

When did you start creating erotic art?

I've spent all my life painting. I've never stopped since I first picked up a crayon as a toddler, and I had my first commission at the age of 13 for my history teacher at school, but the artwork has changed a bit since then! So I've always had the talent to paint within me, but I like a challenge, and love to be creative so for that reason I am probably unusual in that I will paint any subject matter, I don't limit myself to just erotic art or landscapes, or any subject really, or to a certain style.

How I started being an Erotic Artist was by attending life drawing classes like most artists do, about eleven years ago, and I quickly realised how difficult it is, because if you draw a tree, it doesn't matter if the trunk is a little too wide, or if one of the branches is too long, but it does if it's a human body, the measurements have to be right, and the arms and legs need to look like they are all connected to the body and that the head sits on the shoulders. I found it very helpful for teaching me to look properly at a subject, but after a few weeks of being at the life drawing sessions and looking at the work I'd done, I wondered how I could make it look more interesting and life-like from the stilted poses that the model was in and I realised that it's what I was leaving out that made the picture far more interesting, as it leaves more to the imagination. I didn't need to draw all of the body of the person in front of me, for anyone looking at it to know that they had legs, or a back, I just captured where the light touched the body and found that anyone looking at it much preferred it as their brain was filling in the parts their eyes couldn't see. It made it erotic because of that. And it evolved from there.

What inspired you?

The reason I started doing erotic art is because it's the most difficult art to create I think; it's subtle and has soft nuances, and what I need to capture is that certain something, the essence, that will make the viewer feel erotic when they look at it. And that is such a subtle thing to do, and is something that may be different in all of us. It's the enjoyment of sensual things, but the way I describe "erotic" is that it is something that makes you wonder..... what has that person done beforehand to now be in that position and place and time, and what are they going to do next? Or if there is more than one person in the picture then it makes it a little easier to imagine – so just think what a whole orgy could produce!!!! What I draw is the erotic – the sensual, the sexy, and the suggestive. And I can draw an image where the woman in it is fully clothed and make it erotic just because of the look on her face.

I've always loved the dramatic strong light and darks of Caravaggio's work and found it immensely inspirational, and use that powerful effect in my white on black erotic drawings.

Which is your favourite theme?

Probably the erotic landscapes because they are so difficult and challenging to create and I love the secrets hidden within them.

An erotic landscape can be where an erotic couple is hidden in a traditional landscape, camouflaged by colour or shapes, or they could be part of the landscape hidden in the twisted trunk of a tree for instance, or even when they are the geography of the landscape itself.

I was commissioned a few years ago by a chap from Windsor who asked me to paint a picture of the New York skyline at night as the typical picture but with an erotic couple hidden within the painting so that people viewing it wouldn't know unless they looked closer or had it pointed out to them. And also that very same week that he asked me to paint that picture I was commissioned to do a painting for a woman in Dorset who wanted an erotic picture to hang over her bed that her four year old son wouldn't recognise as anything other than a landscape. She wanted me to paint an erotic landscape where the couple are actually the geography of the land. I did it based on Lands End – there is sky, sea, cliffs, a beach, sand dunes, a cave, and a tree, and a bit of a phallic looking lighthouse in the distance. And to innocent eyes, this picture is nothing more than that. But to less innocent people, it is far more than that. You can see instantly the man and the woman within the picture, and you can see they're having sex. It is both erotic, and a landscape. And it's the thing that I am most proud about, because it took three months of hard work to design it.

You work with crayon, paint, oils and more, which materials do you favour and why?

I am proficient in and love watercolours, oils, acrylics, pastel, pencil, pen and ink. They all have their own unique properties that create fabulous effects – watercolours for their unexpected spontaneous reaction to the water or any effects you apply to them like salt or wax. I love oils for their soft buttery mixing and subtle toning abilities, acrylics for their bright vibrant colours that can be used as thin as watercolours or as thick as oils but dry very quickly so that you can get colours on fast without waiting days for bits to dry, like oils. Pastel can be tricky to use to get fine details, but is superb for instant colour, instant wow factor, when you don't need to stop and think about mixing a colour adding water to make just the right shade, you just apply the pure colour instantly working totally and fully on intuition, creating the painting fast, and mixing vibrant colours on the paper in front of you. Pencil is fabulous for black and white very detailed pictures, whether it is graphite pencil on white paper, or the white conte pencil on black card that I've used to great atmospheric effect for a lot of my erotic drawings. Or ink, that stark black on white medium that cuts out any colour, but concentrates fully on the image, the tones, the shades and shapes to wonderful effect. But, if you were to ask me which I prefer of all of them, and bear in mind I love them all for their different approaches, I think I would choose watercolours, because although they can be tricky to use you can get some stunning effects when you wet the paper, and apply the paint in a controlled way but letting it weave its magic in front of you, adding to the impetus of the emotional feel of the painting.

Some of your pieces are “in disguise”, like the picture on the right (vagina flower), what is the aim behind this?

I love hiding the subject matter within my art – like in the set of erotic feminine abstracts (my ‘Fantasy Fannies’ paintings) that just look like brightly colourful abstract shapes, but are actually a very intimate picture although most people looking at it probably wouldn’t have a clue – which makes it the ultimate joke and conversation piece as far as I am concerned!

The paintings are a celebration of womanhood – bright, vibrant and colourful abstracts of their most innermost secret places. The thought was that when someone has their portrait painted, it is of their face with their name as the title - but in this case I wanted the portraits to be of the parts of women that they keep secret, and their names to be anonymous. I think for the women who have participated in this project, the anonymity is most important for them, too. The ‘Queyntes’ (*an obsolete word for the vagina, from quaint, a many-layered, in-folded mystery*) are bright, beautiful and shameless, both spirited and spiritual.

I painted the pictures intuitively – in that if I “felt” that a certain area was lime green or bright orange, or turquoise, that was the colour I painted it, regardless of the colour I could actually “see” before me. The bright colours denote energy and emotion, ever moving, ever changing, and focusing on the opening itself. They radiate life, just as a woman does, even though her actual colours are more subdued. The reason I used acrylics was because I needed the colours to be bright and well defined, to dry rapidly and cleanly, leaving me time to work intuitively and quickly. The board was very absorbent, leaving no room for error or a change of colour.

The paintings are a reminder of what makes women so special, where they accommodate lovers, accept life and give birth to it but also of the complex nature of their beings, represented in the folds, crevices and textures of this entrance to their innermost depths. All the paintings have a woman hidden within the folds to remind you what the image is about.

They have empowered the women who have participated in them, since they find them therapeutic and spiritual, and a little bit naughty as well! They are currently hanging on walls in America, and England, and a woman contacted me from New Zealand in raptures over them and what they stood for. I love the fact they are affecting women worldwide. I painted one for a woman in Canada whose young step-son described it as “the sky diving picture”, because that was what it looked like to him. Innocence only sees innocence. I just have visions of him looking at it in a few years’ time and thinking “Oh, that’s not sky diving at all!!!!!!”

And I like to hide messages within my more vanilla art too – like when I was asked to do a landscape painting for a couple from London of a particular village in Southern France that they had visited a lot, and I suggested that they might like their initials hidden within the buildings itself. They loved that idea, as it made it far more personal to them, but I knew we were going to have a problem, as did the couple when I mentioned it. So, I had to just put in their initials, and not the “and” part – since otherwise it would have spelt out “M & S” or better still “S & M”!

What should an erolife member do if they are interested in a commission?

Ring or email me to chat about their ideas for a painting they may want me to do for them. It costs nothing to ask!

Why is it called a commission, what does this mean?

It's placing an order to the artist to paint a picture for you, granting authority to the artist to undertake work that is specific to your request. Owning art is a pleasurable experience but if you buy work from a gallery or exhibition, it is someone else's viewpoint and not necessarily fully your choice. If you commission a piece of art direct from the artist it is far more rewarding as the work is personal and unique as it is specifically created for you and your requirements.

To commission a work of art, think about what you want to capture as the essence of the work – it may be something like “I want a picture showing how sexy my girlfriend is” or “I want an erotic picture of the two of us to hang in the bedroom” or “I want a lady in red to go with the colour scheme in my room” or any other idea. Then you can discuss with me how that image may be created. You don't need to have any artistic capabilities, only ideas of what you want, or even what you don't want. There are lots of things to consider at that point – the size of the piece of art, where it is going to hang, whether you want to frame it yourself or get me to do it for you, what medium you want it in (watercolours, acrylics, pastel, oils, pencil or ink), whether you want it painting realistically in traditional style or fantasy, or surreal, or abstract, or with something camouflaged within it as a secret to yourselves, what your budget is, is there a colour scheme you want me to keep to, any deadline you need the picture ready for like a birthday or anniversary date, and bear in mind that I have a lot of experience of painting all sorts of pictures for people so I can advise with ideas if you need any help. When I've quoted you with a price and once you are happy for me to go ahead and create your own special picture I will require a 20% deposit at that point. I can work from photos so you won't have to sit for long uncomfortable hours. When the picture is finished I will contact you and send an email of the picture so that you can see it and confirm you are happy with it or make any adjustments if you think them relevant. I will require the balance of payment at that point and then will make arrangements to get the piece of art to you, if it needs transportation costs they will be priced separately and be kept to a minimum. And this way you get a bespoke piece of art in the subject you want, in the medium you want, in the frame you want, in the style you want, in the price-range you want.

Apart from new commissions, you have a selection of limited editions prints and originals for sale?

Yes I do, both erotic and non erotic originals. From tigers and landscapes to sensual pictures, Fantasy Fannies and vibrant abstracts. But also, if you see something on my website that you like, that I've already sold, it is possible to re-paint it for you to suit your requirements. Most things are possible, just ask.

The Limited Edition Prints are a way of making my art more affordable for everyone. You might not necessarily want to buy the original but love the piece of art and want to own a limited print of it. Just 500 prints in each run, each one is signed, dated and individually numbered and is accompanied with a signed Certificate of Authenticity.

Do you have an ambition in your art you have not achieved?

I have always liked the idea of a celebrity having her Fantasy Fanny painted as a massive canvas to hang on a large blank wall as a stunning conversation piece. Having said that, maybe I'm half way there since the Fantasy Fannies are anonymous I can tell you that one of them is actually someone who's name you know very well.....

Where will you be exhibiting your work next?

I am exhibiting at the hugely popular Ticknall Exhibition, Ingleby Lane, Ticknall, Derbyshire DE73 1JW over the August bank holiday weekend 26th and 27th August 2012. And during those two days I will be in attendance doing "ten minute portrait" drawings for anyone who is interested. That exhibition isn't erotic though.

I also currently have a good selection of my erotic art hanging at The Vanilla Alternative in Bedfordshire and at Eureka in Kent.

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