

Interview with Mamta Herland

by

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Nov 2006, Antwerp, Belgium

Artist Mamta B. Herland



I am proud to present to you artist Mamta Herland and proud to say she donated 3 of her specially made artworks to the cause of anti-child labour (Programa Muchacho Trabajadores) to the Banco Central in Quito, Ecuador last March 2006. I am so thankful for her great effort!

Tru: What kind of work you do?

Mamta: As a visual artist I use number of methods and materials to communicate ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Although I have my Masters Degree background in painting, I basically like to create work using computer as my medium to create digital collages and digital paintings. I have also integrated few of my graphic design skills learned for the sake of commercial use into a process of non commercial art work. The source of my artistic activities usually originates from my own archive of photography that are being transformed, and in many cases synthesizing with available computer software.

Besides creating traditional paintings (basically with acrylic paint) and creating two dimensional digital art works, I also employ my self creating short video films. My painting however has undergone a process from using pure paint to applying layers of manual laser photo transfers on canvas.

Tru: What got you into it?

Mamta: Art activity is a way of getting freedom and creative expression. My artistic expression is my way of capturing the different ideas and visions which I constantly experience and perceive. I have always been inspired by the experimentation and exploration of new techniques and new tools (what's more, I was encouraged by David Hockney's insightful book 'Secret Knowledge', knowing how the old masters used mirrors and lenses). Even few years back only few artists and their digitally created artwork were taken seriously, however, things have changed rapidly. During my studies in UK, I realize that digital means is an opportunity for artists to exercise the timely media to reflect various artistic expressions. The idea of the adaptation of technological means among artists subsequently led me to research on 'digital art' weighing against the traditional art work, as well as responses by artists, museums and the international art world. I have done an extensive survey involving some of the world renown artists and institutions (among them MOMA and Tate) to support my investigation. The continuing conflicting issues, debates and discourse around the advent of this new media inspired me write the dissertation "The Impact of Giclée. A shift towards digital print in future art" purely based on fresh inputs from above mentioned.



(this is one of the 3 paintings she donated to the Banco Central, Ecuador-see how the art speaks for itself- the reality of child labor)

Based on the dissertation I further extended my research with the thesis title "Internet and the World Wide Web," Consequences for Fine Art.

However this time exploring the merger between Art and the Internet - the constant challenges and its outcome. (available at my website MamtaArt.com).

Tru: Any interests that motivated you to this kind of work?

Mamta: I am being driven by what is new and unique, to create images that simulate the imagination of the onlooker instead of being the expression of imagination of the creator.

However, the underline of my work is in some way to persuade feelings despite the media used.

Tru: How long you have been doing this work?

Mamta: It took me a long time to discover my potential abilities towards artistic imaginations. I have mostly studied general sciences (subjects like mathematics and informatics and so on) in Oslo University although my every day interests and activities convinced me somewhat else. I loved exploiting my self in practical tasks instead of theoretical assignments. It was only after my marriage to Geir Herland I choose the artistic path and for that reason I have considered my self as a practicing artist since 1996, following the time I was accepted at Sydney College of Arts in 1996. I have been creating artwork ever since and throughout my studies in Graphic design in Oslo and later MA in Fine Art in UK.



Tru: Why do you choose this kind of work?

Mamta: I find artistic activities somewhat innovating and challenging, as well as working with new technology implies not only creating simply artwork but also provide artists' the possibility to have public perceive their works worldwide at no time.

Tru: What are the tools you use for your arts?

Mamta: Artists have always being in the forefront, using new technology. Following the same convention I like first and foremost to employ digital technology as one of my key tools, and in addition, the internet to show my work – a tool that artistically, visually communicates with viewers.

As mentioned, I also work with more traditional tools like brush and acrylic to make paintings. However these tools and medium varies from time to time depending on the relevance and theme that I desire.



