

Artist of the Day

(Meet your Teachers): Brian Hierstein



-Born in Iowa, went to grade school and junior high in Minnesota, went to high school in Pekin, Illinois, went to Illinois Central College in East Peoria, went to Northern Illinois University for Art Education, moved to Rockford to teach at Page Park School/ Wilson ASPIRE before Roosevelt

-Making art since childhood. Made cartoon art when young. Made nerdy art based on science fiction in high school. Made portraits in young adulthood. Working on Pop Surrealism now.

-Frequently paints with acrylic paint, carves wood, uses oil pastels, sews, sculpts with wire (pipe cleaners)

-Collects pez, is vegan, very interested in pop culture (movies, celebrities, video games, comic books, etc). Has worked over 20 different jobs to afford college (usually 2 or more jobs at a time).



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As an art teacher it is important to make all types of art. Brian has sewn, embroidered, made ceramics, metalwork and wood carvings with a variety of subject matter.



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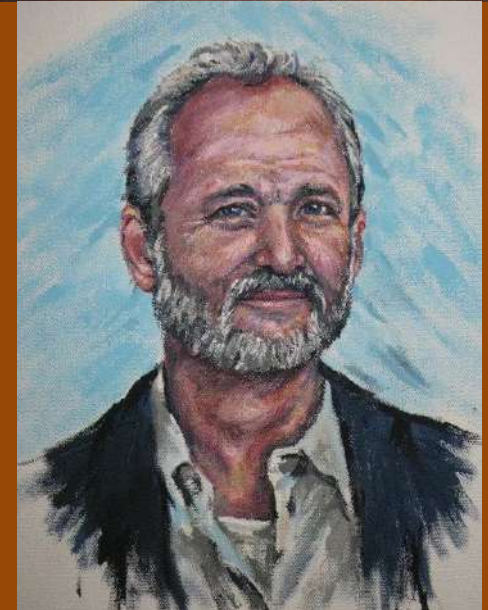
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When Brian was in high school he made a small pipe cleaner animal at an art club meeting. He kept making pipe cleaner sculptures and eventually made a series of dinosaurs that represented friends. Each sculpture contained a letter to the person that they would only be able to read if they destroyed the sculpture.

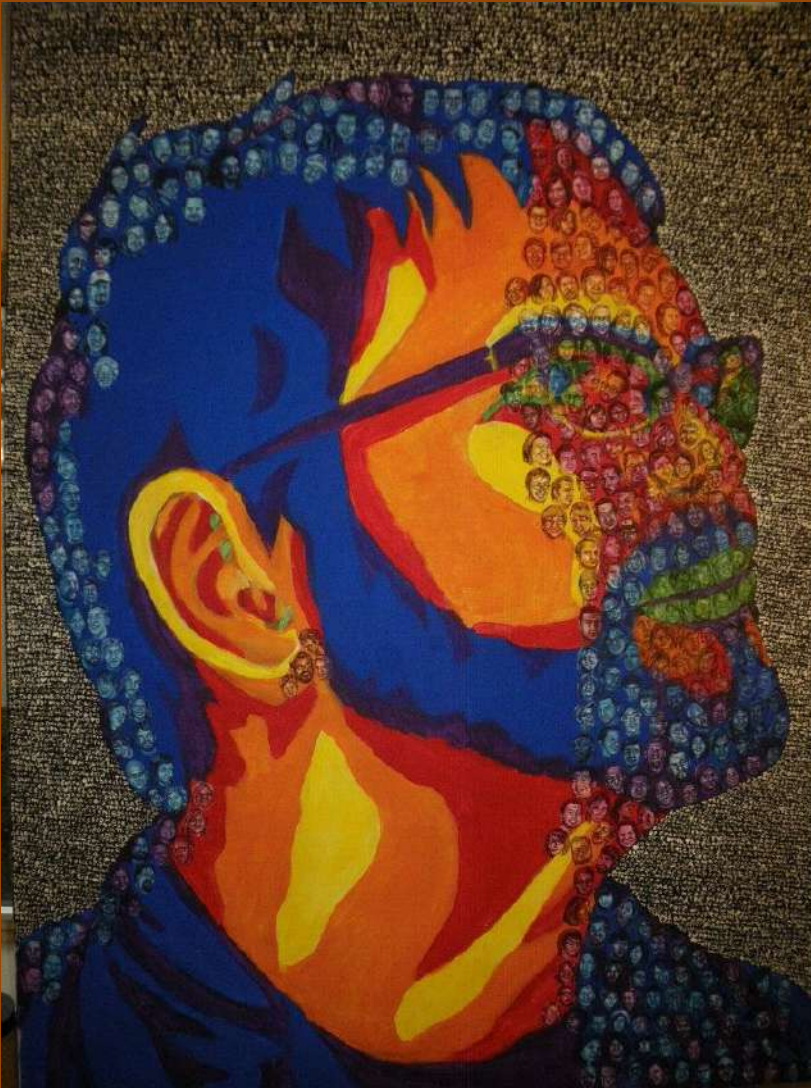
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After college Brian mostly created portraits of friends and relatives with hand carved frames



