

Discovering an Artist in Hiding

by William Rose

I want to tell you a little story about my unlikely entry into the world of fine art – of drawing and painting and models and paper and charcoal and oil and canvas. And faces... lots of faces. I'm 56 years old and I'm a full-time artist. It was just a few short years ago, at age 47 when I drew my first portrait, drew my first anything really. But first I'll back up just a little...



A Day in the Life
Charcoal on Strathmore® 400
Series Drawing Paper, 16" x 22"

My educational and professional life was always about business. I have an undergraduate degree in business administration and all of my life following graduation until just recently has been in business, primarily as an IT project manager. Even in high school I never took art classes, only college preparation. So I truly never attempted to draw anything other than random (but occasionally creative) doodling.

I found creative outlets in other areas such as music, writing and photography, which I was fairly respectable at, with a good eye for color, composition and light. But all of that changed one evening when I picked up my oldest daughter's school sketchpad and for some insane reason attempted to sketch a photo of a college softball player up to bat, which I had taken a few days earlier. It was a close shot of a very intense face in dramatic late-afternoon light. After about an hour of determined pencil to paper, I found



Tiger Eye
Charcoal on Strathmore 400 Series Drawing Paper, 18" x 24"

myself staring at what appeared to me (and my astonished family) to be a near photographic copy of this young softball player's face and upper body. Well, that was pretty cool. An entirely unexpected surprise to find a talent hidden inside me – apparently deep inside me – that for some unknown reason suddenly surfaced. And it took off from there.

Life changed. While still holding down a full-time job, raising a family and coaching youth sports, I spent any free time I could find immersing myself in art. As I had no education in art, I read everything I could get my hands on about the history of art, artist biographies, techniques and materials. I visited art museums whenever I traveled around the country and studied drawings and paintings up close and personal. I went to local gallery shows and art fairs, talking to artists and gallery owners. And I took a couple of life-drawing courses at the Kansas City Art Institute.



Erin

Charcoal on Strathmore 400 Series Drawing Paper, 20" x 16"

I soon found myself accepting commissions to produce portraits, first in graphite, then pastel, watercolor, charcoal and more recently in oil. I found along the way that I love charcoal. I like all of the creative options it provides me as I work my way through a portrait or figurative drawing. And there are multiple types of charcoal. All providing unique characteristics that act differently based on their composition and the paper I use. I experimented with everything – all kinds of media and mediums. I learned very quickly in drawing that the paper was probably the most critical element in achieving a desired outcome for each piece. And I've used a wide variety of types and brands (including Mylar), but in the last few years I've settled into a



Undeniably Cool

Charcoal on Strathmore Museum Board, 26" x 25"



I'm Here

Charcoal on Strathmore 400 Series Drawing Paper, 22" x 16"

comfortable zone with the Strathmore® 400 Series Medium Drawing Paper as well as their multiple ply museum and illustration boards. All of my artwork shown here was produced on one of these papers.

So I began entering many of my charcoal drawings in local and regional juried shows as well as numerous art publication competitions. I received very positive responses. A few of my drawings were featured in *American Artist* and *The Artist's Magazine*. Then the proverbial "snowball" began rolling when last summer my drawing "Rossina's Apple" (Strathmore® Illustration Board) won the *American Artist* Cover Competition and was featured on the cover of their summer issue of *Drawing Magazine*. This led to an opportunity to work on a movie with the Eastwoods in Carmel. The movie is about a teenage art prodigy who gets involved with international forgery and stars Lauren Bacall, Alfred Molina, Josh Hutcherson, Hayden Panetierre and Dina Eastwood (Clint's wife). The movie is scheduled for release early next year. I produced all of the artwork that appears



Calypso

Charcoal on Strathmore
Illustration Board, 20" x 32"



Charity

Charcoal on Strathmore 400
Series Drawing Paper, 15" x 21"



Rossina's Apple

Charcoal on Strathmore Museum Board, 20" x 28"



Megan

Charcoal on Gray Charcoal Paper,
11" x 14"

in the movie as the work of the kid-prodigy (Josh Hutcherson). Quite a surreal experience and something I couldn't have possibly imagined happening just a few years ago.

Since I began drawing and painting, most of my work has been figurative, with a nearly unconscious attraction to the inescapable canvas of the female face. The way even the slightest change can

completely alter the emotional character of the subject and ultimately the response of the viewer. And when the light is there... perfect light... man, I'm hooked. I can't think and I can't look away. Those are moments I strive to capture. I know I'm on the right track when it becomes frustratingly impossible to express in words what I hope to convey on paper or canvas.



