

SL images as real life art

By MORDECAI SCAGGS
Staff writer

In the past month, a new art initiative has come to Second Life which offers the possibility of bringing SL to real life in the form of high quality oil paintings. The initiative is called Secondlife-Art.

According to Jubilee Druart, founder of Secondlife-Art, there are four domains within which business operates upon the grid. First, RL to RL, where companies set up a SL location to advertise products or services they produce in RL. Related to this is the second domain, RL to SL. This is where a company produces SL versions of its RL products, for example, Nike trainers that can be color customized.

The third domain is one that all residents are very familiar with, SL to SL, where items are designed, produced and consumed solely within Second Life. Finally, the fourth of Druart's domains is SL to RL, where items are produced initially within SL and converted to RL objects.

This is the visionary concept behind Secondlife-Art, Druart's new venture, which is based at her studio in Infamy. Secondlife-Art takes digital images produced in SL (the snapshots that so many residents love to take) and converts them into full-fledged oil paintings. This is different from the Fabjectory, which takes an avatar and produces a 3D resin model of it. With Secondlife-Art, it is content truly created by the resident that is converted, whether it is a self-portrait, a portrait of a lover, a build, a landscape, or any other subject in SL.

Druart came to SL out of an interest in the amazing, and soon realized the potential for taking the creativity of Second Life into RL. With an interest in art for many years, she found Amiticia and Infamy to be the perfect place for her business, and with help from Lana Miranda, Whisker Ophelia and other residents her initiative is now ready to open for business.

But is it just art that Druart hopes will cross the border from the grid into First Life? Druart

says, "We have all heard the stories of people who are non-social in RL first, then got to know SL habits, and turn up more social in RL too — there you have RL impact," adding, "There is another aspect — the world view, time and distance will be less of a problem."

Asked whether she plans to open a gallery of her own in SL, Druart said, "I think the SL art scene is going fine without my additions, but who knows? Maybe if I meet someone who wants to start something, we might help. For now, we have too many ideas for the initiative on our hands."

But Secondlife-Art is not her only project on the grid. Running alongside Secondlife-Art is Art2art, which is aimed at helping new artists who work mainly in SL to get their work out to RL, world-wide. The images created within SL are once again turned into actual paintings, mainly in oils but also in acrylics, and then sold in RL. The original artists receive a RL commission for

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I'm not interested in creating a comic that is entirely twisted or depressing. I try to subtly weave in emotions and a sense of hope within the dark humor."

Seeing that the M2 had covered her debut webcomic, I was curious about GingerDead and Friends' progress and what she's up to now. When asked for an update, Ennui said, "The webcomic only began in October and has 8,000 other webcomics to be discovered amongst... For a newcomer, it's doing extremely well with an average of 7,000 hits and around 800 unique visitors daily. I plan to open a gallery in Second Life in hopes of introducing this medium to people who may not know about it by featuring various artists on a regular basis.

She continued, "Nocturnal Threads is doing great. People wondered if I could balance the comic and the store, but when you are equally passionate about two things it's not so difficult. Besides, Nocturnal

Threads gives me a platform to design fashion around the comic whenever I want. I wouldn't mind seeing the GingerDead collection come to fruition in the real world. For now, I have to be satisfied with tees and other merchandise I can create via Café-Press.

"So, you see, for me SL and RL are always converging. Whatever projects I choose to involve myself in within my real life will most often be expressed in some way within my Second Life."

Once I had a chance to get to know Ennui, I was impressed by her approachability and clear passion for her work. She is a true artist in both SL and RL and makes use of her talents in many mediums, with more to come, including RL traditional art such as painting and clay inspired by her webcomic. She is a published writer, with an essay on SL fashion and its convergence or influence on RL Fashion, featured in a book by Frank Koolhaas to be

published this month.

When seeing her initial post on this back in January, I fell in love with her "VenBowler" release, a unisex retro-style bowling shirt with a design from her comic on the back that comes with matching star gloves. In the ad, there is a darling red plaid skirt, which comes as part of the "VenPlaid" outfit, which of course I had to have to get the whole look.

The ensemble includes a mod flexi skirt, sleeveless top, sweater with prim cuffs and collar, gloves, panties, and adorable argyle socks. Last but not least, be sure to keep up with Ennui at her blog, <http://nocturnalthreads.blogspot.com> and GingerDead and Friends at www.gingerdead.com.

Whether you're a fan of GingerDead or Nocturnal Threads, Ennui will be one to watch. I know for sure she has gained a new reader and customer here and I look forward to see what is to come!

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It gets worse if you go through a reseller such as Emperor Linux (www.emperorlinux.com). They resell Dell, