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ARCHANT LIFE

From a garden studio

Artist and tutor Jane Kerr Wood talks to Caroline Foster about her passion for painting

JANE Kerr Wood from Potters Bar allowed her artistic talents to be suppressed for the sake of more academic studies and a 20 year career in Government. However, with peer pressure and the desire to let her creativity loose Jane launched herself wholeheartedly into the world of art.

Having taken the plunge, Jane retrained as an interior designer; this gave her the discipline to create very delicate perspective watercolour renditions of interior room views that had to be drawn accurately to scale.



Acacia Blossom

'Sourcing art work for clients was often part of the brief that I particularly enjoyed, and which led to me wanting to take up my brushes again and paint my own pictures,' says Jane.

She also says she has, in more recent years, been lucky enough to have been tutored by a really first class art lecturer at Middlesex University. 'He inspired me and helped me to develop my drawing skills to a point where I had the confidence to sell my work through a website and also direct through exhibitions and commissions,' says Jane, who is delighted that prints of her work now sell internationally.

In 2005, Jane took part in an exhibition 'Small Works by Great Artists'. This was a charity event with an auction run by Christies. 'I was the only one of 200 artists, who wasn't famous, so it was a tremendous buzz as the organisers had chosen my work for the event catalogue and publicity poster,' says Jane. 'Exhibiting side by side with Royal Academicians such as Elizabeth Blackadder and Norman Ackroyd was a real thrill. The controversial Damien Hurst also contributed a piece of work and so did other contemporary stars of the modern art world such as The



A pastels session

Chapman Brothers and Tracey Emin. Anthony Gormley of Angel of the North fame had sent a piece, which was great as the friend who accompanied me to the event had been a student studying sculpture under him many years before.'

In 2007, Jane held her first solo exhibition. It was a month long show of 14 nude studies titled 'Bare-Faced Cheek' held at Forty Hall in Enfield. The art works were in a variety of styles but all were nude studies and the local press had a lot of fun with articles about the event, which as expected caused a bit of a stir, especially a censored banner which had been placed across the publicity posters.

Jane is currently working on a series of figurative paintings inspired by one of her hobbies, Yoga. 'I love the interesting patterns that multiple human forms create. When you get as many as 24 people in a room in the same pose it can be very powerful,' she says.



Right St Paul's
Millennium Bridge

Jane is also working on developing the programme for her Summer School classes, which she runs from a studio in the garden of her Potters Bar home. 'Over the years quite a few people asked me if I offered lessons having seen my work so I decided I should take up this challenge and offer tuition. I find teaching very rewarding and helping students develop the skills and confidence to create their own art work is fun.'

Jane teaches mixed ability groups, including people who haven't drawn since school, together with

individuals who studied the subject at college but in recent years haven't found time to paint.

This year she will be offering classes in basic drawing for beginners. 'I have been lucky enough to have some brilliant tuition myself and I know that my module will offer techniques and 'tricks' that will inspire and give confidence to even the most novice artists.' Jane believes everyone has an innate ability to draw and releasing this skill has a profound positive effect on other areas of their life as it has on hers.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Jane Kerr Wood has an online Gallery at www.kwsArt.co.uk
Details of the courses at Kerr Wood Studios are also posted on the website.

For bookings and commissions contact Jane on 01707 850356