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For the past several years Brian has been working intermittently on a self portrait composed of pinky to thumb sized portraits of everyone he has known throughout his life.



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Another character Brian admired was The Fonz from Happy Days because he was calm and even tempered.

Brian also studied Buddhism and found parallels between The Fonz and Buddhism.

The painting was done in the style of Buddhist scrolls and the frame was hand carved and hand colored with Buddhist symbols (including Buddha giving a thumbs up).

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The trick to art is trying to create something that is not usually shown.

Brian loves Jurassic Park but images of the characters with dinosaurs are used too often.

Brian decided to combine his favorite movie characters with one of his favorite activities (using shopping carts as skate boards).

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This painting was a gift for Kyle Wolfe (the Roosevelt Graphics Teacher) because he loves Star Wars.

He asked Brian to paint Chewbacca and Brian found a photograph where the character was smiling in a flirty way.

Brian went with that idea and made the image into an ad for a phone dating service.

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Most people have photos of important memories that they love to share with others but nobody usually cares.

Brian used to work at a pet shop and hated hamsters because they would always attack him.

He decided to paint his real wedding being attacked.

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This painting was for a music challenge.

Brian searched music legends and Justin Bieber kept coming up.

Brian felt that he has become like a Peter Pan Lost Boy going off the deep end.

He wanted him flying past London but not through his own power. A griffin would be too noble so Brian created Griffies (kitten and parakeet hybrids)

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This painting was made for a group show themed around Rockford's Symbol sculpture.

Brian struggled with making someone else's sculpture into his own character.

Brian loves characters so he decided to bring the sculpture to life.

He then decided to create a battle between Rockford's most famous sculpture and Chicago's (The Chicago Picasso).

The battle is viewed by other Rockford and Chicago sculptures

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This painting “Anne Yeties: Retrospective” came about from a joke about the baby portrait photographer Anne Geddes.

While Brian was creating this he was finding out that he and his wife were expecting their first child.

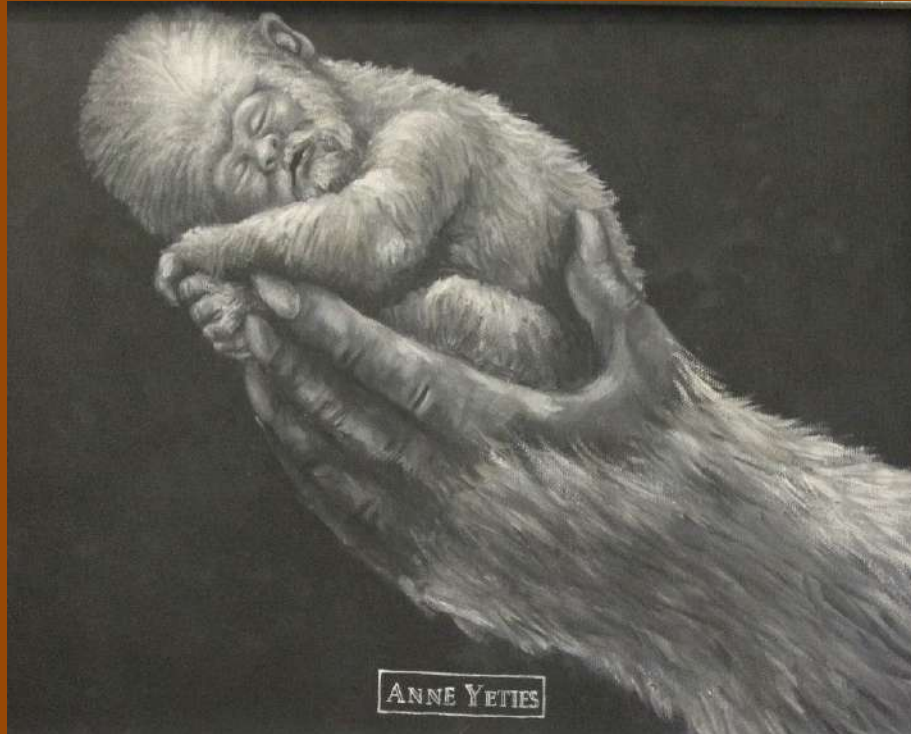
Aside from imitating famous Anne Geddes works he used butterflies and flowers from the region where the Yeti is believed to live.

