

Julia Carter

# Enjoying My Life With Paint

Feeling gratitude for the world's beauty and opportunities has been a cornerstone of this remarkable artist's creative life.



Heart and Soul

**T**hey say to look at your early childhood pastimes to see what you are truly passionate about, and all I can remember growing up in England was obsessively creating things and looking for adventures. Now many years later I find myself addicted to painting, travelling the world with my art, and living with my fairy tale husband on Queensland's idyllic Sunshine Coast. How romantic!

It's this blessed life for which I feel so grateful every day, but it has been a journey not without challenges. Following my honours degree in Literature and Sculpture from Liverpool University, I holidayed in Australia with the intention of returning to England to study interior design; however I fell in love and we started a new life together in Noosa. I worked with children in different ways; arts festivals, vacation care and art teaching, and returned to university to complete a diploma of early childhood education. My creativity always found an outlet, so much of the teaching was integrated with art and was incredibly rewarding.

After seven years of wonderful teaching, my life changed again as I was involved in a serious accident, injuring my leg and back. The rehabilitation was long and frustrating but in that time I began to paint. It lifted me from the darkness that was consuming me and I knew it was



Glasshouse Vista

something I needed to do for the rest of my life! But I had no idea of the future adventures it would bring.

I began showing my work locally, and found venues that I could display my work without pressure such as the local library, cafes and community events, even winning some awards. These were fantastic experiences where I could engage with the public and discuss my work and gain valuable feedback. I was approached by a contemporary gallery in the town and couldn't believe my luck the next day when one of my large paintings appeared in their window, and I will never forget how elated I felt, I was bursting with pride excitement and disbelief! This opened the way to many more great opportunities.

Also gaining representation in Melbourne, and participating in a show there, I was approached by an Italian organisation Trevisan International Art to participate in an amazing exhibition in a medieval castle in northern Italy.

Again more disbelief!! And I had to do some serious enquiries, but it turned out to be one of the most magical experiences ever! From then the invitations seemed to come so unexpectedly yet synchronistically, from around the world, and I eagerly accepted shows in London, Paris,



Complete Calm





From the Heart



Little Kisses

Vienna and Hong Kong. This year I achieved my ultimate goal and showed in New York which has definitely been the highlight of my career. I'm currently working on paintings for the Asia Contemporary Art Show in October which brings together talent from around the world, but I'm taking a less frantic pace following a period of exhaustion which clearly reminded me of the need for a balanced life.

Along the way I have learnt so much valuable information from generous teachers, including, Bill Mackay, Donald Waters, Michael Taylor, Peter Griffen, Lynne Marshall, Elizabeth Cummings, and especially from now my friend and mentor Metka Skrobar. I attended workshops, summer schools and soaked up as much information as I could; now I read profusely every art book possible and take an avid interest in the past and present art scene around the world. I have many favourite artists, including Van Gogh, Turner, Redon and Klimt and present masters such as John Olsen and American artist Wolf Kahn. I know that I'm just beginning my artistic journey and feel excited that I will never stop learning; Margaret Olley was such an inspiration.

Play and experimentation have been an integral part of my development. It's essential to learn the basic techniques including colour theory, composition etcetera, but then remember that the rules may always be broken and "happy accidents" and the moments where you truly lose yourself in the moment produce works straight from the heart.

My paintings begin with a special meditation focusing on positivity and love as I believe this energy will infuse the work and go out to the viewer and connect with the person for whom it's destined. I believe that my art is to bring joy to the lives that need it most, and I have many works in medical institutions such as hospitals and hospices.

I create a highly textural surface on the canvas using palette knives, stamps and tools with modelling mediums and allow this to dry before priming this layer for washes of translucent vivid acrylic paint and inks, sometimes adding



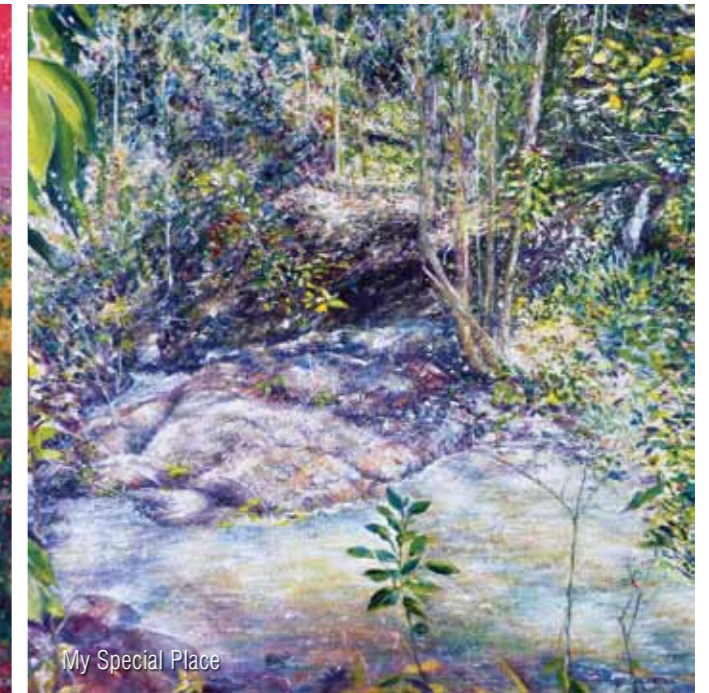
Magnificence



Rest Awhile



Spectacular



My Special Place

collaged quotes, text and found objects. Adjusting and refining the work as I go I allow the painting to lead the way and show me the direction to follow. I add rich jewelled embellishment with gold and silver leaf, metallic pigments and sometimes other decorative gems.

The painting process is such a rollercoaster, from the most joyful moments when all is working well to the complete devastation when everything seems to have gone wrong, but as Donald Waters told us, painting is about

thirds, first the excitement and joy of commencing a work, followed by the frustration as it all goes west, to finally persevering until achieving the ultimate wonderful result!! I also believe it is important to try to not be too precious and perfectionist about a work, as this is what leads to character, presence and individuality about a piece.

My inspiration can grow and develop over time from almost anywhere; whilst walking in nature, reading a magazine, travelling

overseas or magically in a dream, sometimes an idea just pops in out of the blue! I believe it's all a gift, but is often a reflection of ourselves and current circumstance. At the moment I am painting bench seats, such as one I saw in Central Park and in an English garden, fascinated by the "stories they could tell" over the many visitors through time, or maybe because like so many of us in this busy world, I need to sit and rest awhile and take in life's beauty.



Quintessence III

Quintessence III





Peace II



Set Free II

Due to my own experience I like to explore concepts of life's connections and life's journey, including achieving individual dreams and potential. I believe things happen for a reason and the universe has a way of intervening when you're not on your true path. The Tree of Life, tunnels, pathways and wildflowers are some of my favourite subjects to convey my ideas, and I often use symbols such

as a blue bird for destiny, a falling leaf representing the passing of time and butterflies for freedom. I like the viewer to make these discoveries and be taken around the work on their own individual journey of reflection. My gratitude for life is overflowing and I celebrate this in my paintings.

I'm not sure what the future holds, but I now have a new studio; a local warehouse with big white walls, and I

would like to focus on establishing my work more at home. I will certainly continue to exhibit both in Australia and overseas, whilst aiming to give back to those in need. I know I have so much more to learn and many lifetimes of ideas to try, and I'm determined to go with the flow and make the most of every minute, and enjoy my life with paint.

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Love's Path



Mt Panorama Vista