

Water provides inspiration for Kemah artist

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Photos by Kevin Cox



The studio overlooking Galveston Bay on the second floor of Robin Stone Collins' Kemah home no doubt serves as the only muse she needs to create her paintings of pelicans, sailboats, shorelines and just about anything else coastal.

"I love the water, so it provides the inspiration for most of my themes," Collins said.

Growing up in Pasadena, Collins had horses and lived down the street from famous honky-tonk Gilley's, so western art also occupies her portfolio.

"I'm really a cowgirl at heart," she said.

Her mother, an oil painter, had a big influence on Collins' art, mainly because she wouldn't buy her coloring books. Instead, she gave the young Collins paper, pencils and paint. Her mother would say to her: "If you want a house, draw the house, if you want a boat, draw the boat," which prompted Collins to find her own style.

While majoring in radio/TV with a minor in art at the University of Houston, Collins spent her free time as a "Derrick Doll," dancing at halftime for the Houston Oilers, later obtaining a degree in graphic design from the Art Institute of Houston.

"I painted in watercolors for 20 years, until I studied with Stephen Quiller in Colorado," Collins said.

She credits Quiller and Galveston artist René Wiley for encouraging her to make the switch to acrylics, adding that they both influenced her regarding color theory.



"When you paint from a photo, you see the familiar, but if you turn the photo upside down, your brain is only looking at geometric designs," she said. "So everything becomes round, square, triangular and abstract, and I'm forced to look at my reference material thereby concentrating more on exact light and color."

Her paintings don't have the same freshness if she paints using photos that are right side up, she said.

"Rather than doing what you know, you basically override your brain," she said.



Collins has shown her work at The Emporium at Eibands and Simply Art Gallery, both in Galveston; Island Gallery in Seabrook; and Bremond Gallery in Central Texas.

But she's had her best luck with sales by word-of-mouth and hanging her art in local restaurants, she said.

In the last few months, Collins has sold several paintings on display at Amadeus Restaurant in Kemah and has been commissioned to paint a wall mural for the restaurant in the weeks to come.

Collins is currently working on two other commission pieces and a variety of

animal paintings that will hang in a local veterinary clinic.

When not painting, Collins stays busy running her company, Stone Studio Graphics. She

also likes to fish, cook and watch football — especially at Clear Falls High School, where her younger son is the starting quarterback.

“Art is good therapy for me,” said Collins, who gets excited when her paintings find good homes.

For information, visit www.robinstonecollins.com.