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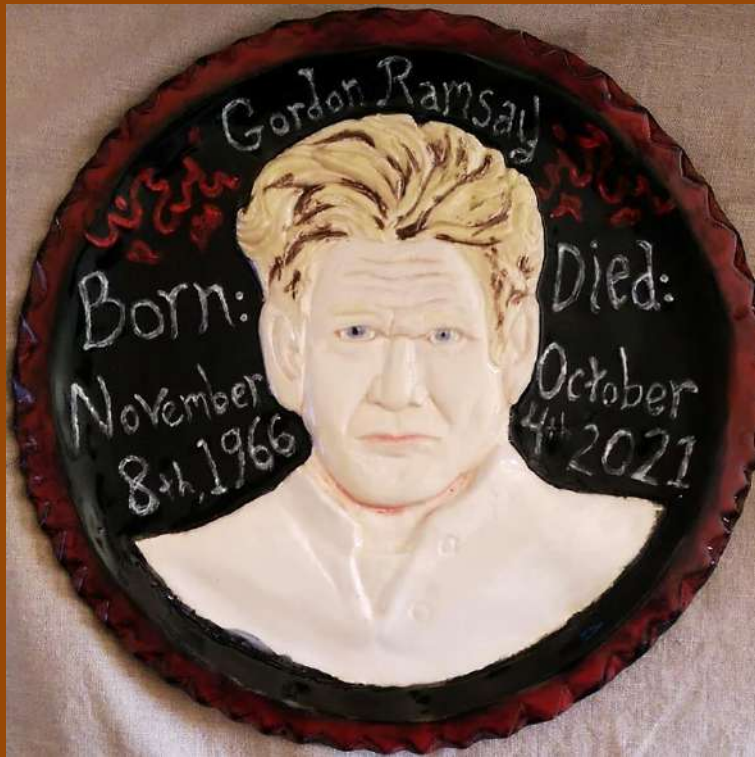
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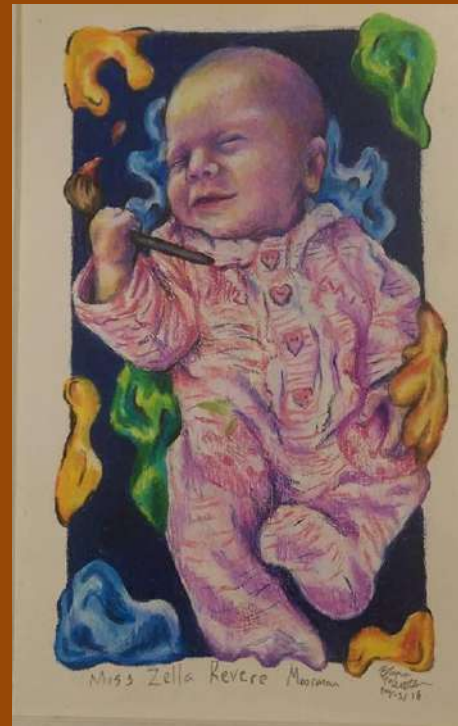
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