil and ink on Scratchbord, 8 x 10 inches, 2013

Daniel Sprick, U.S.A.-oil painting



First and Last, oil on board, 30 x 24 inches, 2010

Contact: DanielSprick.com

Represented by: Gallery 1261, CO, Arcadia Contemporary,
NY, Evoke Contemporary, NM



Interview

Daniel Sprick (b.1953) is a realist painter of soft, airy still lifes that are unusually displayed, or even suspended above, wrapped in fabric tables which, in turn, become delicately balanced, set against simple interior spaces.

Sometimes objects levitate above tables. And other times, barely doing so, they balance and create tension among themselves and between empty interior spaces—the artist's studio, hallway, or a window.

There is a strange feeling—a sense of abandonment present in paintings, where a person might have just fled the scene, leaving behind a table with half-cut apples, broken eggshells, or unfinished soup cans and opened milk cartons. In his painting of interiors with symbolic compositional arrangements, the artist is influenced by the Northern Renaissance painters—Roger van der Weyden, Jan van Eyck, Hugo van der Goes, and the Dutch painter Jan Vermeer. Balance, quietness, and sometimes decay are motifs of Sprick's works. Flowers and vases, skeletons and bones, Campbell's soup cans and peeled fruit, exotic carpets and fabric-odd combinations of objects follow correct linear perspective and appear surprisingly beautiful, coexisting together in one painting. Muted color harmonies re-create realism of natural light falling onto objects, illuminating empty spaces. Sprick is also a masterful figure painter, where people depicted on his panels seem to be removed from natural environment and are set against light, illuminated empty background spaces. The artist is able to depict correct human anatomy with free, loose, Sargent-like brush strokes, where colors mix and overlay each other in harmony. Such skill the artist attributes to his constant portrait drawing.

Daniel Sprick received his B.A. from the University of Northern Colorado in 1978. His work is found in many public and private collections, including Denver Art Museum, National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, State Capitol Building in Colorado, Williams College Museum of Art, and many others. Sprick has shown his works across the states, including Evansville Museum of Art & Science, Denver Art Museum, Louis Newman Gallery, Aspen Art Museum, John Pence Gallery, Taos Art Museum, etc.

Did you have any teachers and artists who were/are inspirational to you? What sources do you use to make your creative juices flow?

I first started drawing when I was a toddler. I remember little about my early life, except for the time when my father, minimally practiced at drawing, showed me how put pencil to paper and there magically appeared the cross section of a biplane. I was captivated from that point on and constantly drew pictures of airplanes and designed my own model aircraft with his guidance and built them out of balsa wood, glue, and tissue paper.

Some influential teachers in my life have included Mr. Ramon Froman, a wonderful portrait painter, and Harvey Dinnerstein at the national academy in New York. I have, and continue to teach myself through books of art history and visits to museums.

As for my general education, I started school at Mesa College in Grand Junction, Colorado, where I took vocational/technical training as a welder. I studied briefly at the national academy of design and privately with artists who would take time to help me with critiques of paintings that I brought to them. I later transferred to the University of Northern Colorado, where I majored in art and benefited greatly from art history courses and earned an undergraduate degree in 1977.

What subjects interest you the most? How do you come

up with compositions for your art?

I am interested in portrait and still life. I love to paint landscapes out of doors in the wind and the sun as the light is rapidly changing. Generally, compositions tend to emerge through some intuitive ways that I still don't completely understand.

In what ways is your art connected to or influenced by your lifestyle?

As artists, our life experiences become the driving forces of our art works. The experiences may be mundane and typical. It may simply be noticing the shadow of a tree limb on pavement. It may be something dramatic and violent, but in my life, that has been very rare.

What is your creative process? How do you critique your work?

I don't know if creativity really exists. We merely rearrange existing ideas, traditions, and materials. At best, we make slight individual modifications. The process has to do with distilling our experiences and observations through our own sensibilities, unwitting products of our times that we all are. It all filters through our well-practiced craft and our inner recesses and we see what comes out the other side.

What advice would you give to aspiring artists? What does the term "professional artist" mean to you?

Advice to artists starting out? Eat right, exercise, and get enough sleep, because you need to feel well in order to do your best work. Work long hard hours, work often enough to remember what you learned the last time you painted. Every day of painting is a learning experience. All challenging professions, such as engineering, law and medicine, require at least ten years of dedication and practice after the initial training in order to reach mastery. Painting and drawing are the same way. We may come into this world with varying

degrees of depth perception, eye hand coordination, and cognitive function, but no one is born with information or skilled at a craft; it is all a learned and practiced behavior.

In regards to your technique: describe what makes your art form and approach to it special.

My technique of painting and drawing has sort of emerged out of years of experimenting and accidentally discovering ways of applying or manipulating paint, as will happen with anyone who does this for a long time. I use opaque painting and glazing and scumbling methods which have been in use for at least six hundred years.

I often paint on gessoed masonite and I complete preliminary drawings working on large, complex still lifes. If it's small, I can

sketch my idea straight on board with vine charcoal.

The brands of paints tend to be from various manufacturers, Winsor & Newton, Gamblin, Grumbacher, Sennelier, and Old Holland. They need to be of pigments and binders that are considered permanent. I mostly use cabinet-grade plywoods or masonite primed with about 5-6 layers of acrylic polymer primer (gesso).

My advice on color mixing is to pre-mix colors on the palette with a knife in order to achieve unified groups of color, then modifying them as needed throughout the course of the particular passage in progress.



Plum Blossoms, oil on board, 24 x 24 inches, 2011



Elena, oil on board, 24 x 20 inches, 2008



Lilacs and Bird, oil on board, 28 x 22 inches, 2011

Demonstration: Blue Bird and Flowers, oil painting

Supply List:

- * Paint medium: linseed oil
- * Linen or gessoed masonite
- * Oil paints (artist uses various brands–Winsor & Newton, Gamblin, Grumbacher, Sennelier, and Old Holland.)
Colors: titanium white, Naples yellow, cadmium yellow pale, raw sienna, burnt sienna, cadmium red light, quinacridone red, ultramarine blue, turquoise blue, sap green, van dyke brown, ivory black

*

Brushes: various filbert and round brushes of either bristle or synthetic sable

*

Other: transfer paper, tracing paper, pencil, kneaded eraser, mahl stick and easel, Gamsol, paper towels.

Step 1:

Here is the initial drawing in vine charcoal of the still life set up. Using vine charcoal instead of graphite pencil allows changes to be made easily and doesn't produce residue on canvas or panel that could intermix with paint and contaminate color.



Step 2:

I blocked in a few of the elements. The mirror in the still life set-up repeats the framed artwork on the wall, and the flowers and blue bowl balance the white cloth on the right.



Step 3:

At this point, the still life is all blocked in and the surface of the picture is mostly covered. The vine charcoal lines overlaying the background and what will become the red cloth and the carpet are converging at a vanishing point approximately 38 feet to the left of the painting. This helps to get the two-point perspective accurate and to have a natural look of the still life.



Step 4:

I

softened distant areas, working from back to front. Here the carpet has been painted in flat, corresponding to the linear perspective shown in the preceding step: the carpet was done by first laying out the linear perspective of warp and weft, then painting the weaver's designs flatly. When it was dry, the shadows on it could be glazed on to it.



Step 5:

I

continued working on the carpet in anticipation of revealing light and shadow by the use of transparent glazing, completed here.

I also worked on the transparency of the blue vase. I painted white fabric on the right and determined general breakdown of folds and its shadows in red fabric.

Many areas of the painting are a mixture of alla prima painting, glazing, and scumbling.



Step 6:

About six weeks of work have passed since I first sketched the picture in charcoal. The roses have been changed to pansies and the planned glass vase has become a bird skeleton. The white cloth on the right is now a green and red jersey. The numerous substitutions of subject matter have meant some extra time involved, but I think that it has been worth the extra effort.

The need to replace some of the objects was a result of my poor planing or the realization that better ideas revealed themselves during the course of the work. It's very time consuming to sand down an area, match colors, and repaint areas behind the objects, but it is better to sacrifice various parts if it adds up to an overall strengthening of the whole.



Blue Bird and Flowers, oil on board, 24 x 36 inches, 2011

Linda Lucas Hardy, U.S.A.-colored pencil painting



Light Crisp Tasty-Fortune Inside, colored pencil, 14 x 22 inches, 2007

Contact: LindaLucasHardy.com
Represented by: Southwest gallery, TX and Davis & Blevins gallery, TX



Interview

Currently residing in Omaha, Texas, Linda Lucas Hardy (b.1947) is a nationally renowned artist working in oil and colored pencil. Her vibrant, traditional drawings and paintings feature still lifes and flowers. Cherries, grapes, peaches, and peppers are a visual feast; daises, roses, sunflowers, and lilies are infused with light and warmth. High-contrast paintings seize the viewer with their intense, poetic beauty. Who doesn't want to touch freshly cut flowers or to smell vivid, ripe fruit? It's hard to believe those subjects are creations in paint and colored pencil!

Linda Lucas Hardy, CPSA, CPX, has been passing her knowledge down to others by teaching classes and workshops for over a decade. Her work has appeared in more than 60 national and international exhibitions. Linda was named as one of the ten artists to watch in 2008 by Southwest Art Magazine. Her articles and artwork have appeared in The Artist's Magazine, International Artist, The American Artist Drawing, American Art Collector, and Northlight Magazine. Her work has also been published in several art books. She received many awards, including the CIPY Award and the EXPY Award—the two highest awards given by the Colored Pencil Society of America.

Linda has the distinction of being the only colored pencil artist to have won both awards in the same year. In 2012, she won her second EXPY Award, making her the only colored pencil artist awarded the EXPY twice. She is also the only colored pencil artist to win the International Artists Magazine's Grand Prize Award which she received in 2005. In 2013 she was the Third Place winner in the Favorite Subjects Competition of the same magazine. Linda is a 10-year merit award recipient in the Colored Pencil Society of America.

Did you have any teachers and artists who were/are inspirational to you? What sources do you use to make your creative juices flow?

It may have started with a box of crayons and a coloring book. I remember laying on my mother's bed at a very young age and watching her as she colored a picture for me. I think that's when I became fascinated with the process of putting color on paper. In the second grade, I painted a picture of a cardinal. My teacher told my mother I should have lessons. I didn't get them until later, but from that time on, I was always drawing. There have been many artists and teachers who inspired me to create, however, the one that stands out was Mrs. Mitty Masters. I took private lessons from her when I was thirteen. She started me in watercolor, then moved me to oil very quickly. Mrs. Masters left an indelible mark on me that has never been equaled.

My art education has been anything but formal. I had private lessons as a teen for a summer and some art in high school. From 1985 thru 1995, I took every art course offered at a local community college; some courses I took twice. When I left there, I stopped doing anything. In 2000, I was in Italy. It occurred to me while there that I was not getting any younger and if I wanted to do art, I needed to stop putting it off until some vague time in the future, and I needed to make it a priority. It was a conscious realization of something I'd known all along that I have never wanted to do anything else. The problem was I had no one to advise me, no plan, and no path...but I had a hunger. That hunger drove me and drives me today; that's why I can truthfully say my education has never stopped, it is ongoing.

I do subscribe to magazines but I must confess, I don't read the articles, I read the pictures. If something arouses my curiosity, then I may scan the article.

What subjects interest you the most? How do you come up with compositions for your art?

I don't paint by subject, it's light and dark that fascinate me. Any subject becomes mine when the lighting is right. I work from photos, so I'm always taking pictures. Once on my computer, I scan through them, looking for that one that stands out among the rest. Most of the time, I manipulate them in a photo editing program. I like to add contrast, which makes everything darker and more intense. Sometimes I over saturate them with color. Whatever direction I take usually transforms the photo dramatically, making it very unlike the original. What makes my art unique is me! I don't allow other artists work to unduly influence me. I can, and do, appreciate and admire other artists, but when it comes down to the wire, I don't want anyone to say or think my work looks like or reminds them of some else's. I am my own person and I want my work to be distinctive.

In what ways is your art connected to or influenced by your lifestyle?

Actually, my lifestyle is influenced by art rather than the other way round. My every thought and most actions have something to do with art.

What is your creative process? How do you critique your work?

My creative process starts with a curiosity. I never think the words but, "I wonder what would happen if..." is actually part of the process. I'm always looking for something a little unusual, yet tangible. More often than not, I'm drawn to extremes of light and dark, but in my quest for just the right subject, I'm delighted if I come across something imbued with a sense of mystery. If I can add a bit of subtlety and create a portion that's partially hidden, then my goal is to make the rest sharp and clear in contrast.

My ideas come from everywhere...other artists work, a photo, a beautiful day. Whatever captures my imagination and gets me excited.

I've just begun to wonder what it is I am doing. I am an artist, I've always wanted to be an artist. I know I love to draw and paint and I know I am driven; however, I've never given much thought as to why I can't "not" paint until recently. Now I'm looking at my work as a body and I am seeing commonalities. I'm intrigued. I have no idea what I'm looking to recreate, but something is going on.

As far as critiquing my own work, I have to trust my instincts since I have no one else to bounce off. I know what I like and I run with it. I'm also not afraid to try something different. I do what I want to do and how I want to do it.

What advice would you give to aspiring artists? What does the term "professional artist" mean to you?

One of the worst things you can do as an artist is to alter your voice to give people what you think they want or are expecting. I don't know who said that, but it's great advice. Explore, experiment, learn, draw and study the work of others, but always be true to you. Ask yourself, if you were doing "that," how would you do it? There are always going to be people who will have opinions about you and your art. Understand them for

what they are, opinions, but stand fast with the one opinion that should settle every opinion, your own. There is a flip side to that, however, and that is to be open. You can learn something from anyone, at anytime, and who works in any medium, so be a thirsty sponge and soak up all you can. In my opinion, “professional artist” means what I do is not a hobby, it’s a job description.

In regards to your technique: describe what makes your art form and approach to it special.

