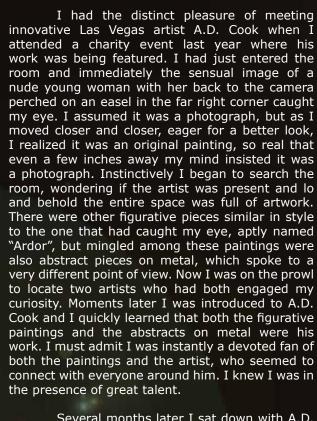
The Relentless

Artist A.D. Cook

by Jennifer Gaydeski



Several months later I sat down with A.D. in his home to learn more about the artist, his journey and his vision for the future of his art. We were surrounded by captivating nudes, thought provoking abstracts and a couple of intimate works in progress as A.D.'s wife Kathy poured us both a cup of coffee and we settled down at the kitchen table to talk. Of course, the first question on my mind was how A.D. had become an artist.

"I've always known that I was going to be an artist. For me, it was never a question," he states matter-of-factly. "I was the kid winning art contests in first and second grade. I was the guy who designed the school plays. It was just sort of known." A.D. also moved three or four times a year when he was a kid, from Phoenix to Wisconsin to Florida to Oregon. His father was in construction and chased work around the country. Drawing was the one thing A.D. could do no matter where he



went and be good at it. It was also something he could do on his own. A.D. never really had any formal training during these years, other than some workshops or classes along the way, making him primarily self-taught as an artist, whose art has naturally evolved. And I must say, his art has evolved into something quite special. I asked A.D. how he describes his work to the many people he encounters.

"Sometimes it depends on who I'm talking to because I do figuratives and abstracts and sometimes it's hard for people to make the jump that I do both. If I am talking about abstract art, I have been doing abstracts forever." A.D. and Kathy actually created abstract neck wear in the mid-80's and A.D. has been doing abstracts ever since, most recently on metal. These abstract pieces are really expressions of more contemporary imagery and imaginative landscapes - the kind of pieces that spark creative conversation in a room, as everyone interprets each piece differently. A.D.'s figurative pieces, such as "Ardor", are less playful than the abstract pieces and radically different, presented in a style that some people have called hyper-real due to the photographic quality of the painting.

The experience of creating both these styles also presents a duality for A.D. "The abstract pieces sort of lead me," he says. "With figurative painting I know exactly what I want to create." The exception for A.D. is the work he does with figuratives on metal. They cross a chasm between the fine detail that he puts into canvas / linen



Natalie, Jenn, Kelly, Randee & Donna with A.D. at Grape Vegas, Las Vegas, NV.





paintings and the free-form process that defines the abstracts. A.D. has done figuratives on metal for a long time. In fact, he has been doing figuratives since he was a kid, when he would make a little pocket money by doing drawings of Raquel Welch or a schoolmate's girlfriend. These drawings were a technical challenge for him as he continued to hone his talent. A.D. believes in, "Just doing it. That's the best way to learn. If it doesn't work out, do it again."

A.D. is still learning today. His prolific body of work speaks to a growth and an exploration of possibility that defines him as an artist who is continually looking to the future. He particularly enjoys doing commissions for discriminating art collectors. His figurative portrait commissions begin with a custom, professional photo shoot event in a photography studio and progress throughout the painting process to a final unveiling. Creating these heirloom originals on canvas and linen are his particular joy and raison d'etre. In fact, A.D.'s current body of work only includes originals, so owning an A.D. Cook piece is very special.

When I asked A.D. where he sees his art going, he said, "I think the best way to describe it would be 'epic pieces' - large statements, whether they be abstract or figurative, particularly in Vegas." These large scale pieces would be a broader canvas for A.D. to make a statement with his work, and I was intrigued by his connection to Vegas. "There is a lot that can be





Original abstracts on metal...

above: Orb 2700 - 28" x 21" 2009

center: Abstract 2708

"Heaven and Earth" - 36" x 18" 2009

right: Abstract 2703 - 38" x 8" 2009









Figurative originals on canvas...

far left: Ardor - 48" x 36" 2007

above: Solitaire - 24" x 72" 2005

left: Luxe - 36" x 48" 2008

Figurative originals on metal...

previous spread left: Syrah - 36" x 18"

previous spread right: Muah! - 36" x 18"

below: Breeze - 30" x 60" 2007

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