

online
member of
the month
**LISA
GROTHMAN
RYAN**



Determined to keep her work fresh, ArtScuttlebutt.com member Lisa Grothman Ryan focuses on a subject that fascinate her and will move on to another when the excitement ebbs.

"I want to be interested in what I'm painting. I don't want to feel like I'm tired of it," she states.

In the past, the 40-year-old artist from Chicago has painted fish, flowers, fruit and vegetables. She is currently working on a series of robots. Though at first glance these topics have little in common, what ties these diverse interests together is Ryan's love of narrative.

"What I like about my paintings is that, even if it's a painting of two peppers, there is a story behind it. There's something to read in there. Everyone who comes to see the robots, they all see something different in them," she explains. "I love to paint any kind of still life because I just see personality in everything."

Personality is very reason the robots caught Ryan's eye. A few years ago, she visited the Museum of Science and Industry where she stumbled upon an exhibition of vintage toy robots from the '40s and '50s. Immediately, she was charmed by their fun expressions and "bright, bold, very vivid colors." She contacted the curator of the exhibit and was given permission to take hundreds of reference photographs. Ryan then alters their shape and color to suit her vision. Each robot possesses its own identity. Ryan's personal favorite is *Mighty Warrior*.

"He's the eternal optimist. Look at him. He's moving forward. That's how I am," she states.

Ryan's robot series has been very popular among collectors. Even Ryan's two children, a young boy and girl, now love to paint their own versions of the robots, too. The experience has inspired Ryan to start her own collection of robots.

"The robots have really become part of my family. I feel kind of sad when I sell them because they are pretty close to my heart."

Ryan sells her art through her Web site, <http://lisaryans-gallery.com>, offering giclées of various sizes in addition to originals. Selling giclées has been a boon for Ryan, as each original oil is made up of many layers and takes her a long time to complete. Last year, Ryan exhibited her originals and

giclées at the Lakeview East Festival of the Arts with great success. This is due to the great deal of effort Ryan puts forth to ensure high-quality printing of her reproductions.

"I work closely with a photographer who prints all my giclée prints. It's great because he's fastidious about matching the colors, and we work hard on each one. It's fun to be able to share my work with people for an affordable price."

In addition to her Web site, Ryan also sells giclées at Foursided (www.foursidedonline.blogspot.com), a framing and gift shop with a very funky, cool vibe.

Encouraged by the positive reception to her robot series, Ryan is determined to focus on painting and making prints for the remainder of the year and into the next. Her aspirations for 2011 include creating large-scale paintings in her newly renovated home studio. Already she has ideas for a new body of work. "Next year, I'll have an actual studio to work in, and I would like to start working on really big paintings. Once I finish the robots, I'm going to start thinking about another series. One of the ideas I was thinking about is doing insects. A couple years ago, we had an infiltration of cicadas. They were so fascinating. I took a lot of photos of them, so I think my next series will be large canvas paintings of insects. That would be pretty cool." **AC**

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Mighty Warrior by Lisa Grothman Ryan. Oil on canvas, 30" x 24".

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