

Deanna Christian

Biography

Deanna Christian is a colored pencil artist living in Bowling Green, Kentucky. She is from a long line of artists including her parents, Earle Holmes and Shirley Phelps (Cles), who were carvers of Plexiglass and painters of murals, china, and Pysanky eggs; her grandmother, Lila Holmes, painted wildlife in oils; her grandfather, Richard Samuel Phelps, was a carver, woodworker, gemologist, and worked with leather; and the English artist, poet, and mystic, William Blake, was a relative.

Deanna learned art from observation of the artists who surrounded her in childhood and took workshops from Ann Kullberg and Gary Greene. She benefited from the excellent books about colored pencil by those and other colored pencil artists. Other than that, she is self-taught with no formal art education. She earned a Master's Degree in Biblical Studies from Fuller Theological Seminary and a certificate for teaching English as a Second Language from Western Washington University.

She has been influenced by the art forms of the Pacific Northwest Coast, which she learned while living on San Juan Island, Washington, and the cowboy artists of Wyoming where she spent much of her childhood. She once escaped from a cougar, saw a white wolf, and enjoys painting wildlife as well as portraits of people and animals. She is learning Byzantine iconography.

In addition to her colored pencil paintings, she enjoys aboriginal-style painting with acrylics, teaching art to a few select students, hosting "sip and color" events, and occasionally does workshops for people who want to learn colored pencil painting.

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Artist's Statement

I've been coloring since I could hold a crayon so I now have 78 years of joy, blessings, and mistakes. My Mom taught me to never throw away my mistakes because they can always serve as a bad example. I have a tub full of mistakes my students can see and avoid making themselves.

Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior. I pray as I work. My intent is that all my work reflects His glory, brings joy to people, and draws them closer to Him. Fyodor Dostoyevsky said, "Beauty will save the world." I aim to capture some of God's Light, Truth, and Love in my paintings.

Dostoyevsky was an Orthodox Christian and their iconography influences my art. Our local Holy Apostles Orthodox Church is filled with beauty: incense, candlelight, chanting, and iconography. If you have never been to an Orthodox service, come and see! When the King's emissaries were sent out to study various religions, they attended an Orthodox Divine Liturgy and reported back that they were in the presence of such beauty that they could not tell if they were in Heaven or on Earth. So, the King of Russia embraced Christianity and Russia became a Christian nation. If you have never seen the beauty of the Ancient Faith, all I can say is come and see!

I especially enjoy painting people with their pets and small children discovering the wonders of God's creatures be they puppies, kittens, butterflies, birds, moths, snakes, toads, lizards, insects, or spiders. God's creation is utterly wonderful and amazing.

Every person is created to be an icon for we are all made in the image of God, both male and female. Though they may not hang in a Church building, my portraits are icons of the people I paint. I hope you enjoy them.