

Hyperrealism

magazine



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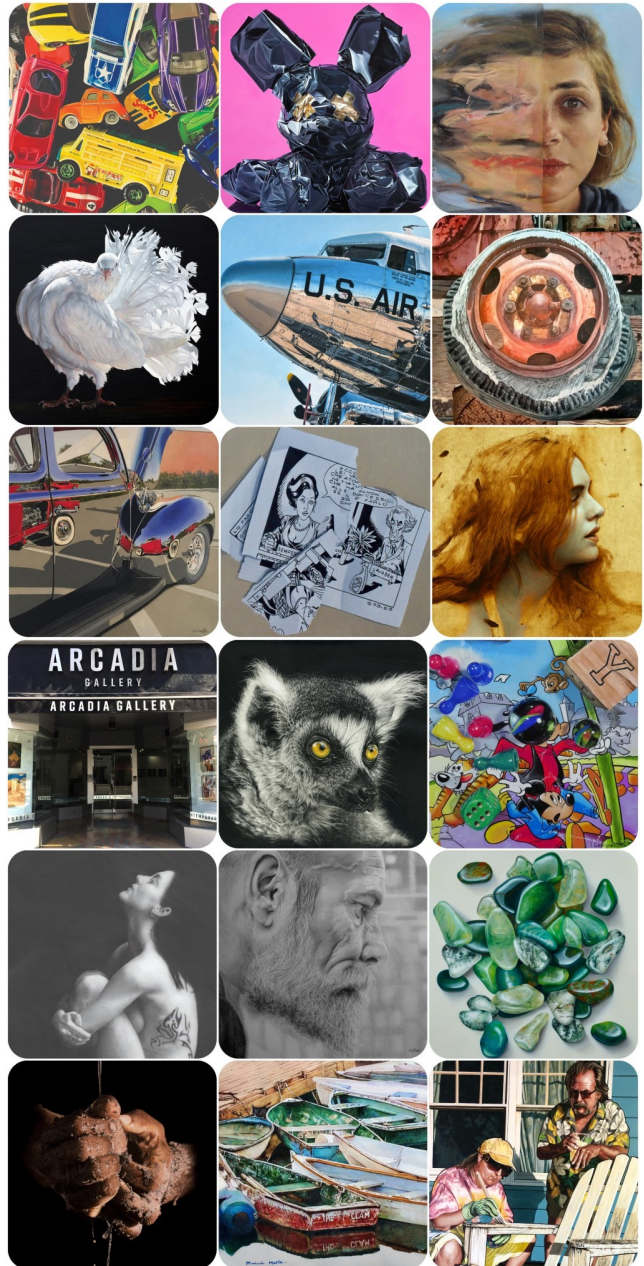
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Cover: "The Hand And The Heart" by Brad Kunkle, oil and gold leaf on wood, 24 x 18 in.

Back cover: "I Want It Painted Black" by Jaclyn Garlock, acrylic on canvas, 80 x 58 in.

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Laurence Saunois
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"I love you"
Oil on canvas, 100 x 150 cm

The main motif in your art are animals, what is the deep connection you feel with their world?

When I started painting, before working on animal subjects, I was a general painter. One day, I participated in an animal painting exhibition and I thought that was what I wanted to do. I have always loved animals, from my earliest childhood. It was obvious. I lived and still live in the countryside in the family home. **I was surrounded by animals:** birds, butterflies, mammals of all kinds, insects... I feel connected with nature. It offers so many artistic possibilities to those who know how to look at it and understand it.

On your website you said: "Through each painting made, there is a story, one or more people met. There is also a photographic work since I work mainly according to my pictures." Can you share with us one of the most pleasant stories related to one of your paintings?