Trying to stay true to myself.



The Long Way Home, colored pencil, 14 x 26 inches, 2006



Pull to Open, colored pencil, 13 x 20 inches, 2005

Demonstration: Bell Pepper, colored pencil painting

Supply List:

*

Paper: UArt 800 grit sand paper

*

Prismacolor Premier colored pencils

*

Electric or battery-operated pencil sharpener

*

Drawing board

* 2

inch wide 14-day clean release Blue painter's tape for attaching the sandpaper to the drawing board. (Must be double taped because the sandpaper resists being taped down).

* Size 2 (1/4") flat (fairly stiff bristle) oil painting brush or

watercolor scrubbers size 2 & 4, NO larger.

*

Scotch tape in the red plaid dispenser for lifting pigment

*

Loc-Tite Fun Tac Mounting Putty for lifting pigment

*

Fixative: Krylon UV Resistant Clear Gloss

Step 1:

I started with a basic line drawing, then sprayed with a fixative to set the lines.

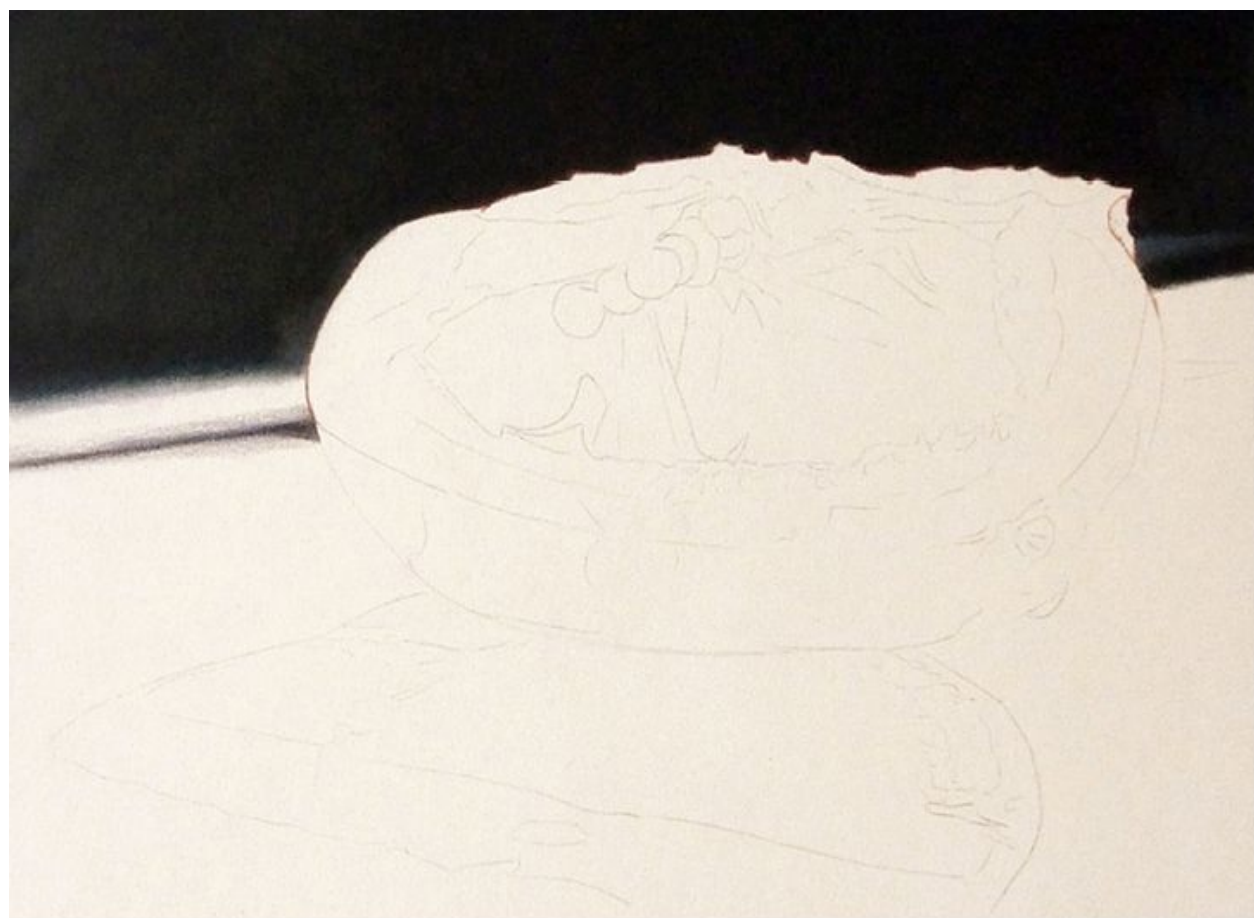


Step 2:

Because I'm using black, because colored pencil pigment floats across the paper, and because I will be blending with a "dry" brush, I have concerns about the paper getting dirty; therefore, I start with and fully complete the background.

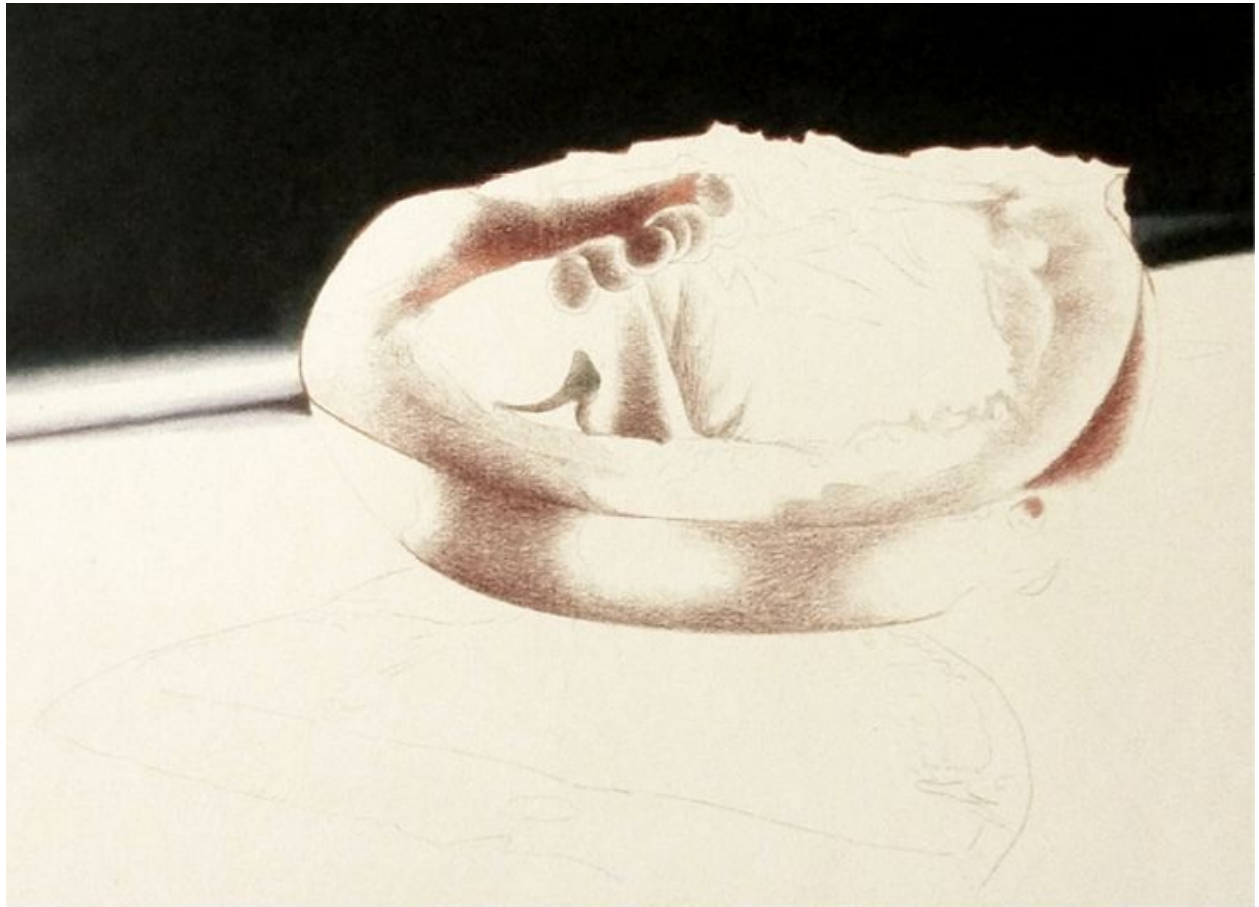
As a precaution, I put a line of crimson red at the top of the pepper to act as a barrier to separate the pepper from the background.

After applying many layers of black, alternating with indanthrone blue, I brought the background to completion by blending with the brush. After blending, I cleaned the paper with mounting putty.



Step 3:

Since I like to get my darkest values established first, I started with Tuscan red on the bell pepper.



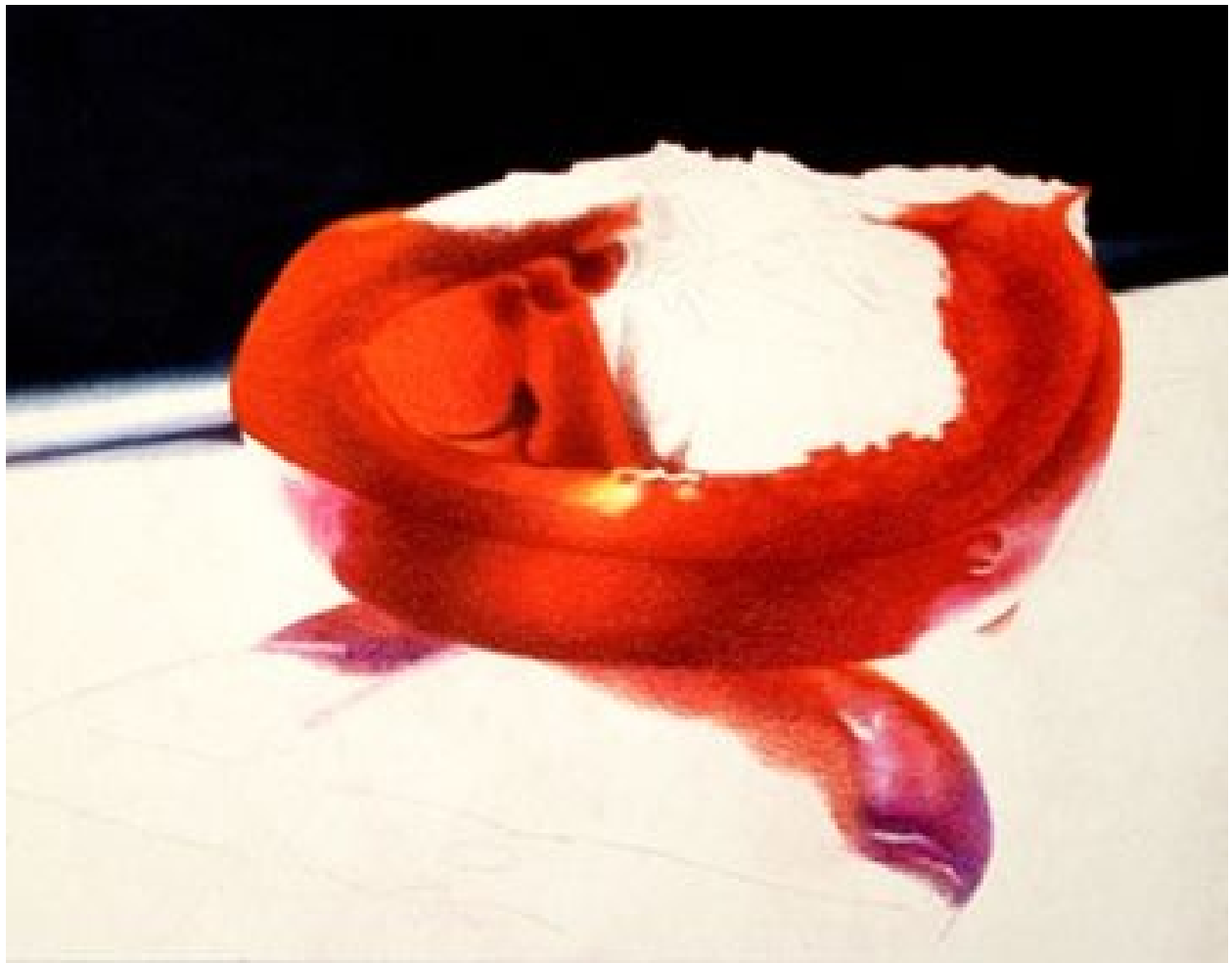
Step 4:

I then added crimson lake over Tuscan red and used crimson red, scarlet lake, and poppy red to make the rest of the red values. Where the reflected lights bounce off both ends of the pepper, I used process red and hot pink.



Step 5:

For the cast shadow, I started with the reds I'd used on the pepper and gradually moved into an assortment of violets, purples, and blues.



Step 6:

Once the shadow was completed, I burnished the pepper but NOT the shadow. To prepare for adding the lights, I used mounting putty to thoroughly clean the paper. For the lightest areas of the pepper, I used canary yellow, sunburst yellow, Spanish orange, and poppy red.

I then added a heavy layer of white to the lightest parts of pepper and a light layer to the tabletop. While doing that, I also went over the shadow very lightly with white to make it softer. To bring the piece to completion, I sprayed it with the fixative, a permanent acrylic coating, not a workable fixative. The spray eliminates wax bloom and intensifies the colors.



