The Story Reveals Itself [1]

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Image Essay by Moira De Luca

Abstraction and Hyperrealism Blend on the Canvas

When I was a child in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the things I enjoyed most were painting and drawing. I kept looking for the moment when I could sit quietly at the table, let my imagination take flight, and paint.

Now, I never find myself wondering what I'm going to paint next. I constantly have ideas of things I could put on a canvas, mostly going back to my childhood, but the truth is that the subject ends up revealing itself after I work in layers and layers of oil paint. It is just as magic as it sounds, and that moment is exciting: The original abstract image can now be as real as I want it to be.

I start by placing the canvas flat on the floor and layering on colors in different mediums and consistencies. I prepare the colors and dribble them on. They mix by themselves, or I slightly direct them. At the beginning, I don't want to control the process too much; I want each addition to be just another medium. That way, they'll show me the path and the direction where the piece is going. In the meantime, I enjoy the process. Magic is happening in front of me, and I can be a spectator.

As days and months go by, the piece starts maturing, with characters and places beginning to appear. I let some of them stay, and I make others go away. I cannot be a spectator anymore, and I control what is happening in the piece. By this point, I am using brushes. I spend a lot of time observing the canvas and turning it in different directions, because each will tell a different story. Many times, the characters in the paintings are based on my own kids. I use them as models just as other artists paint the landscapes they see through the windows of their ateliers.

People often ask me about the characters: Where are they? Where are they going? Why are they there, and why are they looking at us?

My images show a duality: the abstraction of the background and the hyperrealism of the figures. When these merge, we can start making our own stories. I like to let the observer discover themselves there and find the mood the characters could be experiencing as well as the places they could be traveling to or coming from.

As an artist, I am subjective. When people view one of my paintings and tell me what the image means to them or see a totally different story from what I initially intended, I start seeing it differently, too, and I also discover new things. In this way, the creative process keeps happening in my mind, even after the painting is done.

Moira De Luca was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Her father was a shoe designer, and her mother took her to her first drawing class. She has studied drawing and painting since she was twelve years old in different art schools in Buenos Aires. In 1998, she moved to the United States and continued pursuing her artistic career. Later, she began to draw and design custom furniture. She is currently part of the California Closets team, which helps keep her oils and brushes organized.

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