

Art by Katia Von Kral Extended Bio, Facts, and Other Interests-

General Information

For over fifteen years, local Arizona modern artist Katia Von Kral, has offered a variety of products and services including original and custom paintings, drawings, murals, and decorative finishes. Her natural talent, that emerged at a very young age, progressed over time as she received her bachelor's degree in Fine Arts from Arizona State University and catered professionally to high-end residential and corporate markets. By gaining recognition through local magazines such as Phoenix Home and Garden, creating custom commissioned pieces for clients such as Google, Pulte, and Del Webb, and restoring the 1926 Historic Civic Plaza in downtown Phoenix, KVK has managed to keep her dream alive!...but not without a fight (please read more about the auto-immune disease that KVK suffers with under "Causes.")

KVK is now selling her originals as well as giclees of her collections for all to enjoy. Within her scope of work, you will see beautiful figure drawing art, modern landscape art, celebrity art, horse art, baseball art, carousel art, and music art. The latest series of music art, KVK's new and most inspiring series of painted instruments, is the "Solfege Family Collection" and the "French Quarter." In these mixed-media works of art, you will see that they are composed with additional mediums such as chalk, marker, and many other eye-catching elements that create everlasting interest!

In addition, KVK has introduced her timeless series of decorative enhancements, the Paperdolls Series. Like the Paperdolls Series, most of KVK's art is fashioned with repurposed materials. Not only is this concept eco-friendly, it also generates added texture, pattern, movement, interest, and likeability to her already vibrant and attractive collage art.

Because KVK loves to make her art practical in various ways, most of her art is also available on gift art such as canvas, prints, stationary, coaster sets, decorative pillows and shirts. Perhaps the most noted detail regarding all of the KVK creations is that a portion of all the proceeds is donated to benefit endometriosis and awareness, a cause that KVK is most passionate about .

Lastly, among KVK's repertoire of abilities, she also possesses professional training in makeup artistry. She is certified by the Joe Blasco Makeup School in Hollywood, CA. KVK learned the craft of beauty makeup, as well as special effects makeup including prosthetics. She has done makeup for several famous athletes and acclaimed actors. Her work has appeared on popular stations such as FOX, CBS, ABC, and ESPN. KVK still enjoys accepting makeup opportunities for film, television, print, weddings and special events. Whether a job involves painting or makeup, KVK's goals remain the same- produce quality work and exceed her client's expectations.

Other FAQ's and Interests

1. What made you decide to pursue a career in art versus just keeping it as a hobby?

I believe that if you give yourself an "out" or "something to fall back on," most likely, at one point you will take the "out." Another artist, who is now my very good friend, hired me when I was 17 years old to assist her with her professional art career. She saw that I had great talent and strongly encouraged me to pursue a career in the arts. I give her much credit for allowing me to see and to embrace my talents and stay persistent with my goals in art. I was also good at the more academic subjects (I started with an academic scholarship for college), but creating art sounded a lot more fun to me. I had no idea how hard it would be. Later on in life, I found so many other reasons why this is what I was meant to do. I have explored many avenues involving my artistic talents, but have never strayed from the path of creativity. When I decided that this is what I would do with my life, there were no other options.

2. How do you go about your artistic process? What is your inspiration point?

It has taken quite a while for me to really discover what motivates me the most when I go about the creative process. As I'm sure my motivations will continue to evolve through life, I have found that up to this point that the initial subject of my pieces are and can be very different. I have to clear my mind of stresses and then I have to keep myself on my toes, or I get bored of the piece before I even finish. Like in life, I need a certain amount of unpredictability in order to keep my interest. First, I must have a personal connection to the piece. After I have realized that connection and committed to following through with the piece, I generally let the creative juices flow from there. This free flow of creativity is where I see similarities in my work; I love a well executed drawing, I love texture, I love pattern, I love color, and I love a simple yet inspirational meaning behind the work. And like everyone else, sometimes motivation is purely survival.

3. Where do you feel your artistic talent comes from, is your mom an artist?

Neither of my parents are artists, nor do I know of any other family member that is an artist. However, both my mother and my father are creative in a variety of other ways. My mother has a knack for decorating and recognizing nice color palettes, while my father is a creative speaker, motivator, and a pretty decent singer. Thus, I think that creativity is in the genes, but my inherent abilities to draw and paint are gifts from God, with no other explanation than that one.

4. What is your favorite medium to work with? My favorite medium to work with is oils, but because of health issues, I use mostly acrylics. I also like using many different mediums in each piece, like the collages that I have created.

5. I know you have done a lot of mural work, what is the difference in working with a standard canvas size versus a giant wall?

