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Local artist puts vibrant wagging tongues, wet snouts to canvas



Indian Rocks Beach artist Lisa Gilmore feels her art gives a pet owner a connection to a pet's personality they could not see without paint and canvas.



By Micah Grimes, BayNews9.com Staff
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ST. PETERSBURG-- Lisa Gilmore takes a creatively colorful approach to her paintings of every day pets that sends wagging tongues and wet snouts jumping off her canvases.

What began two years ago as a friend asking a friend to paint a family pet for a Christmas gift turned into a small custom pet portrait business for the Indian Rocks Beach resident.

An interior designer by day, Gilmore was living in Chicago when she posted a picture of that first piece of art on her Facebook to show her other friends her work.

"Then I got an email from a friend wondering if I'd be interested in doing a piece for their parents," Gilmore said.

The Lakeland born and raised interior designer has been interested in splashing, vibrant colors all her life, especially works by Warhol and Matisse.

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CONTACT INFO

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"I get bored with photorealistic art," Gilmore admitted. "I am just a person of color. I really love infusing so much color into my work."

Gilmore feels her art gives a pet owner a connection to a pet's personality they could not see without paint and canvas. "With pets, you can have so much fun with putting a whole new light on them. People are kind of astonished how pets can look in these unrealistic colors."

Her work was mostly done for friends and friends of friends, but her work has taken on a developing audience over the past few months as she has begun to make her work more public.

"I've wanted to be more involved in community affairs, especially as a small business person," she said. "I like the idea of things that involve local community, participating in local events and charities."

Gilmore has been showing her art at Bay area art festivals and farmer's markets, with hopes of growing her clientele.

Though dogs seem to be the normal hot ticket among her friends, Gilmore said she can paint most any animal. "Birds, cats -- goldfish," she said with a laugh.

"Up until recently, it's been mostly friends and family. In the past two months or so, I've had long lost friends see the art on Facebook and ask if I can do their pets."

Facebook.

In the digital age, the social network has become a public gallery of photography, art, writing and creative pursuits from the extra-room-of-the-house artist to the seasoned professional photographer.

Gilmore caught breaks with the first simple, yet viral showcasing of her art via Facebook.

The first post of the first painting. Friends contacting her for their own pets to be painted. Friends of friends contacting friends to contact Gilmore for their paintings A writer seeing an interesting painting posted in a Facebook newsfeed by a friend of a friend.

And now, you.

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