The Only Light I See, colored pencil, 8 x 10 inches, 2014

Julie Impens, U.K.-paper cutting, mixed media



Collection: Christmas of the Dead, Ankou's Sleigh, laser paper-cut, freshwater pearls, 8 x 12 inches, 2013

Contact: JulieImpens.com
Represented by: Independent Artist



Interview

French multi-media artist Julie Impens (b.1988) strikes as an honest and exceptionally talented person who currently pursues her endeavors in England. As an emerging jewelry designer, she has already exhibited internationally, including Kaliningrad Amber Museum in Russia, Touchstone gallery in Washington D.C., and several galleries based in London, UK. Multifaceted Julie not only works on her jewelry projects for fashion industry, but also creates scarves, drawings, and framed paper-cut pieces. These laser-cut, multiple paper cuts are beautiful, elegant, and sculptural artworks reminiscent of fragile snowflakes, delicate flowers, and baroque-inspired shapes. If you zoom into her designs, however, you'll often notice skeletons hidden in the leaves and curves.

Julie explores the theme of the early history of the myth of Adam and Eve (Enki and Ninhursag) and the release of empirical religious codes, which persecuted relationships between sexes for centuries up until today. She questions how religion views and places women in society; she challenges the social norms enforced by religious practices. In the laborious process, the artist creates repetitive designs suitable for her jewelry, fabric, and framed sculptural pieces.

Julie studied art and design in London Metropolitan University and received her B.A.

with honors in jewelry design from Central St. Martin's College of Arts & Design in 2010.



Collection: Christmas of the Dead, Anon on Earth, laser paper-cut, pearls, 8 x 12 inches, 2012

Did you have any teachers and artists who were/are inspirational to you? What sources do you use to make your creative juices flow?

I have always been a creative person. When I was seven, I started taking weekly painting classes. Gradually, I realized it could become a profession, and it was the only one I could see myself to do. With the support of my parents, I continued taking art classes until 2007, when I came to London for college. It was clear for me that, despite the difficulty of becoming successful in the field, it was my passion. Art brought me to life and it was the only thing I ever wanted to do.

I am passionate about the art world and the fashion industry. I decided to study jewelry design because I wanted to create wearable art pieces that would become an expression of art on their own. I chose to apply to the Central Saint Martin's University because I was fascinated by the work of John Galliano and Alexander McQueen who, amongst other celebrated artists, graduated from that school. During my first year of college, I met Jane McAdam Freud, who became a true inspiration for me. She was the first successful artist who made me realize and see all the difficulties and hard work existing behind passion. She taught me that being an artist was not just about creating nice things.

After my graduation, I was an intern for Kelly McCallum for another two years.

McCallum is the artist who influenced me the most, and my style has evolved considerably because of her help. She made me understand that art is a platform to express yourself, and the message behind the piece is just as important as the piece itself. It's exciting that, as an artist,

you can influence and encourage people to think, question, and confront their thoughts. Such freedom lets me be less expected or acceptable, working on darker, more controversial pieces.

To be in touch with the art world, I go to exhibitions, watch catwalks, and look at art, design, and fashion magazines. I read a lot, and writers like Jovanovic and Aries have dramatically influenced my work, helping me understand a lot about religion and death, questioning their powers and significance in our society. I enjoy seeing the work of Takato Yamamoto, Philipp Banken, and Salvador Dali because

they created a lot more than artworks; they invented new universes, their own fantasy world. Tim Walker manages to do the same with photography.

What subjects interest you the most? How do you come up with compositions for your art?

My artwork is a crossover between fine art and wearable, fashion art. My super-fine and detailed creations tell a story and, as art is so powerful to me, I want to be able to communicate my ideas to the viewer. During my studies, I researched my heritage, trying to understand myself. Coming from a Belgian father and a French mother and growing up in a big city, surrounded by people from so many different nationalities, I realized how important my roots were to me and my work. As a woman, I wanted to understand what my gender means in our society today and how it has evolved over centuries. Being a woman in our society is an ambiguous task. Despite the emancipation of women and the apparent equality of our rights, fighting for our civil liberties is rooted in our

everyday life. I also understood that the religion played an important part in this vision of womanhood.

Religions have sought to stigmatize women. They placed women at loss of spirituality, as the cause of all major sins. I studied how this vision of womanhood evolved in different religious texts. In the Garden of Eden, Eve seems more gifted than Adam; she is represented as a demon, a weapon of Satan to test God's creation.

She is responsible for the fall of an ideal. However, according to the studies of the historian Jovanovic, Eve was pure. The first religious text that presents Eve, or at least its ancestor—Ninhursag—is a Sumerian text. It shows her as a sexual being, but not perverse. This is the text that celebrates the fertility and does not include the notion of sin.

I find my inspiration in philosophical, sociological, artistic, and religious books. I am inspired by the memento mori and the way people see death and deal with the notion of grief. My artwork is different because I base it on my personal experiences, raise questions, and challenge societal norms. I am proud to be able to translate my own view of the world as I see it, and to be able to share it with others and have their response to it.

In what ways is your art connected to or influenced by your lifestyle?

My art is in me. My environment influences me and therefore it influences my artistic choices. Living in London is very inspiring; the art scene is big and diverse.

It is an opportunity to be part of a community of artists, actors, photographers, designers, and other creative

actors, photographers, designers, and other creative personalities. It allows me to share and compare my ideas with theirs. I also meet people of many origins and backgrounds, and I'm fascinated to see how a different nationality or religion creates a different point of view on the same subject. I like travelling. I've had a chance to start going abroad at a very young age to observe life from many points of view. It has opened my mind and gave me the inspiration. Living in London allows me to express myself, to have the opportunity to exhibit my work, and to meet people to whom culture is really important.

What is your creative process? How do you critique your work?

Ideas come from reading, exhibitions, discussions with friends, or watching the media. Sometimes even just walking down the street, I might see an ad or hear a conversation that will give me a new idea. As one piece leads to another, my entire body of work is connected. Through my pieces, I try to get people to reflect on their own experiences.

I

incubate my ideas before releasing them. I am a perfectionist, and I have a need to work on my concept a lot before sharing it. Sometimes I have an idea, but I will put the project aside for a few months because I feel like I need to think about it more, to study more on the subject.

When it feels right, I go back to it. Sharing my ideas with friends and my companion helps me to articulate my ideas better and to create work I really believe in.

What advice would you give to aspiring artists? What does the term “professional artist” mean to you?

I am not sure the concept of professional artist really exists. Being an artist is something you have deeply rooted within your soul. You don't become an artist, you are born this way, when creating is the necessity. Even if you are not lucky enough to make a living, you are still the artist. It's very easy to lose yourself in order to please others. But if you are true to yourself and to your work, it becomes the most wonderful experience. Being an artist means to give everything to your art, to believe in what you do, and to have a real message you want to communicate through your art. Having a skill is amazing, but what matters is what you do with this skill, how you try to be different and to touch people with your art, leaving them reflecting.

I have been very lucky in my experience to have the support and the understanding of my family and my companion, which I think is the key to being successful.



Collection: Flowers of Eden-Garden of the Not So Forbidden Garden, laser paper-cuts, pearls, 12 x 12 in, 2013
Isimud's kiss-Ninhursag's forgiveness-Ninti

In regards to your technique: describe what makes your art form and approach to it special.

I

design my work on my computer using Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator. It's necessary because my pieces are laser-cut and I need to create the vectors the laser will read and follow to cut the paper. Working on the computer also lets me draw and play around with shapes and sizes, moving forms around. Because all pieces are laser-cut, I must make sure the lines are precise. Thus, it takes a long time to go over every line, making sure it looks delicate but doesn't burn off during lasering.



Collection: Flowers of Eden-Garden Of The Not So Forbidden Garden; Shouldn't I Kiss This beautiful Ninnisi? 20 x 28 inches, 2013.



Oh, My Thighs! Oh, My Body! Oh, My Belly!, 20 x 28 inches, 2013



Enki Guardian on Earth, 20 x 28 inches, 2013

Demonstration: Flowers of Eden, paper cutting assemblage

Supply List:

*

Paper: Canson white paper

*

Surface: sheets of Canson colored paper for background

* Glue

*

Other: freshwater pearls, brass beads, brass wires

*

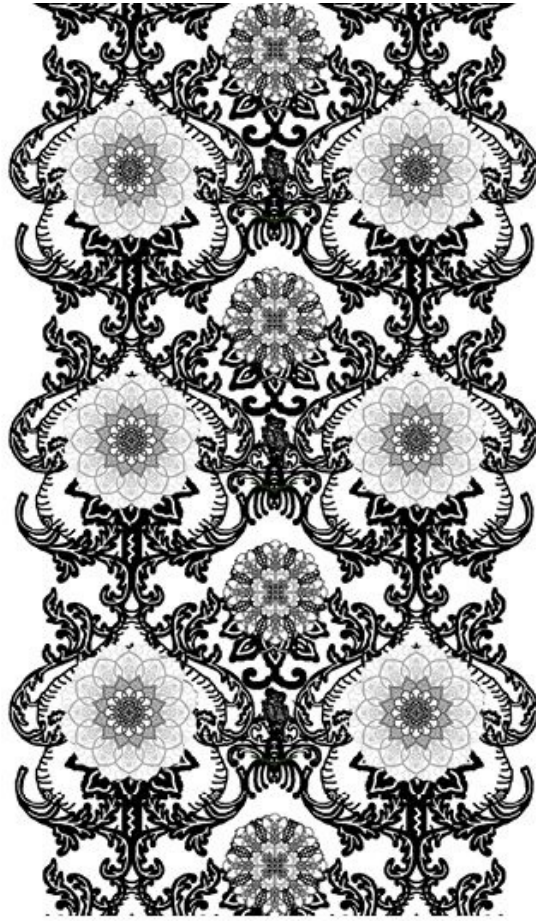
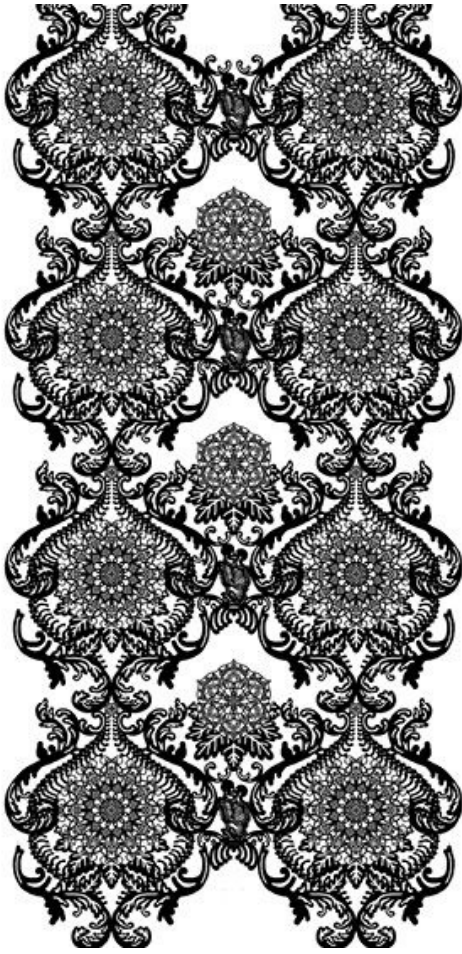
Computer, Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator
program software

* Note: the laser cut is done by the 4D Modelshop company
based in London.

Step 1:

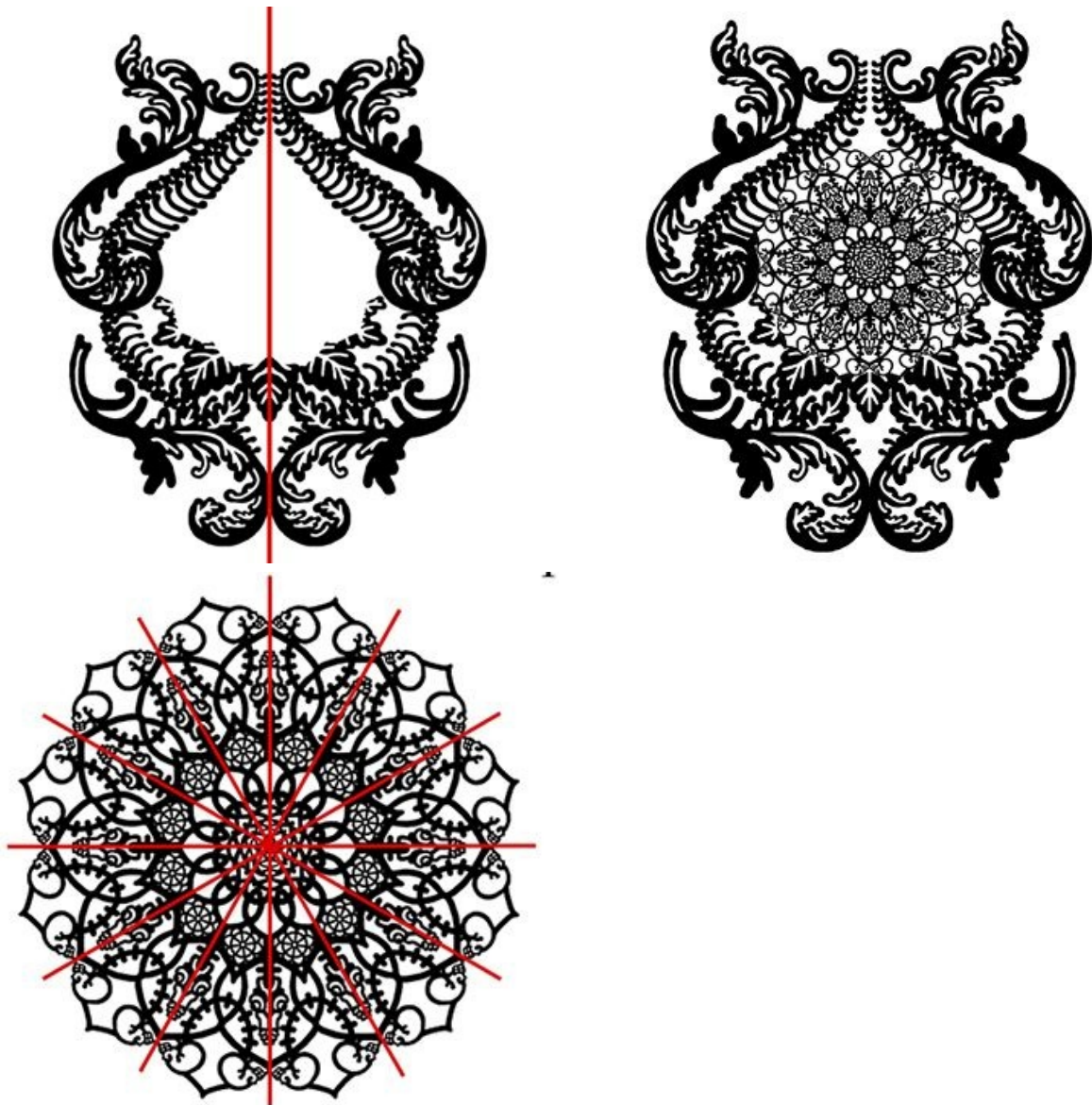
To begin, I sketch out my general ideas, which are always baroque, floral shapes.

