

Artist Interviews

Kathy Hildebrandt

Born and raised in Edmonton and area, Kathy Hildebrandt moved to Calgary in 1984 and has lived there ever since. While she did a bit of drawing when younger, it wasn't until she moved to Calgary that she became interested in practising art. She put this interest on hold in 1986, however, when she started studying to be a Certified Management Accountant and it wasn't until 2001 that she began painting again.

Describing herself as a self-taught artist, Hildebrandt initially focused on landscapes and other subjects such as people and animals when she returned to painting. She also tried her hand at a variety of media such as oil and acrylic painting. When she received a box of chalk pastels, however, she 'found her medium' and has worked mainly with pastels ever since, finding she can do her work quicker with pastels than with oils or acrylics.

For the past few years Hildebrandt has focused on still life subjects such as toys and memorabilia as the subject matter for her art. Describing herself as a very detail orientated person, she states that

With still life I can control things. I can control the setup and the lighting and I'm not hampered by outside factors. Also, I've always taken a certain amount of pride in my ability to draw and still life subjects allow for this.

Beyond controlling the more formal aspects of her still life subjects, Hildebrandt is also cognizant of what the subject matter is in her works. When she began painting still life works, she began with objects from her childhood and then began scouring antique and thrift stores for source materials. For the artist, such subject matter reminds her of simpler times. She also likes it when viewers walk up to her images and discover things and remember things they can relate to.

As an artist, Hildebrandt demonstrates a great deal of independence in her practice. As stated by the artist:

I want to paint the way I want to paint. I want to paint the things that interest me and I want to paint realistically as (this style) bucks the trends. I ignore what others say and just do what I want.

Beyond fulfilling a sense of independence, however, Hildebrandt's choices of subject matter and style challenge her creatively. As described by Hildebrandt:

I am a very detailed person in life. The objects in my paintings have different shapes, colours, patterns and textures and there's a lot of time and effort involved in getting this level of precision and detail. To be able to take these things and re-create them in pastels is both challenging and very rewarding.