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LIFESTYLES

Artist Sonya Paz Minds Her Own Business

Thursday, January 04, 2007

San Jose artist Sonya Paz loves pop art and cubism, sometimes embracing the abstract. However, this wasn't a conscious choice by Paz, but a deep, unquenchable fire that incessantly drives her.

"I felt drawn to these genres and styles when I was small child," Paz said. "It just seemed a part of myself as long as I can recall."

The quirky lines, round shapes and vivid colors is what draws many to her wacky creations. She could thank Pablo Picasso and George Braque for jumping off the edge in the art world in the early 1900s by painting people or things in cube-like shapes. A disgruntled art critic - Louis Vauxcelles made fun of their work by calling it cubism and the name stuck. Modern Art is an excellent genre for Paz, and it certainly works for her.

Collectors and art lovers alike are fond of her use of bold reds, blues, greens, yellows, pinks and oranges when she depicts a wine country scene or sassy women out on the town or the business professional on the go. Her simple shapes and saturated palette are magnetic and the happy themes a great remedy for melancholy. Paz gets her inspiration from anything that grabs her attention - everything from conversations with friends to shopping at a grocery store.

She knows no fear when it comes to marketing and selling her prized colorful depictions of urban life and ebullient musical themes in her acrylic paintings.

Paz has an international collector base along with two gallery-retail stores under her belt in Silicon Valley. She relies solely on her earnings from her art to pay the bills. She does her art gig full time with little time to spare for the things she loves, such as going to the gym or on a well-deserved vacation.

Eighteen-hour days aren't unusual for this hard-working petite, brunette who takes her job seriously. Success comes with a price tag: it's never free. When her high-tech group disbanded in 2002, Paz chose to pursue her art full time rather than stay in the technology circuit.

Subsequently, she founded her own gallery and corporate office in Santa Clara and recently opened up another gallery in the prestigious Santana Row Shopping Center in 2006. If that wasn't enough to keep her busy, her dealings with trade shows, hosting workshops, repeatedly getting picked as poster artist for big-name venues, stores across the nation selling her artsy wristwatches and wall clocks did. Paz even got her name into Hollywood and received the red carpet treatment at the 2006 Academy Awards with celebrities taking home Paz's mod-art wristwatches, which were included in the VIP Oscar goodie bags.

How did this happen to the girl next door? Marketing. Paz is confident in marketing her paintings, decorated furniture, wristwatches, bedroom accessories or wall hangings. She simply believes in her work and who she is as a person. "I feel that this comes through my personality and through my paintings. I often refer to myself as a WYSIWIG (What you see is what you get). No hidden agenda, no artificial sweetener.

"I like to talk with my collectors and public. It's really easy," Paz said. "I have a no-fear attitude and tenacity that you need to survive in any business. I feel I know my art better than anyone, so it's easier for me to market because I know the true meanings behind each piece."

With all the framing, print layout, administrative tasks, mixing colors, painting, traveling, training employees, talking to clients and family life, Paz doesn't have time to be scared of the unknown.

This spunky artist sold her first paintings in a cafe and then through Silicon Valley Open Studios and kept showing up at outdoor festivals and local art events to get her name out there. Her design background and working in computer graphics certainly helped her create tight compositions that are lively and whimsical to the eye.

Paz hasn't forgotten where she came from and helps others learn the business side of art by giving workshops.

She's approachable and friendly and loves to share life's joy in her artistic expression. Like any imaginative person, she is growing into other areas of creativity and we'll be seeing more of her in the future. We can hardly wait what she'll do next!

Sonya Paz Fine Art Corporate Office is located in Santa Clara and is by appointment only; please call (408) 241-0001. Sonya Paz Fine Art Gallery in Santana Row is open Monday to Saturday from 10am to 9pm and Sunday from 11am to 6pm; call 408-247-7789 for more information or visit www.sonyapaz.com.

Morgan Hill resident Angie Young enjoys telling stories through a variety of media in her studio or abroad. When she isn't painting, Young is roaming the countryside while writing about the creative endeavors of others in the arts community. She has a diverse background in many facets of the arts - visual, music, dance, theater and literature. To find out more or to contact Young, go to www.angieyoung.net.

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