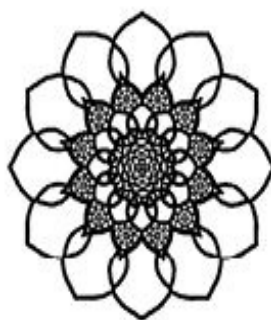
As I create the 3-D pieces by layering in the end—and I have to draw them 2-dimensionally at first—I want to make sure my design will be balanced and visually pleasing as a sculpture. So I use different shades of gray in the drawing to see how dimension will affect my piece.



Step 2: Vertical flip

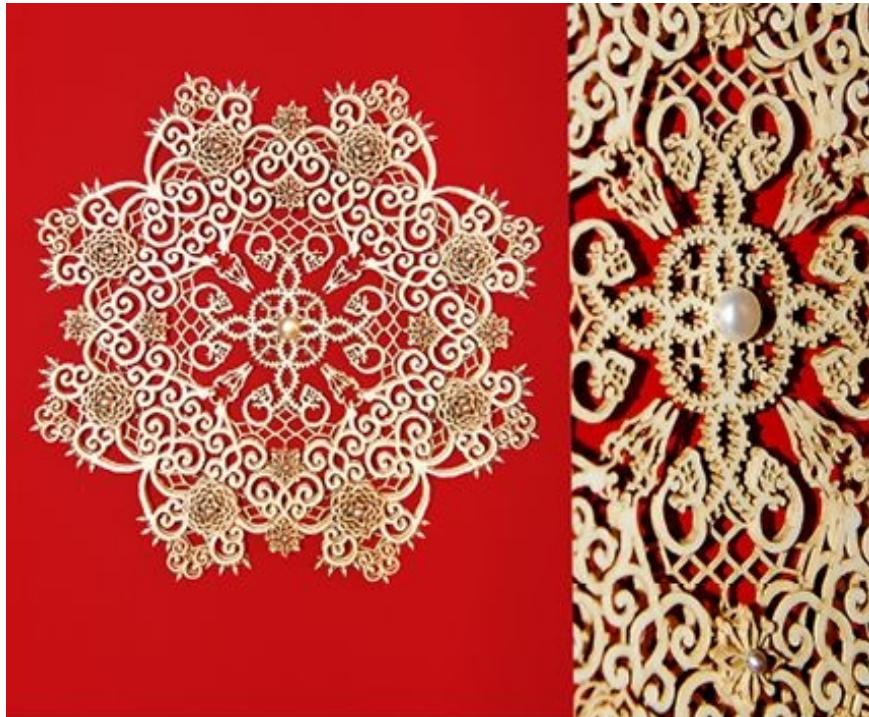
Symmetry is really important to me and it appears everywhere in my work. Most of the shapes are repetitive in my patterns, so I design the shape once and then multiply and attach the parts together.

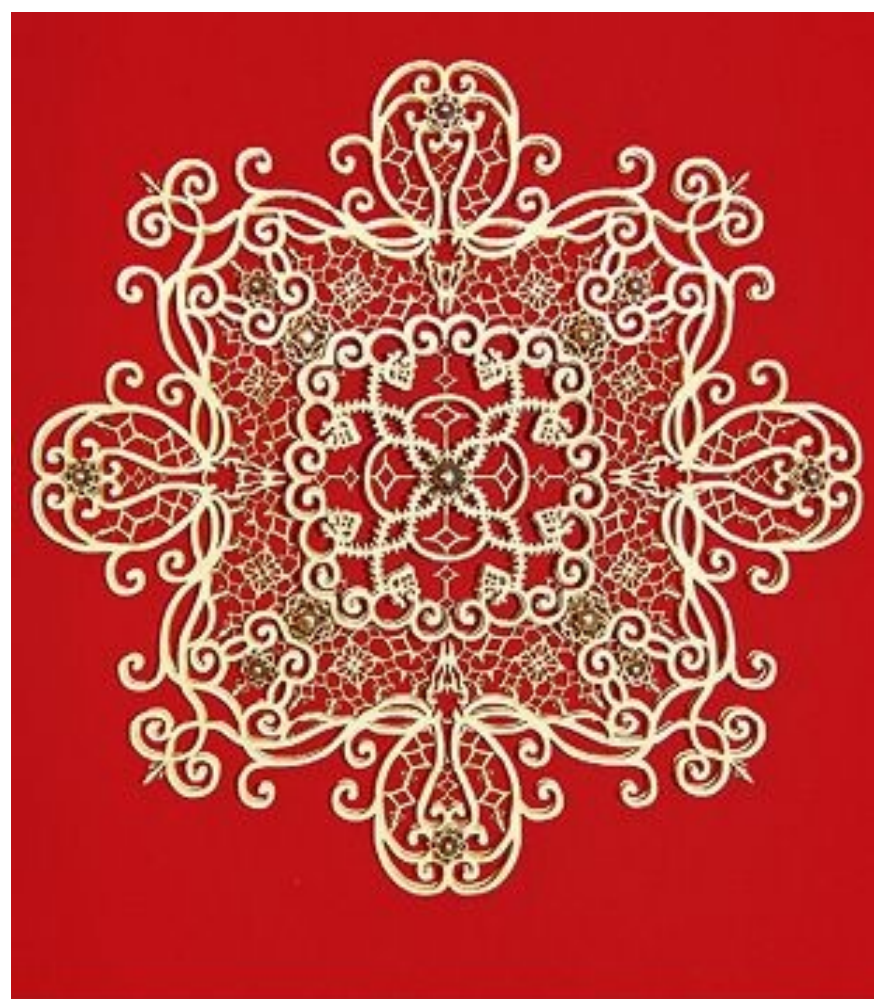




Step 3: Repetition

I create a repetition of my pattern in one shape and then I put all the pieces together, which is a time-consuming process.

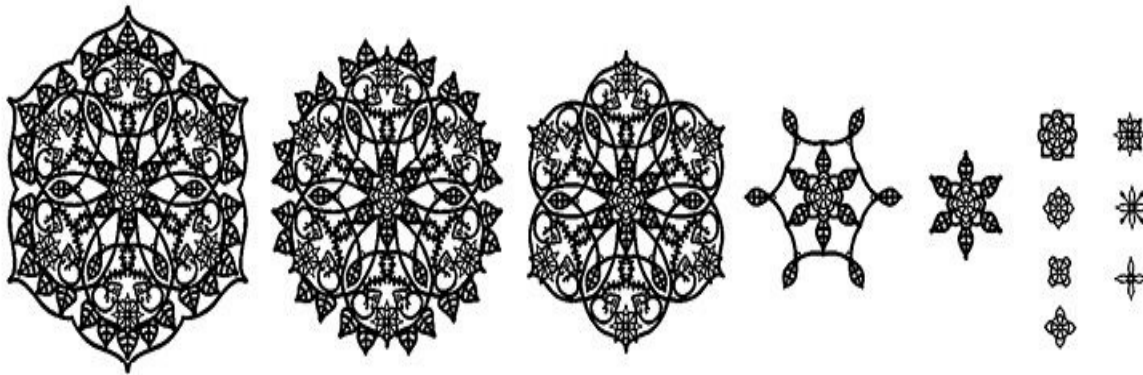




Step 4: Assemblage

Each design consists of several kinds of flowers, which are repeated several times in the design. Each kind of flower is used only once in one art piece. Small flower is also divided into layers to give dimension to my final piece.

The layers are fixed with studs. Between each layer, I put one bead on the stud, using beads of various sizes depending on the thickness of the piece. I secure my last layer with freshwater pearl.

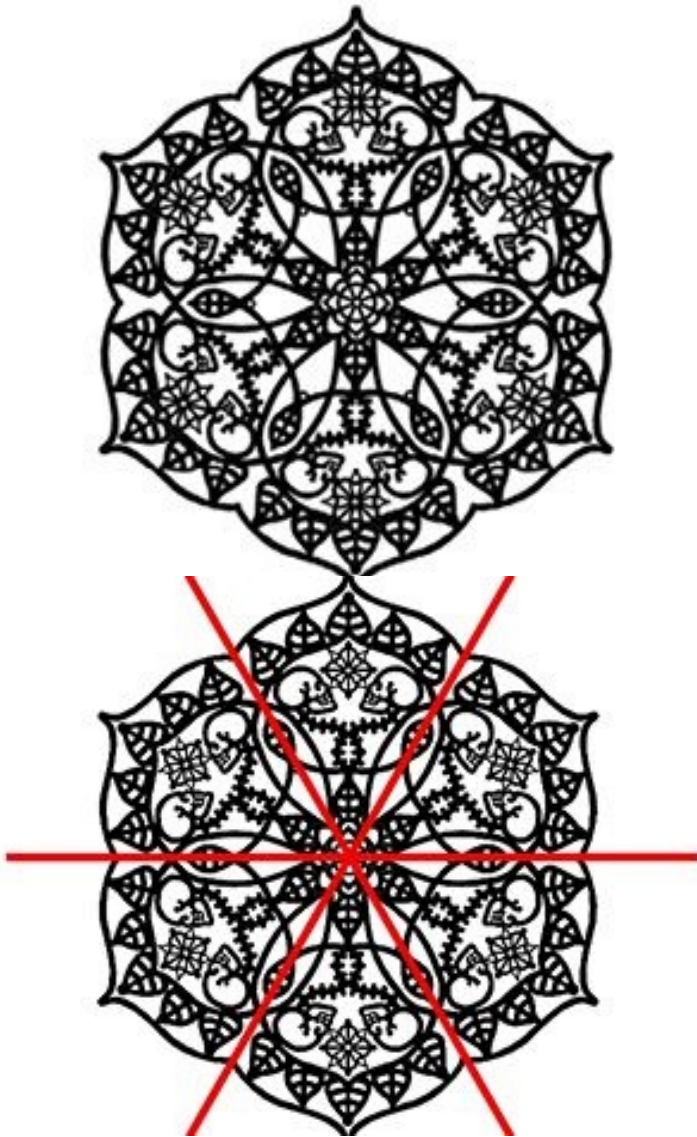


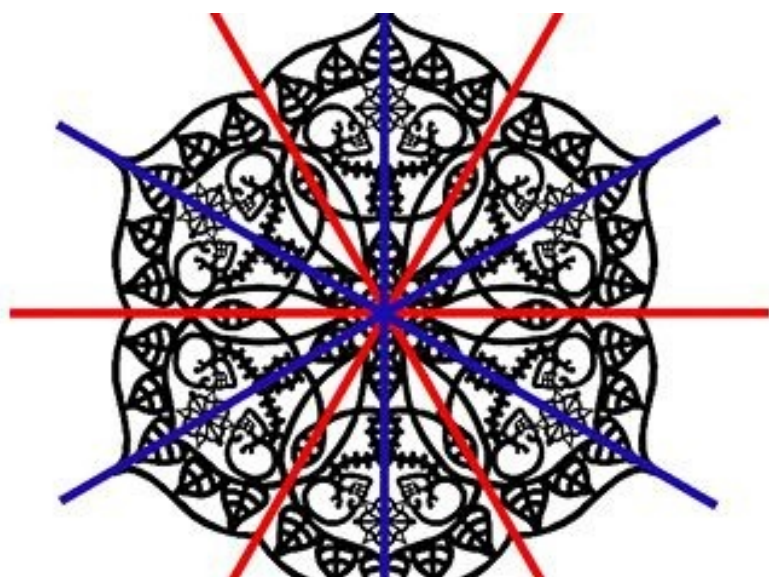


I hide my skeletons in the design, so from a distance the piece looks like a classic baroque pattern, but once you look closely, you become aware of the skeletons.