Sometimes murals are smaller than paintings. Murals are simply artworks applied directly on walls, so size is not really the factor when it comes to differences. I like to work large even on my paintings. The

biggest differences between murals and paintings on canvases are that paintings are mobile, canvases are smoother to paint on most of the time, paintings increase in value and can be collected, and offer much less physical labor. Some of the murals I have created are on canvas, but I installed them directly on the wall like wallpaper so they appeared to be murals.

6. Tell me about your favorite piece? I don't think I have any single favorite piece, but maybe a few that stand out for different reasons. Up to this point, my favorite pieces are the collage pieces which include: *French Quarter*, *Lyle Lovett*, *Mighty Foundation*, *I Like Your Sleeves*, *the Paperdolls Series*, *the Solfege Family Collection*, and *the Carousel Series*. All of these pieces combine the use of fabric, paper, paint, and other small 3 dimensional elements on an acrylic painted background. I like these pieces for the same reasons I stated earlier as to where my inspiration comes from; I love a well executed drawing, I love texture, I love pattern, I love color, and I love a simple yet inspirational meaning. Many of my pieces have musical references and profound moments involved in the subject matter which evoke emotional responses and appeal to the hearing sense as well. I feel when you have all of these elements in a piece, they appeal to a variety of senses that bring the creation to life and stir up a sort of romance in a contemporary way. I do have a few other pieces that are my favorite as well that are not collages but still have the same type of desired romance stylistically and desired execution technically. These pieces are *Preacher's Kid*, *Nude Figure Study*, *Steve and Dan Camping*, *Hailey*, and *the Marilyn Monroe Series* of drawings and paintings.

7. Which artists do you admire the most and why? I admire a few different artists for many different things. One of the artists that I admire the most is actually a living artist that I have spent a great deal of time with Frederick J. Brown. Frederick is an expressionist painter who uses a lot of vibrant colors in his pieces. He is noted for painting portraits of Jazz musicians and being mentored by Willem de Kooning. I had the privilege to work and study under Frederick for over a year, from who I received my true faith, determination, and belief in myself as an artist. That, my friend, is something that you cannot buy or ever repay. Frederick beat the odds growing up in the projects of Chicago and then turned out to be well-famed artist in his lifetime, with works in the Smithsonian, the Met, and many others. I admire him because of the inspiration he was to me, the accomplishments he has made with his art career, and for his use of vivid color and excitement in his work. When it comes to deceased artists, the artist who painted in my favorite style was Gustav Klimt. He used a lot of pattern and collage techniques in his works. I have been able to view his works in person and his art is truly beautiful and breathtaking! If I were to reference other admirable artists, I would have to include Frida Kahlo and Georgia O' Keefe. I admire both of them for being successful women artists. Georgia O' Keefe had great successes in her lifetime and Frida Kahlo endured horrible physical ailments (so we relate on more levels than one, having endometriosis) and yet continued to follow her passion.

8. What is the strangest thing anyone has asked you to paint? Strange is a funny word, because strange to one person may not be the same as to the next person. I personally don't feel that there is anything very strange that people have asked me to paint but I have worked on some grandiose projects that I found myself doing somewhat bizarre things. For instance, last year in April, I was chosen by the city of Phoenix out of many artists who applied for the job, to facilitate the restoration project of an old 1926 historic building in downtown Phoenix, AZ. The project in itself was actually quite fun and amazing. I had a 6 man crew working for me and the "team" atmosphere was quite invigorating. But I found myself intrigued with some of the rather funny things we were doing to make this restoration as accurate as possible. The entire front side and some of the other sides of this decently large building were covered in brick. My team and I actually painted every single brick more than once (process to achieve accurate color and texture) and also every inch of grout line that was on that building. I had never thought I would find myself painting a million old bricks individually so that they would appear new yet natural again.

9. I understand you are currently working on a new series, your landscape series, tell me about it? Yes, my new series that I am currently putting together is the landscape or favorite locations series, but I haven't figured out what I want to call it yet. I know creating art using landscapes is not an original idea but I have a couple ideas up my sleeve that is going to make the series very fun and interesting, ideas that I will not reveal until you see the pieces. Also, what is great for me is that the pieces I have enjoyed creating the most, are also the pieces that voyeurs are responding positively to the most. Many of my collectors love the collage technique that I have incorporated in my pieces, and this will also make the series stand out. That is all I'm going to say...you will have to view the results in person at their revealing show September 2, 2011 at the Alta Phoenix Lofts Gallery in Downtown Phoenix.