I'm going to tell you the story of my painting "**The Bath**" which depicts a white pelican grooming. In 2010, the **Society of Animal Artists** celebrated its 50th anniversary in San Diego in the US. My partner and I decided to go and participate in the festivities. In addition, one of my paintings had been selected to participate in the annual exhibition at the Museum. So we left for a few days of exchanges between artists from around the world. These few days have been absolutely wonderful! I met artists like **Robert Bateman** and many other talented artists. We made new friends. The Society of Animal Artists is a big family. Obviously, I had my camera with me. It never leaves me when I go on a trip because I'm always looking for new ideas, new subjects. During the visit to the San Diego Zoo, a pelican came to rest on the surface of the water and began to wash. I took a few photos of this intimate moment and I felt like I was sharing a special moment with him. Back in France, I decided to make a painting of this scene with a beautiful play of light, movement, a reflection and especially a black background. This painting was the beginning of something, of a new approach to my painting. This trip, these exchanges between artists have pro-



foundly changed my way of understanding my subjects. In addition, I have gained great friends.

You're so proud of your beautiful garden that covers over 5000 mq and it's home to many species of birds, insects, reptiles and other little animals. You have a special attention towards biodiversity and floral environment. How important this place is for your art?

My garden is absolutely essential to my creation and my inner balance. It relieves my tensions, my stress sometimes. **The nature around me amazes me.** There is so much beauty to discover, so much to learn from the animal and plant world around us. It's just fascinating. I like to work in my studio listening to the birds singing, paying attention to the sounds of insects, watching the sun play between the leaves of the trees and flooding my flowers with light. I think an artist needs to feed on spirituality and my garden is my source of food. **We must not forget that life is fragile and that everything is harmony.** Sometimes very little is enough to break this. My garden is reassuring and allows me to paint in peace, far from the outside world.

In your statement you declare: "Create brings me much joy but it is nothing compared to the joy of giving happiness and emotions. Because art is above all this: to provoke emotions." What do you want to convey to the viewer through your artworks?

What I want to convey through my works is above all pleasure and emotions. Make the small interior voices of the spectators react. If the viewer stops for a moment to look at one of my paintings and it provokes an emotion, then my work as a painter

has achieved its goal. **I seek above all to transmit a feeling of calm and serenity.**

When someone orders a portrait of their pet, for example, I want that person every time they look at their painting to remember all the good times they spent with them.

You're a self-taught artist and you have been painting for many years. What have been the greatest difficulties and satisfactions in your path?

The biggest difficulties I encountered on my way were due to people who criticized my way of painting quite simply. How many times have I heard, "it is useless to paint something that seems like a photo, this is not art. You are not an artist. " Many exhibition places also refused me because I did not do contemporary art. But I would say that all of these obstacles only comforted me in what I wanted to do. No matter the criticisms, the refusals, it has changed me and I am more than ever determined to defend my way of working. I am what I do and what I do is what characterizes me. I had a lot of satisfaction on my way. The most important was to meet people and especially other artists who made realism or hyperrealism, to find support in international organizations of which I am a part and especially to expose in places which support this kind of painting.

When and how your interest for Hyperrealism was born? Are there any artists of the past that have

influenced you?

I think Hyperrealism has always been a part of me and of the way I see painting. I have always been drawn to it and have always aspired to work like that. And the more I work, the more it seems obvious to me. I have always been attracted to realistic artists rather than contemporary ones, but I have never been influenced more than that by past artists. I greatly admire artists like the Impressionists and, above all, **Claude Monet**, his garden and his search for light.

You're able to use in an excellent way different mediums, ranging from drawings in pencil and charcoal to oil paintings. What's your favourite one?

I really like to work with charcoal drawing for the whole range of contrasts it provides, though it's oil painting that I prefer of all the techniques that I practice.

Tell us something about your next projects.

I am currently working on several series of paintings which are related to flowers in my garden. The latter brings me an inexhaustible source of inspiration. I like to choose plants based on their graphic form and the subtlety in their colors. I really like the white flowers.

*"Peace & Love"
Oil on wood, 100 x 160 cm*







"Le Bain"
Oil on wood, 60 x 80 cm

"There is so much beauty to discover, so much to learn from the animal and plant world around us."

- Laurence Saunois

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Top:

"Each Other"

Oil on wood, 100 x 160 cm

Bottom:

"Esperanto"

Oil on canvas, 80 x 100 cm