





LEFT: Gary Anderson usually paints an entire surface in one sitting. RIGHT: His paintings can be seen online at Garyandersonart.com.

Anderson's Art

WRITTEN BY **BRITTNEY JONES**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **SARAH BREWER**

Having an eye for art is considered to some as a gift, but for Gary Anderson he believes most people could have the same gift if the desire and opportunity is there.

Anderson said his interest for art was first sparked during his senior year in high school when he was a part of the yearbook staff. Anderson says he enjoyed it so much, he decided to study commercial art in college.

"I wasn't particularly artsy as a child, but I appreciate that my parents supported me trying something different for a vocation," Anderson says. His parents were farmers.

Anderson says he noticed his gift at the age of 20 while attending Athens State University. He concentrated on communication graphics while taking several painting classes.

"That was fun. The instructors were encouraging, and I had some success with juried exhibitions," he adds.

After he finished college, he continued to paint sporadically.

"Once my children got a little older, I focused more of my spare time on painting. Now I paint mostly on weekends."

Anderson creates his painting using photos.

"When using photos for painting, I have to remember that I'm making a painting not copying the photograph," he says. "Sometimes, I start with an idea and then find photo reference. Other times, I start by

looking through my photos to get an idea.”

Before Anderson begins to paint, he brings the photo into Photoshop on a computer and manipulates the image so it will make a good quality painting.

“I will usually crop the photo, adjust the contrast and sometimes add or delete elements,” he says.

“Once I have the photo the way I want it, I print it and use an opaque projector to project the image on a surface, such as canvas or paper.”

He uses charcoal, pencil or paint to sketch the image. Once he has a sample line drawing on the surface, he fills the canvas or paper with layers of paint.

“Usually, my goal is to paint the entire surface, so any time I stop, the painting could be finished. Working on a painting longer defines the image more,” says Anderson.

Painting is all about the appearance and quality, Anderson says. He creates the type of painting he wants by using oil, water color or liquid paint to make a painting more transparent.

“Oil painting is the process of painting with pigments bound with a medium of oil. There are several different mediums, but linseed oil is probably the most common,” says Anderson.

Oil paint can be used on many different surfaces. Anderson says he uses cotton canvas primed with gesso and hog’s hair or synthetic bristle brushes to apply the paint.

“My paint is thinned with a solvent such as artist-grade mineral spirits,” he added.

Anderson explains that watercolor paint is a pigment suspended in a water-soluble vehicle.

“I paint on paper when I use watercolors, and the best part about using watercolors is that it’s generally more transparent than oil paint,” he says.

Anderson has painted more portraits of people and animals than landscapes. He says he wants to become better at landscapes. Someday, when Anderson has more time, he would like to paint “plein air” from life, but for now he says it’s convenient for him to paint from photographs.

“I like playing the visual ‘trick’ on the eye you get with realism,” he says. “Folks are usually very appreciative and that makes me feel good. Normally I need a couple of



Anderson does oil and watercolor paintings. He works full-time as a technical illustrator.

months to do a painting, and the subject, as well as size, determines the price,” he added.

Anderson also plans on being a Da Vinci dogs artist for Therapy Partners benefit again this year. “I’ll be ‘helping’ a dog create a painting, and then the painting will be auctioned at Therapy Partners’ fundraiser Dog Days of Summer, he says.

Anderson paintings can be seen at the annual Athens State University alumni exhibit. Anderson says anyone who has

attended Athens State and creates art is eligible to exhibit.

“We are looking for as many Athens State alumni to participate as possible, he says. Anyone interested can contact Anderson, or visit asuart.com for more information.

Anderson’s paintings can be seen online at garyandersonart.com. If you would like more information about his art work he can be reached at garyanderson@knology.net or (256) 683-8742.