Tru: *How do you generally work?*

Mamta: With my digital artwork I like to transform my original photographs, original paintings and prints into digital works. I have few years back illustrated in a simple manner the basic step by step process of my work in my article "Mamta Digitized - My way to make digital fine art". It can be read at my website www.MamtaArt.com. Since then however I have practiced and experimented with more complex skills.



Tru: *What do you want to tell?*

Mamta: First of all, I intend my work to resonate with positive energy and somewhat

evoke emotion. Secondly, I like to engage and involve viewers and media with the issues the digital world raises in our time- especially towards artists and the market. Some of my digital works therefore demonstrates issues raised by the emergence of digital technology, Internet and World Wide Web and its impact on art and artists. Digital technology provides artists with a radically new set of possibilities necessitating a new set of skills. Even in our current time, art made by the digital tool box has been viewed by way of scepticism, as has always been the case with striking new technologies in art. It has been alleged as is to simply press a button to make digital art, and the computer will do the rest, missing the hand of the artist. Moreover, some traditionalists argue therefore that such art printed on archival museum quality substrates cannot be labelled art. Although I believe that the artists' mind is utmost noteworthy than the hand- it is the idea rather than the medium that I consider what measures up.

Digital technology and telecommunication are, and increasingly so will be, part of our daily life and routines, whether we decide to be plugged in or not. Nevertheless many issues need to be discussed with reference to originality and authenticity, copyright and ownership. Do I have the right to include elements of other artists work in my own, and in case 10 or 50 % of it? Is it then my original, and is a digital original the image shown on the computer screen, the first print or the ones and zero's that is the computer representation of the art work? The art market is based on scarcity and 'fame' presenting art as an investment. New technology adds insecurity, even more so when an edition can be infinite with unprecedented quality. The price of a piece of art might very well be different then the value as experienced by the viewer. Moreover, art can be rented from a virtual 'gallery', presented on a flat screen and renewed every month. The art lover now no longer have to visit a gallery or museum, art can now be enjoyed anywhere anytime anyplace. Art can develop into a new democratic aura being available for the masses and not only for the few, being an instrument for pleasure and contemplation, not mainly as an investment. Now wonders many art galleries are insecure teaming with other art traditionalists in dispute against the digitalisation of art. Well, these are after all thought provoking issues one might like to look into.



Tru: *What do you want to reach?*

Mamta: I like my work to expand in different possible artistic dimensions and genre that future combine the aesthetic of technology with a sense of spirituality and transcendental emotion. I prefer diversification in working with different ideas and expression and have no intention of confining myself to a specific style or a genre.

Tru: *What are you currently working on?*

Mamta: I have recently completed two commission pieces, a painting for a private client and a digital image for the cultural council in the town I live. At present I am working on an traditional yet experimental painting that refer to a 'digitized' large portrait intending that viewer being drag spontaneously in experiencing a visual tension between proximity and distant. It is not the viewer but rather the image itself decides where the viewer may position himself in order to fully experience the clear image of the painted portrait.

Tru: *Do you have more to add about your arts or about yourself?*

Mamta: I too consider as a part of the evolution of surrealism that is strongly influenced by mass-media and technology. Drawing on my knowledge of computer and commercial design techniques, processes and working methods, I have developed my own approach. I see diversification of artistic intentions not to be confined or limit with 'style' or uniqueness. To have an 'artistic style' I believe artist need to constrain within a boundary of creative practice and limiting exploration. This however what art critic, curator and art institution wants and rather that's what qualifies art? In fact as far I am concern art as spontaneity of a certain vision and what is worth noticing is how the media and the art critic define art' and the medium in which it has been expressed in.

Tru, as you have already looked up on my website you know the most the stuff needs to know about me. However I would like to add that my husband and I recently established a Gallery 'Mamta Art Gallery' nearby Oslo city where I now have my bright studio and hopefully in the long run I may well like to collaborate with some international artists.

Tru: Thank you Mamta. God bless you and your family and more success in everything you do.

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Thank you by Tru.

If you like to see more of her art -click this link www.MamtaArt.com

Wednesday November 8, 2006 - 06:27pm (CET)