Step 5: Small flower

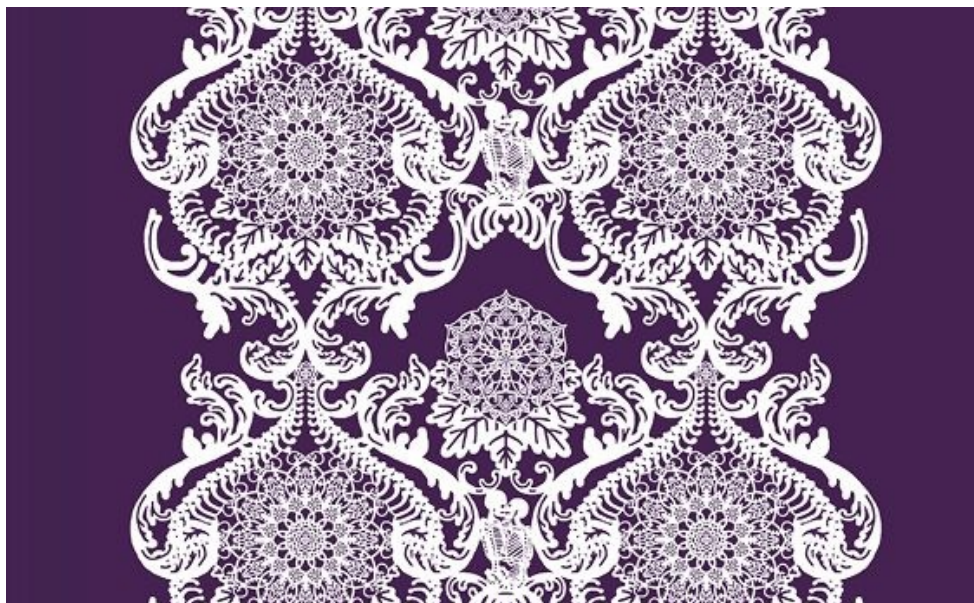
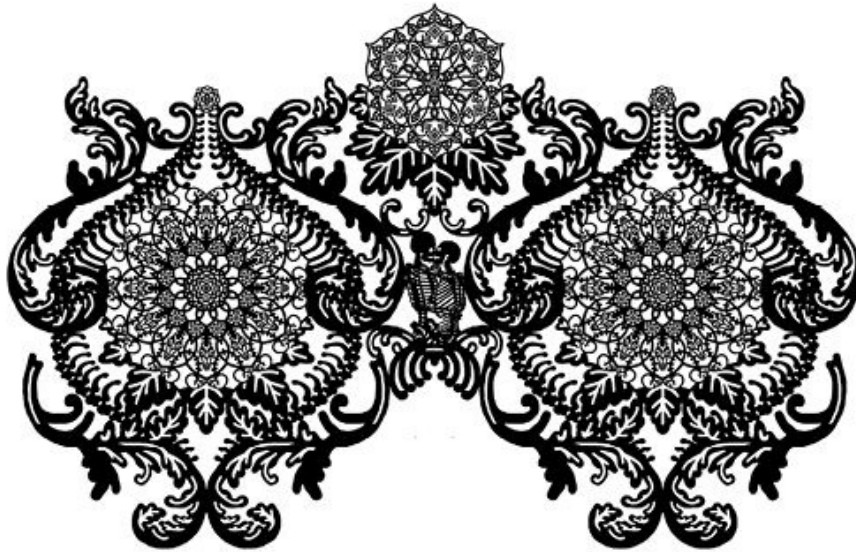
Symmetry is created in a small flower, rotating it on a 30° axis each time (red lines). There is also a horizontal flip in each section (blue lines).





Step 6: Final assemblage

Once one section is put together, I can then repeat the shape many times over. The entire design is vectorized in the Illustrator. I put background color into the image. After the design is laser-cut, I put all parts together and secure the layers with freshwater pearls.





Collection: Flowers of Eden-Garden Of The Not So Forbidden Garden; Ninhursag's Forgiveness, laser paper-cuts, pearls, 12 x 12 inches, 2013

Joanne Miller Rafferty, U.S.A.-mixed media



Timeless #2, mixed media, 60 x 40 inches, 2013

Contact: JoanneRafferty.com

Represented by: Chasen Galleries, VA, Rima Fine Art, AZ,
Gallerie 505, Maui; Landmark Gallery, NY, Gallery on Fifth, FL,
Village Smith Galleries, NC, Das Gallery, GA



Interview

Joanne Miller Rafferty's art is beautiful, mature, and experimental in its nature.

Abstract landscapes are spontaneous yet refined juxtapositions of color, gold leaf, and shimmery texture. They are lifescapes with the artist's distinctive way of observation. Her acrylic paintings are collage pieces that begin at the horizon line and end at the personal experiences of viewers gazing at Joanne's art. The artist has experimented with the use of leafing, gold leaf, and silver, copper, and variegated varieties. Using a mixture of acrylic color combinations on top of leafing creates new effects that Joanne has discovered in her creative processes.

The artist's selected works are included in her book, *Paint and Inspiration*.

The artist is represented by dozens of established galleries nationwide. She has exhibited her work in numerous national shows and museums, including the Hickory Art Museum, the Monmouth Museum, the Cayuga Museum of Art, the Members Gallery of the Albright Knox Museum, the Noyes Museum, and the Museum of the Great Plains.

Her public collections include the Exxon Corporation, IBM, Marriott Hotels, UBS, CompuServe, PSEG, Master Card International, and American Express.

Her art has been featured in several movies and television programs, including The Sopranos, All My Children, Friends, Everybody Loves Raymond, The Devil Wears Prada, Law and Order, and Saturday Night Live. She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Art Education from Daemen College and graduate studies for permanent certification in Art Education from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Did you have any teachers and artists who were/are inspirational to you? What sources do you use to make your creative juices flow?

I have always loved to “make things” and to draw as a child. I am the oldest of five children, brought up in a happy household in a Cape Cod home in New Jersey. I was always encouraged to follow my path by my parents. I went to a Catholic high school which offered art courses. With good advice from my parents, I chose to matriculate in art education, pursuing a Bachelor of Science Degree in Art Education (Daemen College in Buffalo, New York).

I was greatly encouraged and taught by some important artists, including James Kuo, who I still to this day attribute my semi-Asian style of painting to his direction in watercolor painting. My free hand in creating washes and mixtures of paint can be referred back to those days in his class.

College was a positive foundation for my art career.

A lot of my organizational skills were born in those days, and

that has helped me a great deal while working over the years with galleries, art reps, and clients of all descriptions. Selling art is a business. After graduation, I got married and accepted K to 6th grade art teaching position in Amherst, New York, where I taught art for six years until my son was born. During that time, I took 30

graduate hours in art education to receive permanent certification in Art Education from New York State. (State University of New York at Buffalo).

Claude Monet, in his beautiful, wistful studies of light and shadow and his use of light colored grounds to prime his canvases, rather than the previous dark grounds of artists at the time, stands out as a recurring influence on my work.

He worked plein air, and then reworked his pieces in the studio. I, of course, do not follow that method, since all my work is created flat in the studio from the beginning.. Even though his work was certainly realistic in nature, I still feel a strong pull to the impressionistic description of that group of artists back in the 19th century. I appreciate his asymmetrical positioning of forms and feel that my abstracted landscapes follow that compositional factor. J.M.W. Turner, the Romantic English landscape painter, created works that continue to take my breath away. He was often referred to as the painter of light, and his atmospheric application of color and paint washes draws you in to his work and leads you to want to concentrate on his use of the play on light to water and land and many

surfaces contained in his compositions. It is no surprise that Monet studied Turner's technique and was greatly influenced by it.

What subjects interest you the most? How do you come up with compositions for your art?

The exploration in my work has always been centered on the landscape, or the seascape, which both in my paintings have become lifescapes.

There are numerous landscapes in our lives. The ones we see, the ones we envision in our minds, the horizon we are trying to see, trying to reach, trying to overcome. With some horizons, we feel we have come to the place we want to be, and those horizons are the most peaceful. It is the promise of possibility. Sometimes it leads to pure tranquility; those scapes may be depicted with softer shades.

In my latest body of work, there is still a juxtaposition of different elements that imply whether the landscape (or lifescape) is

complicated or easy, quick to visualize or steeped in heavy contemplation. The newest pieces involve the wrapping of a gold leaf blanket to the edges of the canvas, creating a new border for the image and conveying a feeling of warmth, a wintry inner fire of thought. This border protects our thoughts, holding them

close so that they can be churned and manipulated and meditated. Perhaps they are meant to live within these rich borders that create an atmospheric web that holds the piece inside. As you meditate on the piece, it then doesn't float to other thoughts or other atmospheres, it remains in a cocoon of its own complexity.

Over the past thirty years of painting, I have been searching for whatever is next in my creative life. It is not particularly a conscious thought. The searching takes place in the day-to-day creative process. I paint with much thought, and passion and, most of all, a happy, grateful heart for abundant blessings and creative impressions remembered. I try to take time every day to observe ordinary things in extraordinary ways, the perspective or profile of spaces or colors to bring back and incorporate in my work.

In what ways is your art connected to or influenced by your lifestyle?

I do have a very strong compelling need to create. I certainly prefer to paint as the mood leads me, to feel totally free in what I am creating... When I'm in the painting zone, I want to do other things creatively. My mind feels like it is on fire. Everything is energy and brightness; it's an amazing feeling and I am in it with all my heart. In those same moments, I observe my surroundings differently, and I find myself rearranging furniture and changing the location of paintings in the studio and in the main living sections of the house. Travel has always been a very important aspect of this escape. I especially have enjoyed Europe and its unending plethora of antiquity and many lives lived before us.

The art and culture of times past is fascinating, and I love to be in a location and just drink it in.

What is your creative process? How do you critique your work?

I try not to judge myself or my work through the eyes of someone else. There are those who will love it and those who might think it's just okay. How droll would it be if everyone had the same "taste," the same likes and dislikes. Diversity in thought and preferences in life is what makes the world go round. Aristotle said "we are what we repeatedly do." I have often said that I will never retire. I will always be thinking of what I can next "make".

It is a very long journey to reach a technique that has taken years to perfect. For that reason, it is so difficult to answer the most-asked question of most artists. I have encountered it for as long as I can remember and that is this: "How long does it take you to do a painting?" I was even asked this question on live television in an interview and it is a well-known fact by any artist that there is certainly no easy answer. In terms of real time, it can be a few days, a week, a couple of hours. But that is certainly not the whole story. At whatever time it happens in their life, when an artist first puts pencil to paper or brush to canvas, it is their first attempt. And after that first attempt, there are hundreds and thousands of other attempts.

What advice would you give to aspiring artists? What does the term "professional artist" mean to you?

I have been very fortunate to make a living selling my art since I left teaching six years out of college. The advice I would give others who are just starting out is to get as much exposure as you can. Have as many people as possible see your work. Invite friends into your studio. I hold an open house in my studio once a year. Some towns have an artist studio tour. Do the footwork and enter competitions just for the exposure. Who can really judge what artist is better than another? Find your collectors.

In regards to your technique: describe what makes your art form and approach to it special.

The process of my work now always actually begins at the horizon line. I plan and attach the collage pieces first, before any paint is applied. If the sky area is mostly incorporating leafing, that comes next. In many instances, the leafing is the last, added after a number of layers of paint have been applied.

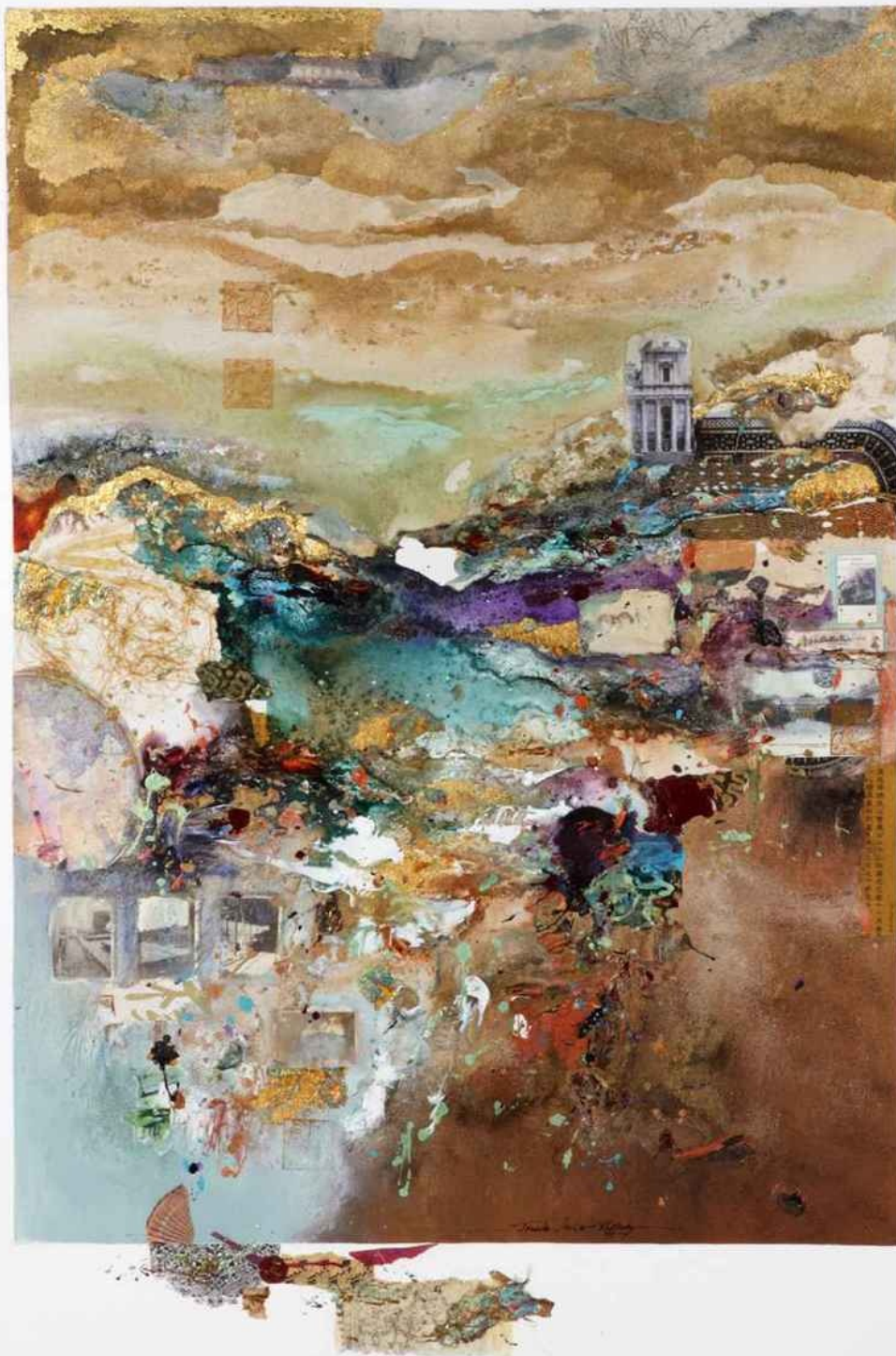
I transferred knowledge of watercolor painting over to acrylic pigments. I discovered handmade papers as a medium and began to incorporate pieces of that paper into my paintings. This is about the time when I took workshops in papermaking and found how adding those papers added so much texture to my pieces. I began to collect old books, ephemera, and interesting images that slowly entered the medium. I use gold and variegated leafing in many of my pieces, and minute spherical reflective glass beads on top of the acrylic paint, along with Clear Tar Gel in some cases. The beads reflect light in so many different ways; I really love the way they bring out certain areas of the painting. In some pieces, I have even incorporated fabrics, upholstery trimmings, old lace, cording, and metallic strings. I like using mica chips, as they give a subtle appearance all their own.



