

ART + CULTURE



*An Interview with
Gina Minichino*

Interviewed by Kelly de Geer

MINICHINO
2009



GINA MINICHINO

Self, 2011.

KDG: What has sparked your interest in painting typical ‘American Food’?

GM: I was just looking to paint something different than traditional still life... something fun, and something I thought was me. I think the first food painting I did was a bowl of Lucky Charms. It was one of those times I was about to eat something and ended up photographing it! It was so beautiful. After that I started looking at junk food more carefully and noticing the gorgeous package design. It evolved into a desire to capture these weird and beautiful foods as a bit of a snapshot from the time I live in.

KDG: How did your background in Cartooning bring you into painting? Would you say there is a connecting link there for you?

GM: I don’t believe there is a direct connection between my cartooning and painting. I always loved to draw cartoons... Charles Schulz’s PEANUTS being my earliest and strongest influence. After earning a BFA at the School of Visual Arts in cartooning, I went back and took a portrait painting course and fell in love with oils.

KDG: As a viewer, I sense the comfort aspect as well as a nostalgic feel to the ‘American Food’ series. Would you say your work results as a reflection of your inner child as well as your adulthood?

GM: Absolutely! Actually, I feel that my inner child and my adulthood are one in the same. The food items do have a connection to comfort and nostalgia. Since I’ve been painting them a while, I know I’m not alone in this feeling. I hear a lot of stories of people’s attachments to certain foods. Those feelings built in childhood are strong. My mom has told me that she ate tons of frozen Milkyway candy bars when she was pregnant with me. (cont...)



Two Blow Pops, 2018.



Peanut Butter Cup, 2017.



Twizzlers, 2017.



Kiss, 2011.



Trolli Squiggles, 2014.



Green Apple Jolly Rancher, 2015.



Heart Donut, 2009.



Peppermint Pattie, 2018.

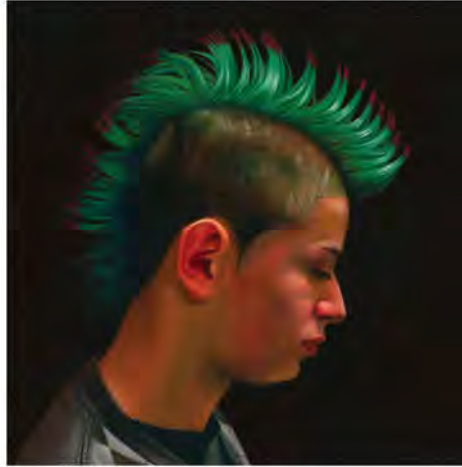
(cont...) I think that is where my sweet tooth comes from! And I always remember my dad having a bunch of snack cakes in the fridge when I was a kid!

KDG: How do you decide to paint portraits of people and animals? Are they caught on camera and appeal to you as they are, or do they have a certain meaning to your personal life?

GM: My portraits do have personal meaning. Most of the time I'm painting people that I know, and are kind enough to model for me. I would take photographs with the intention to create a painting. The same with the animal portraits. They are personal to me, in that I hoped to show the subject to be just as complex and soulful as a human being.



Cow, 2010.



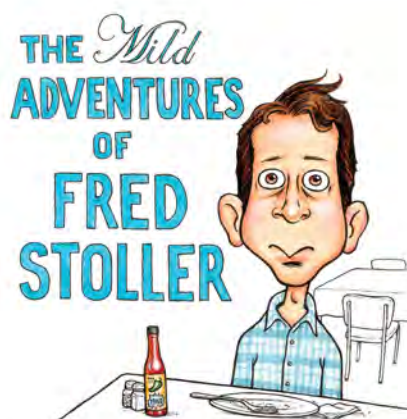
Young Punk, 2010.



Chicken, 2010.

KDG: Considering the current climate, have you been dealing positively with change and creativity? Or the complete opposite? As an artist who has to face drastic changes in the industry, what are your thoughts on the present and the future in the Arts?

GM: I feel positive regarding the change. Change is difficult, but whatever the cause, I believe positivity and creativity can come from it. There's always been a certain amount of struggle in the art industry. I think as it changes, artists will adapt and continue to create, regardless. I think that is comforting.



Cartoons



GINA MINICHINO

KDG: Would you consider using more digital platforms or ways to exhibit your work?

GM: I have my website and I love Instagram! I'm always open to a digital gallery. Really though, there is nothing like viewing a painting in person.

KDG: Thank you Gina!

Portrait of Gina Minichino



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@GINAMINICHINO