10. Talking points on Paperdolls & French Quarter Series: What was your motivation to create each of these series? To start, *French Quarter* is just one individual painting, it is not a series. I have included the painting on coasters, pillows and stationary, but they consist of only one image, *French Quarter*. The painting definitely evolved throughout the time that I worked on the piece. My very dear friend is a musician. He plays the piano/keyboards now, but played the accordion and trumpet when he was little. He played music professionally since the age of 11 and now he and his band are in the Arizona Music and Entertainment Hall of Fame. I was at his house one day and I saw the accordion, trumpet and candle light post grouped together as you see in the painting. I love his music and I thought it would be a wonderful still life the moment I saw it. I took several pictures and began painting it to put in my next show at the time. The great thing about this piece is that it was not planned, it was very spontaneous. Through the painting process of *French Quarter*, I added the collage elements, which really made the painting come to life and made for a very interesting, eye-catching piece that you can almost hear singing to you. The original size is a 3ft x 3ft painting

and is rather large. The painting sold the first night that I showed it to the public. The painting did not get its name until the night of the show, and received its name through the deliberation of the owner, myself, and friend.

11. Motivation for creating Paperdolls Series? Looking back, I think most of my works all have an underlying sense of romance, freedom, inspiration, and simplicity in their subject matter. They are the sort of pieces that evoke happiness and peace, and bring you to a place that is fun and free of pain. Because I have suffered with a painful illness (apparent in only women 99.999% of the time and still incurable) for many years, it so important that I create pieces that feel light and burden free. When I began the process of making the *Paperdolls Series*, I really wanted to create a series that exemplified the freedom I referred to, but also come up with something that could be trendy, chic, and decorative at the same time. The series is “one-of-a-kind,” it is clever, it is sincere, it is artful, it is soulful, it is well-designed and well crafted, it is recycled, and it is beautiful, which were all characteristics that were very important in the design process as well. What little girl didn’t love playing with and dressing up her collection of paper dolls? Bringing these fond memories back in a fresh, unique, and contemporary way is what inspired me to create this all encompassing artwork. The materials used to construct the pieces represent the clothes, patterns, and paper that you might have dressed your paper dolls with, or the pieces (like the beach balls and flowers) may represent other childhood memories that coincide with the moments that you may have been enjoying paper dolls. The silhouette of the woman that is painted in black over the fabrics and paper represents the doll that you would have been dressing up. The *Paperdolls Series* was created specifically to be used by and inspire women of all ages to decorate and make practical use of a design that ultimately would connect them to a positive experience. It was important to me that I make a “doll” that didn’t look too sexy and grown up, yet not so youthful that only children would connect to the pieces...I still wanted them to be classic and chic, with that bit of youth added at the same time.

12. I understand that several pieces in your Paperdolls collection are textured, please describe? Like all of the elements that go into any stylishly decorated person or place, the *Paperdolls Series* art includes the love and fun of textures and colors. Each of the 9 paperdolls is originally constructed with both recycled fabric and paper, and acrylic paint. Every piece is a collage, and therefore every piece is textured from the overlapping of material and the texture of the material itself. I have to remind you that the actual texture is only on the original *Paperdolls Series*. The prints look and seem like they are textured, but in reality they are not. Also, the original pieces have a thick “mirror coat” carefully applied to the front surfaces of each piece. This coat looks like glass, but it is not. It is more of an epoxy finish that is extremely thick and shiny. The series consists of 9 uniquely different works in 9 separate predominant color palettes (red, blue, yellow, purple, orange, green, gold, silver, black & white) that stand as one or all together according to your own personal styles and preferences.

13. Do you feel your Paperdolls collection is your most popular work to date and why? I feel that they are one of my most popular works. As you know, for many years, I did a number of commissioned pieces which include paintings on canvas, murals, and decorative art and finishes for which I gained a decent amount of notoriety. Three years ago, I made up my mind that I had to begin to do work that was my idea and hope that people would enjoy it as much as I do. With my medical condition, it is very hard for me to report to job sites and work from schedules that are not my own, so it was imperative that I create a life for myself selling my own work that would allow me to babysit my own disease. It has also always been my goal to be able to give back to the world what they give to me. If the world likes my artwork and it keeps me alive, then I can hopefully give back to organizations like the Endometriosis Association to help other women to live comfortably that may not have the ability to have a career or talent that can be manifested at home and when you are sick. I also have always desired to place my works on other practical items of which I have done with *Paperdolls* and other most popular works the *Solfège Family Collection* and the *French Quarter*, and will continue to do more of on various other things. All of these collections mentioned have been popular because they are fun, attractive, relative, and because they are the first series' of my paintings that were my own original ideas. You could also say that these series' were and are the gateway for me to moving on to my next chapter in life and coming that much closer to my goals and dreams in my career and helping others along the way!

14. When you are not busy creating art, what are your other hobbies and interests? When I'm not creating art, promoting it, or trying to sell it, I still do a decent amount of makeup jobs for weddings, proms, and other costume or special events. When I'm not doing that, I love to go sing karaoke as often as possible! I also love to travel, play word and card games, watch movies and learning channels, ski, bask in the sun, watch the Pittsburgh Steelers play football, have great conversations with others, and read weird books on dream interpretations, ghosts, and stuff like that. I also like to spend time with my family and friends when I have time.