Life is Juicy #1, mixed media, 40 x 40 in, 2013



Artist's Universe, mixed media, 60 x 40 inches, 2013



City of Promise #1, mixed media, 58 x 42 inches, 2013

Demonstration: Whisper #10, mixed media painting

Supply List:

*

Brushes: #10 and #12 flat brushes and 2-inch flat tapered brushes.

*

Other: metallic threads, cotton pulp, screens, Daniel Smith reflective glass beads, Golden Clear Tar gel, Golden large mica chips, gold, copper, silver, and variegated leafing

*

Colors: Golden and Liquitex acrylics: iridescent bronze, red iron oxide, quinacridone crimson, dioxazine purple, anthraquinone blue, quinacridone violet, phthalo green, payne's grey, duochrome oceanic, iridescent copper, and cobalt violet hue.

*

Polymer medium (attaches the papers to the canvas

surface, encapsulating them between two layers of medium)

*

Titanium acrylic (for the paintings with a white border and to use in the body of the painting to mix pastels.)

*

Stretched canvas

Step 1: Paper making

For making paper collage pieces, I prepare cotton pulp mixed with assorted threads and bits of fabric. I try to find interesting examples of fibers to incorporate.

These first two photos show what the container of pulp looks like and the screen used to pull through the pulp. Water drains the pulp and the sheet is placed on a piece of plexiglass to dry.





Step 2: Paper making

The photo on the left shows what the pieces look like if I pull the pulp using one long thread or string, without the use of the screen. This gives me the irregular shapes that I like to use in the paintings. The photo on the right shows the pieces after I have embellished them with metallic paints, duo chrome colors, gold and silver inks, and mica chips. If I use a flat piece of paper (one made with the screen), I use a wet brush with iridescent gold acrylic to finish off the edges of the piece.





Step 3: Painting on canvas

I stretch the canvases myself because I like to use shapes that are not standard. I use a medium to heavyweight cotton, previously gessoed canvas as my substrate. Using Golden Gloss medium, I attach the pieces of embellished paper somewhat along the horizon area of the canvas. Then I add the pictorial collage elements, photocopied from old books, stamps, and other ephemera. They are encased in medium, coating the pieces above and under with a protective coating, thus eliminating the need to worry about fading. The pieces become permanent. The photo on the right shows the beginning washes of acrylic paint as it is added to the canvas. I add polymer medium in some areas to give the colors depth and work the colors in a sweeping fashion.





Step 4: Painting on canvas

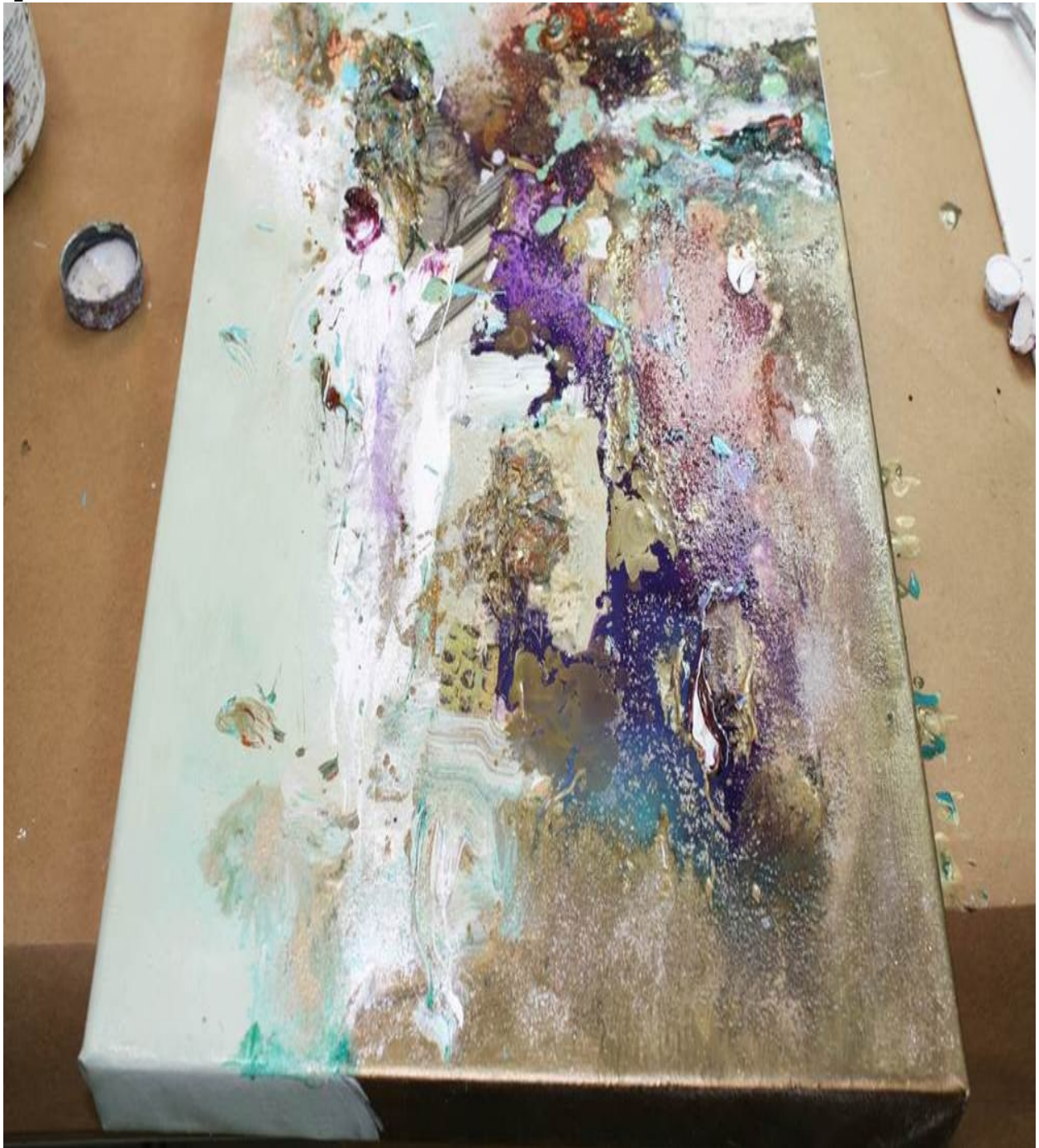
As I add paint to sections of the canvas, I am mixing them with glass beads and powdered metallic. The first photo shows the addition of white acrylic to the left side of the piece.





This photo shows it with the left side combined with phthalo green (blue shade) and red iron oxide acrylic to create the green shade shown more visibly in next photo.

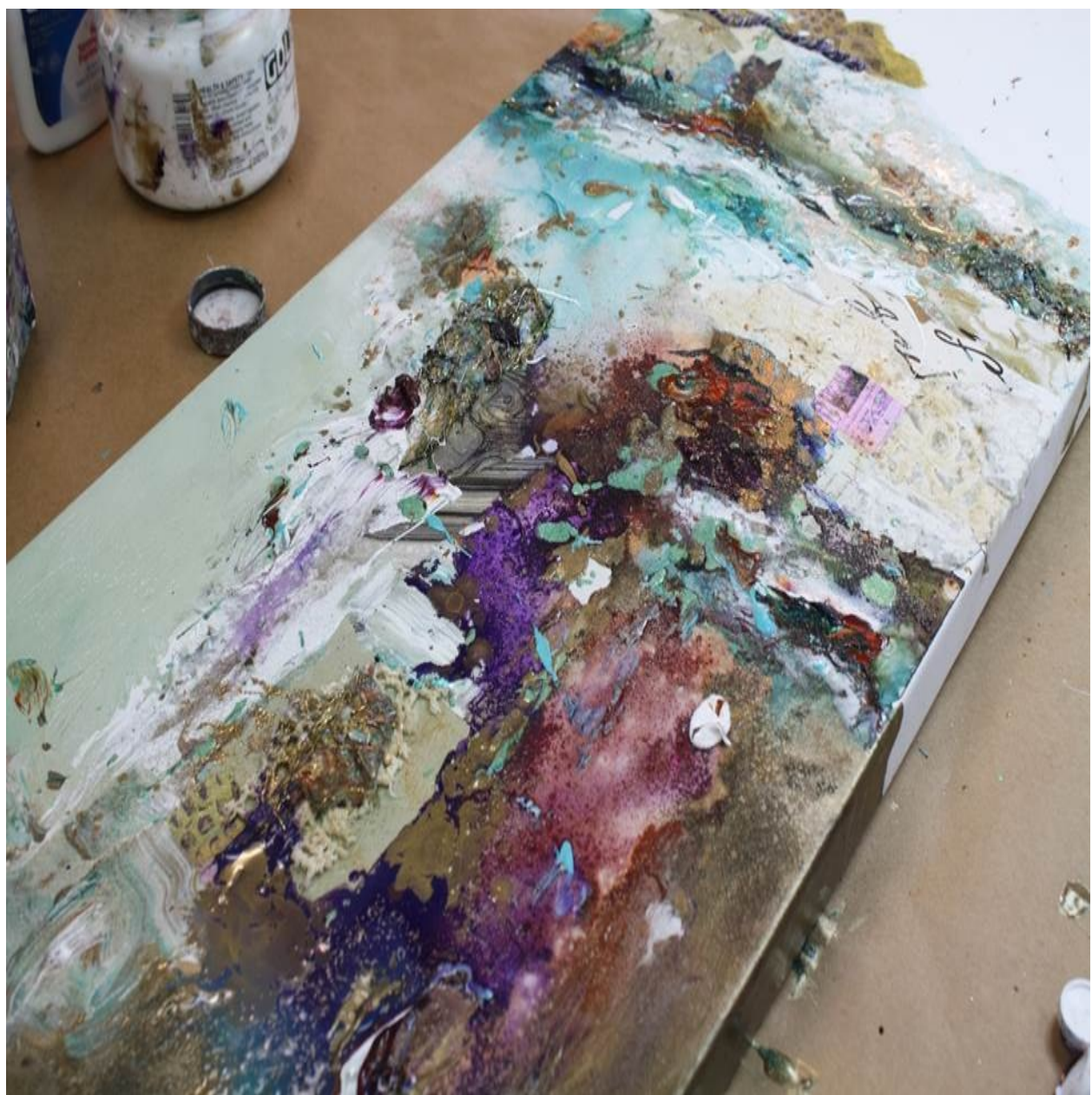
The lower right portion is an iridescent bronze and mars black mixed with the remnants of the red iron oxide and quinacridone violet.



Step 5: Details

On a painting that is bled to the edge, I continue to monitor the flow of paint around the edges of the stretched canvas so that when it is hung, it does not require a frame. I use canvas stretcher bars that are 1.5 inches deep.

The sky area in this piece combines the quinacridone shades with duo chrome blues and greens. The washes move when the canvas is tilted and monitored as it dries to get the correct wash. I use a lot more water in the sky area in order to make the paint move when I tilt the canvas. Some pieces, such as "City of Promise," incorporate gold leaf areas with the acrylic.





Whisper #10, acrylic on canvas, 40 x 14 inches, 2014 (right)

**Veronica Winters, U.S.A.-oil painting, colored
pencil**



Promises, 18 x 24 inches, oil on gilded panel, aluminum leaf,
2014

Contact: VeronicasArt.com
Represented by: Emillions Art



Interview

Russian-American artist Veronica Winters (b.1976) was raised in Moscow and relocated to the U.S.

in the late nineties, where she has been pursuing her passion for art since then. The artist works in two distinctive mediums—colored pencil drawing and oil painting. Following beauty as her guiding principle, the artist creates vivid images that could be defined as “imaginative realism.”

While her colored pencil drawings are usually studies of light, composition, and color harmonies, the artist’s oil paintings capture her spirit expressed in symbols, color, and settings. Unlike the surrealists, Veronica doesn’t paint her dreams, but focuses on her emotions and the environment she finds herself in. Every big painting is open-ended, carrying a thought and a mystery. In her art, she strives for excellence, not perfection, where every new piece has a story and becomes more skillful and refined technically.

The artist holds an M.F.A. in painting from Pennsylvania State University and a B.F.A. degree in studio art from Oklahoma State University. She studied classical painting at the Art Students League of New York and the Grand Central Academy of Art in New York between 2007-2012.

Veronica’s art is found in numerous private collections and her work has been featured in *Leisure Painter*, *American Art Collector*, *Artists & Illustrators*, *Colored Pencil Magazine*, *Ann*

Kullberg's Magazine for Colored Pencil Artists, 2004 and 2013 Women Artists Datebook, Mildred, Muse Touch, and many other image-licensed books and magazines. Her drawing demonstrations were published in art magazines and books. The artist put a few quick demo lessons on YouTube. Veronica teaches art in her studio and locally in Naples, Florida.

Did you have any teachers and artists who were/are inspirational to you? What sources do you use to make your creative juices flow?