The Burden

Charcoal on Strathmore® Illustration Board, 28" x 38"

Like many artists today, I work from both life and photographs or some combination. While I love the process of working from life, I often need photography to capture the emotion of the subject and in particular, the expressiveness in the eyes. It can be incredibly elusive, and consequently very difficult to capture from life. Much of my design of a piece and thoughts about composition come as I position the model and focus most of my attention on the light. But I also use Photoshop to varying degrees to tweak the image design. Even working from life, I might take digital images and play around with different compositional variations and then come back to the model. My process with charcoal is honestly pretty wide-open and varies from one drawing to another. Sometimes I lightly sketch the shapes of the subject first and then go at it with vine charcoal, finishing with compressed. Other times I simply start right in blocking out large shapes. Either way

I usually plan pretty specifically the placement and size of the subject, though the background is often rendered abstractly and intuitively as I progress through the work.



Sarah in the Light

Charcoal on Strathmore
Illustration Board, 20" x 32"

I've recently begun a series of large-scale faces in oil with my design entirely focused on the landscape of the face and the tight background patterns and colors surrounding it. I'm finding the pull to brushes is becoming somewhat addictive.

I've found in this mid-life journey into a world I knew nothing about for the first 47 years of walking on this planet, that I love art. I mean I am in love with art – not just the 2-D representational

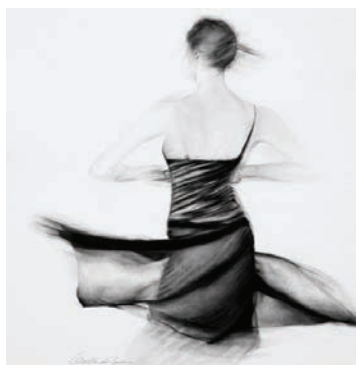
figurative variety I focus on in my work – but all kinds including non-representational abstractions, sculpture and performance art. It's as if this hidden ability to draw awakened within me an awareness and appreciation of a world I barely knew existed. And I'm not planning on leaving for a long while.

About the Artist

William Rose's studio is located in Prairie Village, Kansas, where he has been actively creating artwork for about 8 years. He stumbled across his passion for drawing quite unintentionally and soon began accepting a flurry of offers for commissioned portraits. Practically overnight he went from a person who thought stick-figures would be the grand extent of his artistic expression, to a professional fine artist creating portraits and figurative artwork in multiple mediums and being accepted into prestigious juried shows and competitions. "I wish everyone could experience such an extraordinary surprise – it changed

my entire perspective on life and sent me down a new creative path I continue to travel today.”

William enrolled in life drawing courses at the Kansas City Art Institute, and began to study drawing and painting primarily by pouring through art instruction and history books,



The Dance

Charcoal on Strathmore®
Illustration Board, 24" x 24"

countless magazines, and visiting museums across the country to view the masters. During this time, he was appointed to the art committee for a major international corporation's new world headquarters, which exposed him to a vast realm of art media and processes, assembling a remarkable collection of artwork by regional artists. And just recently,

he won a prestigious cover competition and his work appeared on the cover of *American Artist Magazine*. This national exposure led to a request to produce all of the artwork for a new movie just filmed in Carmel and backed by the Eastwoods about an art prodigy who gets pulled into the world of international art forgery. “Up until this past year, creating artwork had been an evening/weekend activity, but now I've taken the creative leap through the open window and transitioned to a career as a full-time artist.”



Rossina's Apple

Featured on the cover of *Drawing* magazine

William Rose's figurative work has been accepted into many juried shows including...

- Winner (2008) - *American Artist Magazine's* prestigious Cover Competition
- *International Artist Magazine* – 2009 Finalist in Portrait and Figurative Competition
- *The Artist's Magazine* 23rd Annual Competition (2006) – 2 pieces chosen as finalists in Portrait & Figurative category – Juror: Everett R. Kinstler
- *American Artist Magazine's* 70th Anniversary Competition (2007) - 2nd Place in Drawing Category
- Art at the Center Annual Juried Show – 2007, Juror: Dean Mitchell and 2008, Juror: Dr. Patricia McDonnell
- Kansas State Governor's Inaugural Juried Show – 2007
- Johnson County Art Festival Juried Shows – 2006 & 2007

Until recently, most of his pieces have been commissioned portraits and are displayed in many private collections. In 2007, a large charcoal figurative drawing was purchased by H&R Block for the corporate collection in their Kansas City headquarters.



William Rose

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Featured Product

Greener Options Cards

Create with earth-friendly blank cards

You'll find a longstanding tradition of environmental stewardship at Strathmore®. Quality Strathmore blank cards and envelopes are now available in **greener options** for your unique expression. These environmentally-friendly cards are made with **alternative fibers** and **recycled materials**.

Hemp Cards

Ideal for use with charcoal, pastel, pencil, pen and ink, rubber stamps and more. Made with 25% **tree-friendly hemp** and 75% **post-consumer waste fiber**.

