

MARY SPICER

artist / photographer

Born and raised along the river in our beautiful Ottawa Valley, I have spent many years drawing, photographing, and being influenced by my surroundings. I am principally self-taught, adding to my creative box of tricks through experimentation and varied work and life experience. I now maintain a studio at home in Ottawa's east end (still somewhat close to the river), am kept company by my husband, two daughters, our Labrador Retriever, and a somewhat feral cat. Kept going by a healthy sense of humour and an inability to quit, I am also a practising, self-employed graphic designer and professional picture framer. When time permits, I take part in exhibitions and festivals in the Ottawa region.

THE HIGH LONESOME PROJECT: I am currently pursuing a series that combines photography and drawing to examine the frailty of memory. I am fascinated by what we choose to remember, what we are able to remember, and how our imaginations can and do fill in any gaps. **EDITH DIED LAUGHING:** A box of cut out paper dolls belonging to my Grandmother has opened a door for my sense of humour... trying to bring together a generation of strong women who are long past, and my own somewhat colourful present. I maintain a series of cards and prints, available locally and at festivals, and most recently showed mixed media works, "Playing with Dolls and Sharp Things" at Chinatown Remixed.

Long Winded Artist's Statement

I have been drawing pictures for a very long time. I really like to draw. My work has been exhibited on refrigerators in Eastern Ontario and the Pontiac, and hangs in the homes of relatives all over Ottawa. Actually, it is even in the homes of people I have met only briefly, and might someday be stolen on the internet.

When not in the kitchen stepping on the dog, I work in a cheerfully decorated basement office, often with one daughter on the floor illustrating her own books while the other photographs herself and hums along to her i-pod. My husband likely will be somewhere in the house renovating something.

As often as it gets in the way, life continuously offers up inspiration to draw or photograph something. The moments offered dictate the medium I use (as does the reality of carpal tunnel syndrome) and the story that needs to be told. My cheerfully decorated basement office is a complete artist's studio, filled with the trusty tools I need to make those image stories happen; pencils, paintbrushes, two functioning cameras, many antique and broken cameras, two hammers, and three computers. Sadly, the beer fridge has been given up in the interests of energy conservation.

Taking ideas from sketch and camera to print and providing complete creative services for small businesses is what mad mother designs is all about. Since choosing family over deadlines a while ago, I spend my creative time drawing, painting, and photographing my world.

It's a neat one.

Current Work

Much of my work is created while thigh-deep in snow and covered in ice, lying in a bed of pine needles looking up at a canopy of branches, or creeping through decayed, abandoned buildings....its not about people, its about what they ignore or leave behind.

When drawing, my work exhibits the same quiet and stillness in the photography, perhaps because the pencil work requires that same mental space to create it, and allows an attention to detail. In portraits of both people and buildings, I love the gentle way a face is captured with graphite, and the opportunity to focus on small details with a pencil. The long time necessary to create a landscape or portrait creates an intimacy with the final work.



Exhibitions / Shows/Festivals

(ongoing Private sales and commissions)

- 2012 Chinatown Remixed solo exhibit (mixed media; **Playing with Dolls and Sharp Things**)
- 2012 Adornato/Li/Spicer @ Pressed (mixed media/Edith Died Laughing)
- 2012 Downtown Rideau Underpass Project (solo photography from Carp Fair Obsessions)
- 2011 OCCUPY! Cyckelogic Christmas (group)show
- 2011 Ide Hands (Christmas) Art and Craft Sale
- 2011 Selections 2011, Trinity Gallery (juried selection of two pieces; graphite portrait and mixed media work)
- 2011 Orléans Festival d'Orléans , Shenkman Centre
- 2010 BazArt, Shenkman Centre
- 2010 Rumour Has It Group show
- 2010 Idle Hands Art and Craft Show
- 2010 Orléans Festival d'Orléans
- 2009 Back Burner –group show, PGF(drawing)
- 2009 Cyclelogik Christmas Show
- 2008-Foot Fetish Group show
- 2008-Revolutionary Art Group show
- 2007 Open House (photography, drawing)
- 2007 Festival X – Group show at Patrick Gordon Framing (photography)
- 2006 Even Grander Opening (Group) Show (photo-based mixed meda)
- 2006 Old Ottawa South Art Festival (photography, mixed media)
- 2005 Plant Bath Ottawa (photography, mixed media)
- 2005 Patrick Gordon Framing (Preston Studio tour – solo photography show)
- 2005 Old Ottawa South Art Festival (photography, mixed media)
- 2005 Business Showcase Blackburn Hamlet (photography, drawing)
- 2004 December: Solo – Invitation only RBC (photography)
- 2004-5 Carlen Gallery (photography)
- 2004 November: Preston Art Centre (photography)
- 2000 – 2003 Invitation only exhibitions (drawing, painting)