I was always creative since I'd been a kid, working on various crafts including knitting, cross-stitch, paper cutting, and even lace-making. My mother was a good amateur artist and I copied some of her drawings as well. As my parents had a nice book collection, I was exposed to the arts from an early age. I didn't study art, however, until I moved to the U.S. After my graduation from Penn State in 2005, there were zero art jobs available around town. I began taking classes in classical drawing and painting at the Grand Central Academy of Art and the Art Student's League of New York at that time. I felt like I had my vision in place, but I lacked the necessary skill to paint well what I wanted to communicate. Sometimes I stayed in New York for a month during one summer month, and other times I commuted by bus back and forth in one day from State College, Pennsylvania. In New York, I met amazing realist artists—Michael Grimaldi and Dan Thompson, who were also very strong teachers. I wish I could further my studies with them even today.

I love art history and my art appreciation grew in due course.

College was great to develop my knowledge in the field. I began seeing paintings differently—where stories were told in figures and symbols. Reading novels by Vladimir Nabokov, Somerset Maugham, and many others inspire me to create as well, because they are based on real life events and human experiences.

The inspiration is generated from within me as a response to my thoughts and emotions. My thoughts and emotions, though, get stimulated by the world outside me. I love to travel and record my impressions in photos and words. (I authored two travel guide books about Thailand and Venice, and I co-authored a book about Nicaragua.) It's a different way of being creative and telling a story.

Even though I spend most of my time at home, I get inspired by other means: museums, contemporary artists, writers, photographers, fashion, movies, and even weather. I constantly look at art online and in magazines that are on newsstands. I'm subscribed to artists' blogs and I "liked" many artist pages on Facebook to get new inspiration daily right into my news feed.

What subjects interest you the most? How do you come up with compositions for your art?

I paint rather realistically, but what I paint can exist in our life, but it doesn't.

This "imaginative realism" comes from my close observation of life around me. A lot of it is symbolic. In contemporary art, imagination can be discouraged as a past trend, but I feel like it's who I am as a person.

.....

Imagination is what makes scientists invent and discover and artists create. Many subjects interest me. I find symbolism in still life painting as well as in figurative work. A combination of both is actually my thing.

I come up with ideas for my art when I have or after having a strong emotional current inside me. This is the source of my imagination. I think how I can communicate that and I look for images on my computer that resonate within me. Sometimes I have to schedule a photo shoot with a model for this purpose. When the idea is in place, I sketch and paint it. A lot of times, the basic idea evolves into something else, and that's the beauty of it. Sometimes, I don't even know what the story is when I'm painting it, but it becomes clear when I'm done!

In what ways is your art connected to or influenced by your lifestyle?

Painting is a need for me, and my lifestyle is currently attuned to my needs. We all have emotional needs that can't be explained logically. I've noticed that if I don't paint, I become angry. Painting calms me down and it brings me peace I need inside me, living in an often stressful environment (like most of us). I'm not a great public speaker and I think art lets me communicate with people on a different level.

I also have this idea that there are some individuals who can benefit from my art and/or writing. They can find the connection with my stories I either paint on canvas or write on paper. It's healing for people to know that they are not alone with their life's challenges.

I think there is poetry, beauty, and Romanticism in my art. I have a particular aesthetic for beauty. Much of it comes from my upbringing, where art, music, ballet, theatre, literature, and dance surrounded me as a child back in Moscow. I didn't realize how important it was to my artistic development. I allow myself to be romantic in my painting and when I travel. I just

walk, take pictures, and absorb life around me. I'm curious about everything that surrounds me. Doing normal things, like walking, hiking, or watching movies, feeds my creative appetite.

What is your creative process? How do you critique your work?

Although I work both in colored pencil and oil, my approach to painting is about the same. After the idea is in place, I make a set-up and take pictures as I draw from both of my references. I make the outline and analyze the light. I always start shading or painting from the darks (shadows), knowing where my highlights are.

I am very critical of my work. I plan each piece and, although I'm in love with it while I'm painting it, I know I can make the next one better when I'm done.

Sometimes I ask for a critique. It must be somebody whom I respect professionally.

What advice would you give to aspiring artists? What does the term "professional artist" mean to you?

A "professional artist" is a creative individual who is excellent at his/her craft and pursues his goals full time. It's an exhibiting artist who believes in himself and is serious about his work. I'd suggest to take care of your "voice" first, and when it feels right, start promoting your art in free venues (blogs, magazines, or online publications), participate in contests (doing preliminary research if it's the right fit for your art), and exhibiting as much as possible. Nowadays marketing is 50% of artist's time spent in the studio.

In regards to your technique: describe what makes your art form and approach to it special.

My pencil technique is about understanding how light affects form and makes it appear three-dimensional on paper. Color is secondary to this concept. It's important to use smooth drawing paper and soft colored pencils to achieve vibrancy and realism of objects. I studied the Impressionists to "see" the color. I'm still a novice to oil painting, discovering and learning a lot about techniques and color every single day.



Still Life with a starfish, 16 x 20 inches, oil on canvas, 2013



Keeper, 36 x 48 inches, oil on canvas, 2013



Still Life With Corals And Mask, 24 x 36 inches, oil on canvas,
2013

Demonstration: Yellow Rose, colored pencil painting

Supply List:

* Canson's Mi-Teintes pastel paper, plum (smooth side)

*

Prismacolor Premier colored pencils (colors listed in steps)

* Turpanoid/Gamsol and a small brush for burnishing (blending)

*

General's pencil sharpener

*

Transfer paper, sketch paper

*

Kneaded eraser

*

Fixative: Krylon UV Resistant Clear Gloss

Step 1:

When I browse pictures, I look at the quality of the light. Pictures with strong contrast are always good for painting. Then, I look at composition, balance, and uniqueness. I try to envision my finished artwork before I start drawing.
Photograph, permission by T. Kiya



Step 2:

I complete my preliminary drawing on sketch paper. I transfer the outlines using white transfer paper. Its lines are easy to erase, leaving no residue.

Then, I strengthened some lines in colored pencil to separate between petals and shadows.



Step 3:

I block in the background with black and indigo blue (a combination of any dark colors will work well).

To separate between the light and the shadows on petals, I use a combination of lilac and parma violet. I add a little bit of sienna brown to the petals at the bottom. I chose lilac because I saw a little bit of that color in the shadows that contrasted the warmth of yellows in the light.



Step 4:

I used goldenrod and canary yellow to shade the flower's center with medium pressure.

I overlaid other, lighter yellows—deco yellow and yellow chatreuse—with heavy pencil pressure.

Notice that my short strokes repeat the curvature of each petal and the edges that separate light and shadow on each petal remain soft.

Instead of using white, pick a very light colored pencil like cream to shade the lightest lights with heavy pencil pressure.



Step 5:

I added light blues–light cerulean blue, cloud blue–in light shadows around white.

I was burnishing the surface in the light as I was layering and over layering the colors with very heavy pressure.

I colored brown anthers and used some cream and white to create highlights on each anther.



Step 6:

I

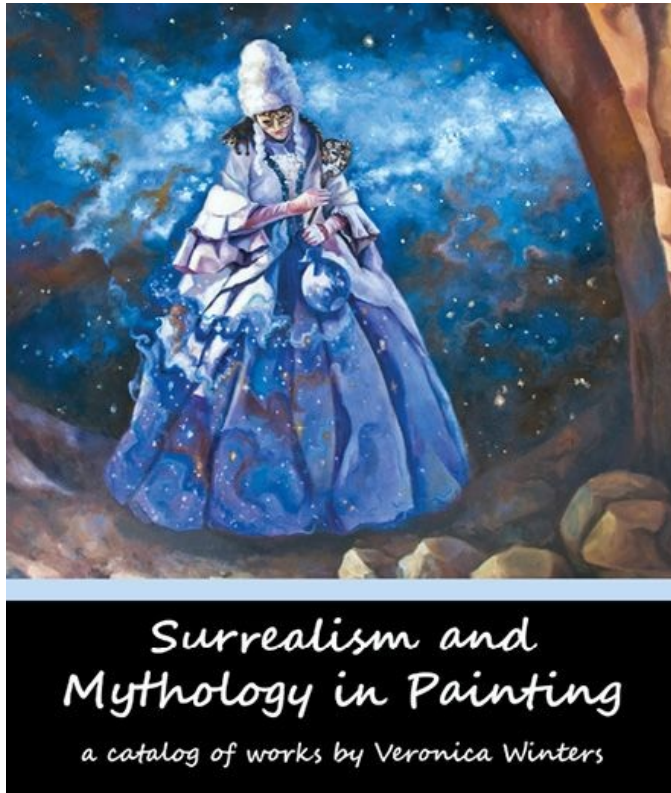
worked on darker petals at the bottom of the rose. I used spring green and limepeel for reflected light in petals. I applied some Spanish orange and light cerulean blue over parma violet.

It was important to pick and mix colored pencils to remain in darker tonality as opposed to colors of shadows in the light.



Yellow Rose, 9 x 13 inches, colored pencil on paper, 2013

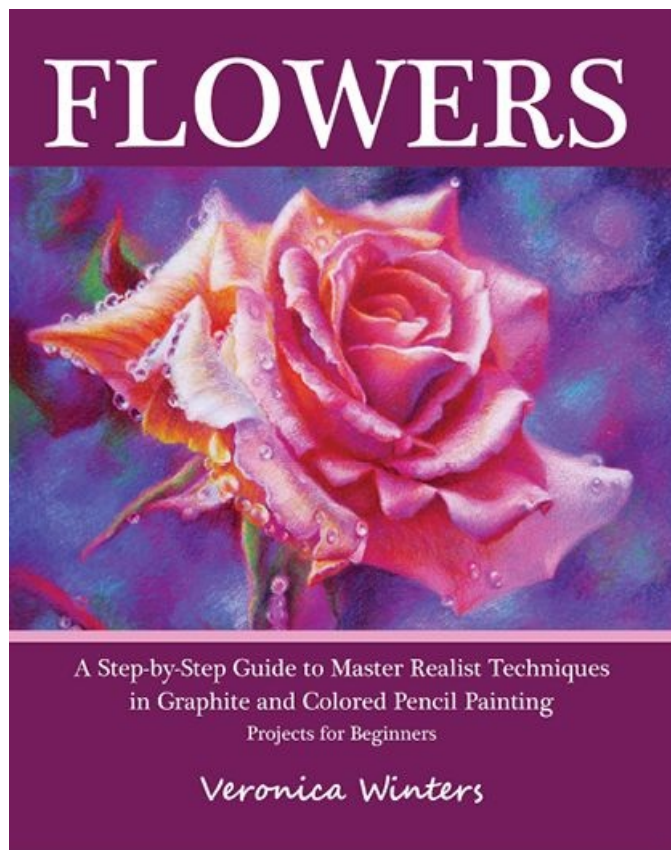
Other titles available from the editor & artist
Buy digital & print books at VeronicasArt.com



Surrealism and Mythology in Painting: a catalog of works traces the creative evolution of the artist through her oil paintings. The art catalog is divided into several sections- imagination, still life, and landscape-and gives insight into the artist's inspiration and practice.

125

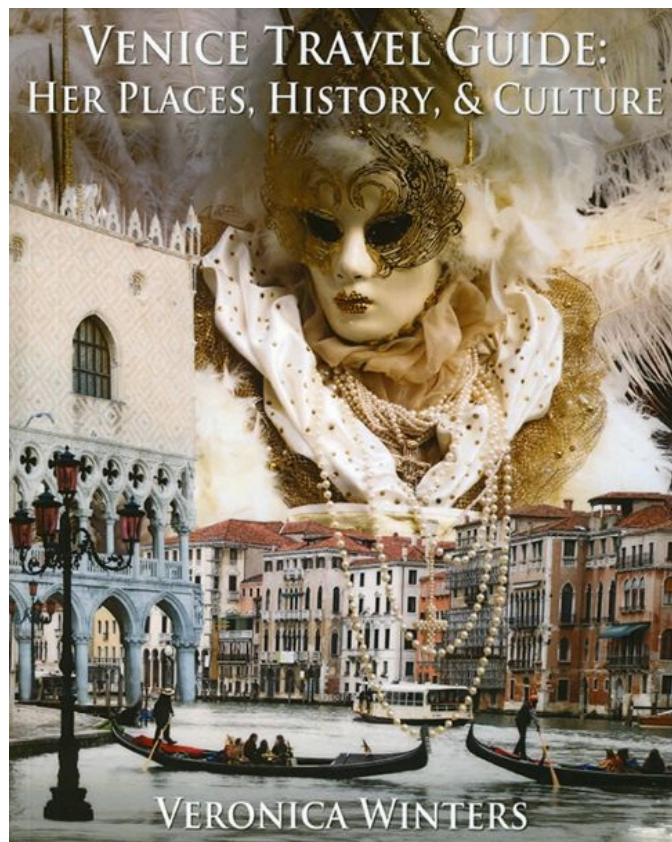
full-color pages, 8x10 in, 3d edition, paperback, 2013



In *Flowers: A Step-by-Step Guide to Master Realist Techniques in Graphite and Colored Pencil Painting*, fine artist Veronica Winters skillfully and gently instructs both novice and advanced artists alike in the art and nuance of drawing flowers. Through twenty three demonstrations, she not only helps readers develop their artistic skills but also learn the nuances of working in colored pencil.

