

expressive TALENT

RAETTE MEREDITH'S ART FOR A LIVING

She's an indomitable force in the North State arts community. An AmeriCorps Vista Volunteer, Raette Meredith works with Shasta County Arts Council and others who promote the arts to prove that artists can make a living at their craft. Not only does Meredith paint profusely, she works tirelessly to bring attention to the wealth of talent and arts education in the North State.

Two current projects have put Meredith's passions and talents to good use in her role as an Americorps Vista Volunteer with Shasta County Arts Council. She is instrumental in coordinating and promoting ARTsMART, an event that will be held at the Mt. Shasta Mall on October 17 to demonstrate the talent here in the North State. More than 30 performing and visual artists will entertain the public and address the question, "How do you survive as an artist?"

Her other project was borne out of her perception of a great hunger in transplanted city folks to discover arts and culture in our more rural community. She envisioned a "one-stop shopping" guide to arts education opportunities. She has designed and produced "Artazine," an online resource that lists arts education opportunities for all ages by type of class, age group, location, description, instructor biographies and more. Parents can go to the online site to find what is available for their little dancers, painters, writers and musicians. Adults can find out where to take ballroom dancing, porcelain painting classes and thespian workshops, among many others. The quarterly web magazine also promotes the work of local artists throughout each issue, featuring the work of one artist on the cover.

An artist born into a whole family with expressive talent, Meredith has studied art since age 19. She studied digital animation at Ventura Adult Continuing Education, a technical school in Southern California, and traditional animation at the North American Institute of Animation in North Hollywood. Her passion is painting with acrylics in themes that portray movement. She says she would go to every ballet if she could. "I feel the things I see," she explains. She loves to "catch people in motion." Dancers are perfect subjects, she says, because they can get into positions most

people can't.

Meredith explains that painting is "my sanity." A self-described "type A personality," she says, "It's the one thing I can do and sit still for. It's a physical need." She is currently painting faeries—an attempt to capture the magic she sees in the imaginations of her two girls, who are 6 and 7 years old. She intends to paint a faerie a day for one year. Meredith explains that she is always pushing herself and can already see the improvement in her faces from her first faerie to the one she's painting now. Many of these paintings will be published in a book entitled *Faerie Adventures*, with 250 first-edition signed copies to be sold at an event scheduled for September.



Not long ago, Meredith challenged herself to use only five colors, creating a unique and distinguishable palette. "It is less about color and more about finding the right light," she says. Her final test for a piece is to digitize the painting, turn it into black and white on the computer and then look for depth and flat spots. Flat areas indicate that the piece needs more work.

Meredith sees her painting as a legacy. "I want to paint for the rest of my life," she proclaims. She numbers everything. "This isn't a hobby; it's everything I am. I want to paint and be the best, a master, for my generation."

In addition to her own artwork, volunteer activities and raising a young family, Meredith designs websites for artists and small businesses. Her mission reflects her desire to help others achieve their goals with as little stress and as limited a cost as possible. With characteristic flair, her web designs provide a window into the hearts of their hosts.

More information about Raette Meredith's projects, artwork, where to see her work and web design can be found on the following websites: Shastaartscouncil.org; Artazine.org; Artbyraette.com; and Todaysartists.com.

