

Journey To Bob

Hi everyone. I live in Cumbria. I am the creator of the painting of Bob. It is painted in chalk pastel pencils from a photo taken by Bob's owner Karen Shuttleworth with permission.

I did art at school up to O level standard but went on to be a paediatric physiotherapist and I left my art behind. My husband and I adopted two disabled children but I continued my work until in 1996 when I lifted a child and hurt my back rendering me disabled and unable to work. That same year my husband left me with the children to care for and I had a nervous breakdown thinking I would not be able to give the children the life they deserved. I became clinically depressed.

A few years down the line I remarried and between us we raised the two children to become independent adults. In 2013 I had a minor stroke which resolved itself in a couple of days. My husband secretly booked a cruise for us. On this cruise I met a brilliant artist called Maria Barry who was taking watercolour art classes on sea days. The classes took me to another place and any worries I had disappeared when painting. I had never used watercolour before and hated that they would not do what I wanted. My paintings were not good. I had overcome so much and I was determined I was not going to be beaten by watercolour. Maria saw something in me and suggested I join an art group when I got home so six months later I joined a local art group where I learned the basics of watercolour and started to produce some nice pieces but I could not get the detail I needed in this medium. After seeing a YouTube video of someone doing an eye in pastels I ordered some pencils and joined an online art class by Colin Bradley. From there I have gone on from strength to strength.

I find my work takes me to that “other place” where time and troubles pass me by and I feel relaxed and soooo fulfilled. I joined a group of “pastellers” called Pastel for Beginners and Beyond and now have a family of people who have become friends that help and encourage me when I have lost my mojo and feel low. I in turn encourage others and give them tips and advice when I can which makes me feel useful and proud of my achievements.



My best supporter is my husband Malcolm who has encouraged me in my journey. I have moved on to take on commissions and to sell my work. I have also been asked to do some illustrations for a book which is daunting but fun.

Thank you.

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