Bamboo Cards

Ideal for use with paints, screen prints, stamps, block prints, collage and more. Made with 90% **tree-friendly bamboo** and 10% cotton.

Sugar Cane Cards

Ideal for use with stamps, pen and ink, die cuts, block prints, collage and more. Made with 50% **tree-friendly sugar cane** and 50% **post-consumer waste fiber**.

Recycled Fiber Cards – 100% PCW

Smooth, bright white

Ideal for use with stamps, pen and ink, die cuts, block prints and more. Made with 100% **post-consumer waste fiber**.

Recycled Fiber Cards – 30% PCW

Textured, cream / Textured, white

Ideal for use with stamps, die cuts, screen prints, collage and more. Made with 30% **post-consumer waste fiber**.



Create Your Own Flower Stamp Card

with Strathmore® Greener Options Sugar Cane Cards



Materials Needed

- Strathmore Greener Options Sugar Cane Cards
- 2 kinds of craft paper, one with a pattern
- 1 small flower stamp
- 1 ink pad
- 1 set of alphabet stamps

Making the Window

Step 1: Cut a 3-3/4" square out of blank craft paper to use as the backing and outside frame for your window. Cut a 1-3/4" square hole in the middle.

Step 2: Cut a 3" square out of your patterned craft paper. Cut a 1-3/4" square hole in the middle so that you have nice patterned frame.

Step 3: Combine the squares you have cut as layers starting with the 3-3/4" square on the bottom, and the 3" square on top. Line up the middle holes to match.

Making the Border

Step 1: Cut a strip of paper from your patterned craft paper 1/4" x 7" long.

Step 2: Glue the strip along the right front edge of your Greener Options Card.

Putting Your Card Together

Step 1: Glue your window onto the front of your now bordered Greener Options Card, centered horizontally between the spine and your patterned border.

Step 2: Stamp your flower stamp into the middle of the window frame. You may want to practice on a scrap piece of paper first.

Step 3: Use alphabet stamps to write your message in the lower right hand corner. You may want to practice on a piece of scrap paper first.

Questions From Our Website

What are the differences between Artist Trading Cards (ATCs) and Art Cards, Editions and Originals (ACEOs)?



Artwork by Amy Mebberson



Artwork by Angela Brereton

Artist trading cards (ATCs) are miniature pieces of art traded at swap events, either in person or online. The only official rule for ATCs is the size: 2.5" x 3.5". Also, there is a widely accepted unofficial rule: ATCs are traded but never sold.

As the excitement for artist trading cards grew, non-artists became interested in collecting the tiny pieces of original art. Because ATCs are not sold, a new term emerged: Art Cards, Editions and Originals (ACEOs). Many artists sell ACEOs over the internet using popular sites like etsy.com and ebay.com.

What is the difference between acid-free and archival? I want to make sure my art will stand the test of time.

Acid-free papers are made using alkaline paper making technology. This means the pH of the pulp that is used to form the paper is above 7 (neutral). The paper is also buffered with an alkaline reserve, such as calcium carbonate, to neutralize acid compounds absorbed from the atmosphere or formed through natural aging.

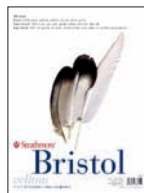
Although there are no universal standards in regards to what makes a paper archival, there are some generally accepted properties. In addition to being acid free, the paper should contain no groundwood or unbleached pulp,

meet strict limits on metallic content and be free from optical brighteners which artificially make the sheet whiter.

If you are looking for the ultimate in permanence, we recommend acid free surfaces made with 100% cotton. Strathmore® 500 Series Drawing, 500 Series Bristol, 500 Series Patent Office Board and Museum Mounting Board are all 100% cotton and acid free. Furthermore, our Museum Mounting Board meets the Library of Congress Standards for Archival Properties.

In addition to your choice in paper, don't forget environmental factors. They can be just as important in ensuring the longevity of your work. Heat, light and humidity all have an effect on paper.

What are the differences between your 300, 400 and 500 Series Bristol?



Strathmore 300, 400 and 500 Series Bristol

Strathmore offers different levels of quality to meet the full range of artist needs. Our 300 Series Bristol is a single ply sheet that is made from wood pulp and has the caliper (thickness) of a 2 ply Bristol. It provides a quality working surface for students or artists looking for an economical sheet. Our 400 Series Bristol is also made from wood pulp but it is a laminated (pasted) sheet consisting of multiple plies (2 to 4). A pasted sheet provides a more stable working surface. For the strongest and most durable working surface, our 500 Series Bristol is the choice of most professionals. Made from 100% cotton and pasted into multiple plies this board has been an industry standard since 1893.