This beautifully illustrated book also has a reference chart for colored pencils, outlines for projects, introduction to framing, and a chapter dedicated to art supplies. The book is a great gift for teen artists and adult art enthusiasts.

full-color pages, 8 x 10 in, paperback, 2013

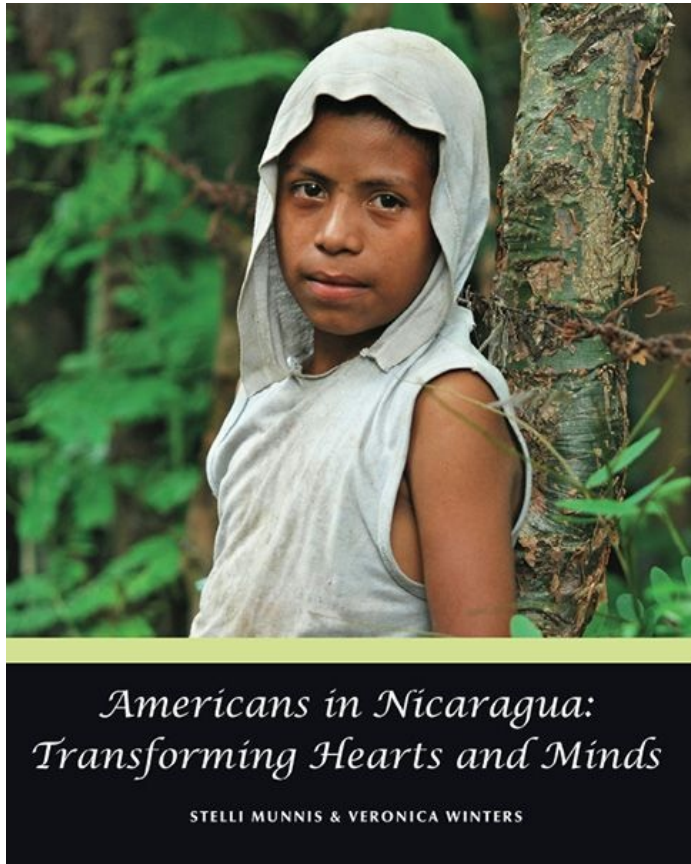


Venice Travel Guide: Her Places, History, and Culture is a travel guide book filled with over 230 captivating photographs. In a concise and fascinating way the guide explores the history of the Venetian region, its architectural evolution, Venetian artists and art, and some Italian cultural habits. It includes extensive information on means of transportation to and from Venice, describing places, names, services, and special cards to buy. It's a concise and handy guide that not only includes information on "what to do and what to see" in the city but also offers some practical insight into the value of visiting certain sights, to spare tourists from possible confusion when ordering food or visiting the attractions. The book is divided into chapters with each section devoted to a particular district of Venice. The guide also supplies travelers with information on

visiting other small and charming towns closely situated to Venice.

148

full-color pages, 8 x 10 in, paperback, 2011.



Eyes to See: U.S. Volunteers in Nicaragua by Stelli Munnis and Veronica Winters

In this beautifully illustrated book with over 100 full-color photographs, Stelli Munnis and Veronica Winters share what it's like to travel to Nicaragua with Seeds of Learning.

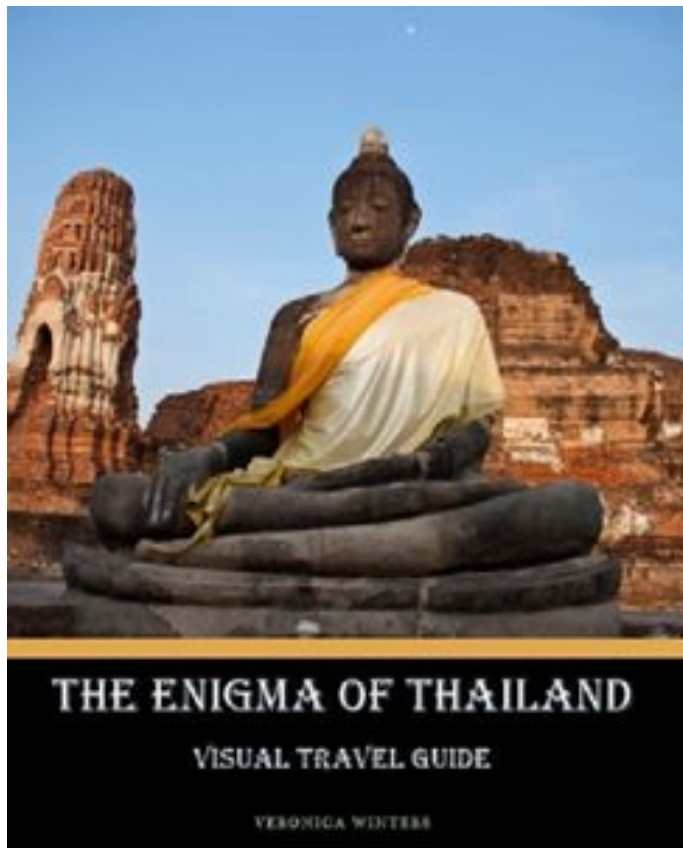
Although volunteers go to build or renovate a school building, the real work happens when things are torn down. As the barriers between people are removed, and the walls individuals erect inside themselves are deconstructed, they become more authentic and caring with one another.

Volunteers can't help but feel deeply moved and touched by the hearts and spirits of the Nicaraguan children and

people.

141-full-color

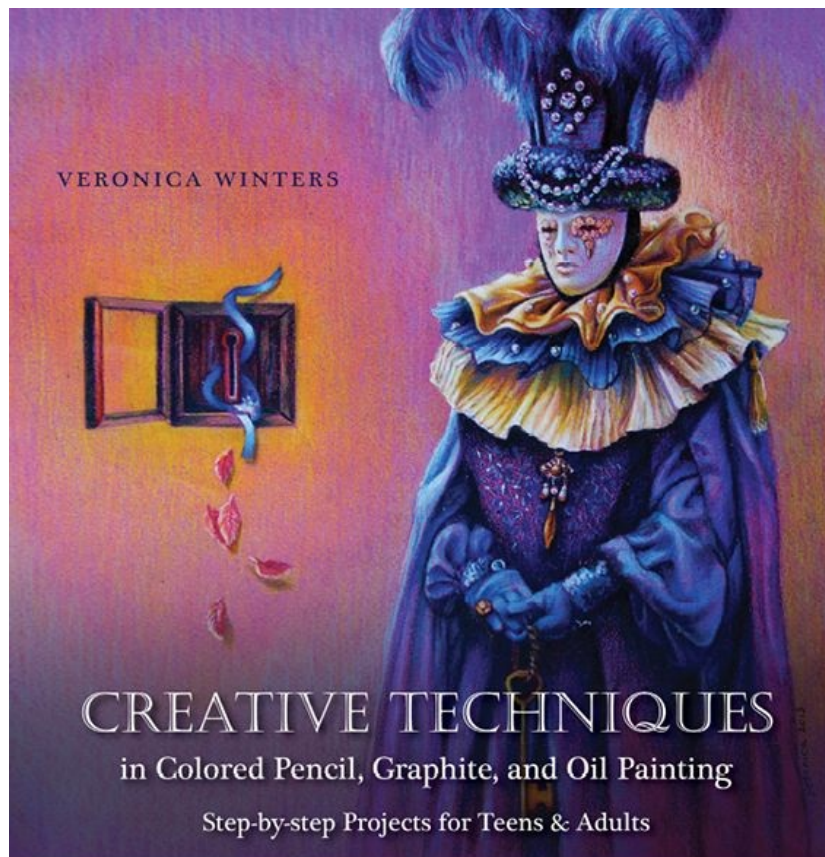
pages, 8 x 10 in, paperback, 2012.



In this beautifully illustrated book, Veronica Winters shares her experiences traveling to the heartland of Thailand. Discover what it's like being immersed in Buddhist culture through visiting ancient cities, wats, and royal palaces in Bangkok, Ayutthaya, Sukhothai, Chiang Rai, Uthai Thani, and Chiang Mai with a day trip to Myanmar (Burma) and Laos. See the temples, learn about local foods, feel the nature, and experience Thai culture first hand. Get quick travel tips and ideas what's worth seeing while in the country. Learn about traditions and best market buys. Visualize beautiful places and discover your inner curiosity and passion for learning, while traveling across Thailand. The Enigma of Thailand contains over 165 full-color photographs taken by Veronica on her trip in spring 2012. Her vivid pictures capture the spirit of Buddhism, Thai people, and the land.

168

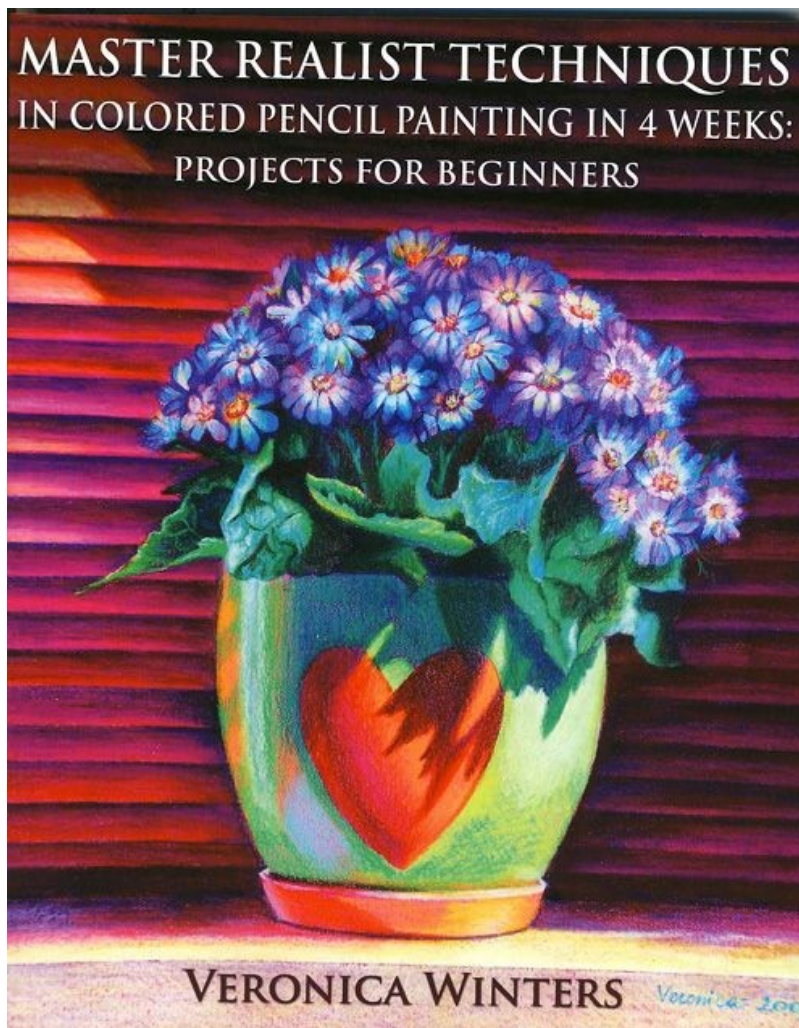
full-color pages, 8 x 10 in, paperback, 2013.



Discover the secrets of rendering subjects correctly and creatively in various mediums, from pencil to paint. In this easy-to-use drawing and painting guide packed with hundreds of illustrations and 20 step-by-step demonstrations, learn everything you need to know about materials, techniques, subjects, and methods.

This handy, reference book with teen-friendly, fun subjects is a book that burgeoning artists will turn to again and again for creative inspiration.

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full-color pages, 8.5 x 8.5 in, paperback, 2013.

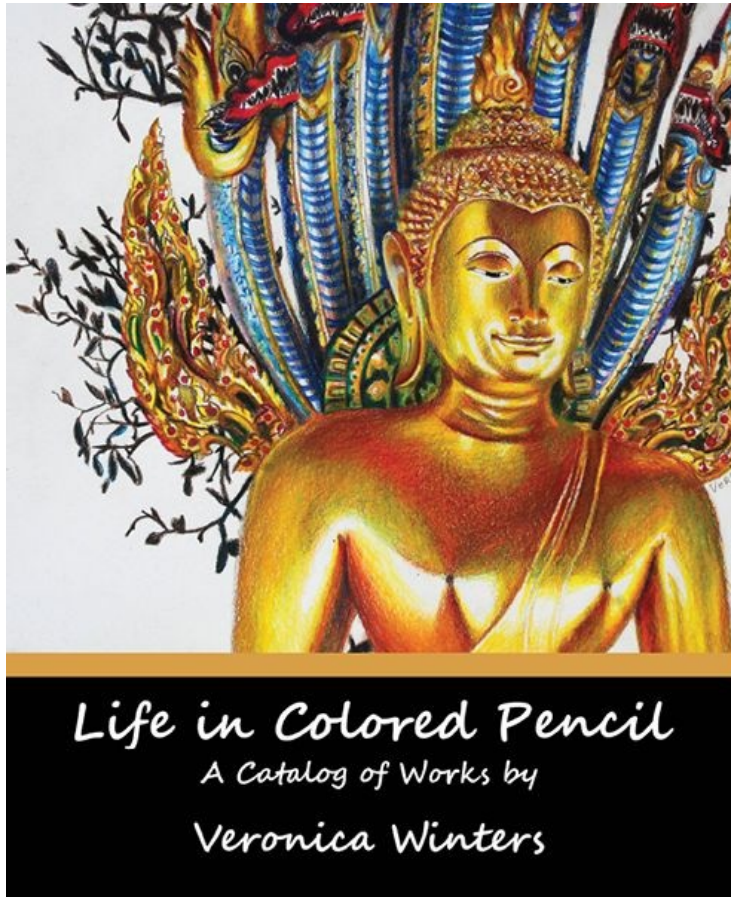


This book is designed for novice and advanced students alike who have the patience to work with colored pencils, and can dedicate enough time to develop their artistic sensibilities. Students from age twelve to adulthood will benefit from its contents, strengthening their skills and discovering their creative possibilities. This book is packed with valuable information on tools and techniques for drawing still life, landscape, cityscape, texture, glass and flowers. In addition to informative illustrations and descriptions, each chapter features several step-by-step demonstrations.

For experienced artists, the book offers explorations of a variety of more sophisticated subjects, complete with additional step-by-step demonstrations.

145

full-color pages, 8 x 10 in, paperback, 2010.



Life in Colored Pencil

A Catalog of Works by

Veronica Winters

Beautifully designed and wonderfully printed catalog traces the creative evolution of the artist, featuring over 100 full-color colored pencil paintings completed in the past decade. A must have for art collectors and art enthusiasts alike!

Contents:

Still Life

Flowers

Imagination

Landscape

Animals

140

full-color pages, 8x10 in, 3d edition, paperback, 2013