

Creative Women



Holiday 2010

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## Sarah Holl's Art Students – In Their Own Words

by Nicola Burnell



**Mother and Child**, by Karen Ryder

Artist Karen Ryder admits to having a "sketching habit" that once satisfied her constant desire to capture people both resting and in action. But, in 2008, she decided sketching wasn't enough anymore and looked for a local figure class that would fit into her schedule outside of office hours.

She met Sarah Holl at an open studio event on Pearl Street, in Hyannis, and found her new art teacher. "I was both excited and nervous on my first night. The last time I'd been in a figure class was back in my college days. Sarah made me feel welcome and comfortable. The class was a mix of all different kinds of people."

Karen soon realized the skills she'd developed through her constant sketching helped her get back into the swing of figure drawing. "It was great to draw bigger than I could on a sketch pad again!"

Sarah recognized that Karen was familiar with drawing the figure and encouraged her to see how far her favored medium of watercolor could take her. "For years, my sketching was done outside of a studio, often with watercolor pencils," Karen explains. "Watercolors force me to make quick decisions that I need to work with. I feel this process leads to a freshness in my work, and the ability to express mood, feeling and movement."

The confidence that Sarah instills in her students is crucial to helping them take risks and move into new areas of art. Sarah's class led Karen to try different mediums. "It's really fun to experiment in a variety of mediums. I'm pushing myself to try different styles and each one comes with a unique set of challenges."



**Cubist Iryna**, by Karen Ryder

She recently experimented with a cubist-inspired style in her representation of the figure. "My next goal is to push myself beyond "just" representing the figure. I told my classmates that I feel confident in my ability to record, but now I want to really make art – to say something and tell stories beyond the story that the model alone tells me."

Karen has participated in various group shows at the Guyer Barn and was selected to have a solo exhibit at the Barn this past summer.

Her work was part of the "Hands" exhibit at the Cotuit Center for the Arts through Nov. 2 and her watercolor painting "What part of no don't you understand?" is on display at the Lore Degenstien Gallery at Susquehanna University, in Pennsylvania, for their juried figurative exhibit Oct. 30 - Dec. 17.

Since taking Sarah's classes Karen has increased her production outside of class. "I've developed a significant body of work and I'm now seeking opportunities with galleries interested in representing my work." Her work may be viewed at her online gallery <http://www.GalleryKRR.com>.

When Sturgis student Brienne joined Sarah's class, last summer, she was very insecure about her art. "Sarah's class has helped me a lot with my art. Before I started going, I couldn't draw people at all, only cartoons. She's helped me a lot with shading and proportions."

Brienne has shown tremendous growth in only a few months. Along with other high school students in the class, she is discovering her unique "voice" as an artist. "I'm not afraid to try these new things because the atmosphere of Sarah's class is so relaxed and non-judgmental."



*Sturgis Charter Public School students Brienne, Sebastian & Gabe attend after-school teen classes at the Guyer Barn.*

Fellow Sturgis student Sebastian has been working on pieces to add to his portfolio as he prepares to apply to art school. It was a visit to Sarah's Artspace Studio, last spring, that opened his eyes to the real possibility of taking his dream to become an artist seriously enough to pursue art as a career.

"It was great to see how an artist can live and work in their own creative environment," Sebastian

recalls. "Something shifted inside – I realized that this is what I wanted to create for my own future. After seeing Sarah's studio I wanted to take her summer class."

Sebastian also grew as an artist over the summer. "Before taking Sarah's class I had a distaste for figure drawing and realism. Throughout the classes, however, I've learned how to develop a strong foundation of technique and composition."

Both students continued to take Sarah's teen classes into the Fall.

Carol Covil claims she's learned more from attending Sarah's art classes than she got from four years at Hartford Art School. She loves the diversity of students, and the camaraderie the classes cultivate. "It's a wonderful group of people."

Carol also appreciates the fluidity of Sarah's teaching techniques. "I like the fact this it's free and open – we can work in any medium that we want."

Sarah also encourages her students to exhibit their artwork at the various shows she hosts throughout the year. Many of her students will have pieces in the upcoming exhibit Miniature Masterpiece, from December 4th to January 9th at the Guyer Barn.

There will be an Opening Reception  
for the Miniature Masterpiece Exhibit  
at the Guyer Barn from 6-8pm  
on Saturday, December 6th -  
all are welcome to attend.



**Godiva Society, Pen and Ink with Gold Leaf, by Carol Covil**



Ron completes his miniature masterpiece.

Studio photographs for this article were taken by Ron Lindholm, who also attends Sarah's weekly adult classes.

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Nicola Burnell is the Publisher and a contributing writer for this magazine.

She teaches Reiki, Personal Empowerment workshops, novel writing & creativity development classes. She also works as a personal and professional consultant.

Nicola is a member in Letters of the National League of American Pen Women <http://www.nlapw.org> and an active participant in the Cape Cod Time Bank <http://www.capecodtimebank.org>.

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