

Dixie Ferrer Uses a Unique Layering Process to Create Ethereal Collages

“All of Brown County could be my studio,” says mixed media artist Dixie Ferrer.

She has always embraced nature and the tactile elements it offers, and she is continually inspired by her emotional response to her surroundings.

Ms. Ferrer has been a professional artist for more than 30 years. Today she works mainly in mixed media collage and sculpture, layering various collage materials with her own drawings, paintings, photographs and prints.

Her current project is a series of mixed media collages featuring Koi, water gardens and plants. To achieve the ethereal look of these pieces, Ms. Ferrer layers graphic drawing, watercolor painting and printmaking with collage materials.

“What excited me about mixed media is the constant exploration and discovery,” she explains.

New techniques in the medium are constantly being developed and published. Ms. Ferrer keeps up with what is happening by reading and absorbing everything she can about art and the mediums that interest her. Her art continually evolves with what she learns.

“I was always surrounded by artists during my childhood,” she says. “My mother was involved in textiles, so I first gravitated toward that medium.”

She learned a variety of surface design methods and combined them with sewing. It was a natural transition from fabrics into mixed media collage.

“I enjoy the tactile quality of the surface, whether it’s fabric, paint or paper,” she says.

Ms. Ferrer also enjoys other aspects of the art world. She owns Ferrer Gallery in downtown Nashville with her husband, painter Dick Ferrer, where she runs the business and teaches art classes as well. Wearing so many hats, it can be challenging to find all the time she’d like to make art.

“I am constantly fine-tuning my schedule to make sure I honor my time in the studio,” she admits. “I find the times when I am just looking to be just as important as the times when I am doing.”

To get inspired, Ms. Ferrer only has to surround her workspace with various colors, papers and embellishments. She moves them around until something clicks. But many of her best ideas come just upon waking.

“It’s a delicious way to the start the day,” she says.

Her gardens are also a source of inspiration to her, offering time and space to reflect and meditate. These gardens, and a second studio she has in her home, are open to the public during the Brown County Studio and Garden Tour, held the last weekend of June each year. Guests have an

opportunity to explore the natural surroundings that are so important to the spirit of Ms. Ferrer’s art.

“I have been visiting Brown County all my life,” she explains. “I knew in my heart that it would someday be my home, where I would be a part of this incredible art community.”

More information about Dixie Ferrer and her artwork can be found at www.ferrergallery.com or www.BrownCountyStudioTour.com.



by Michele Heather Pollock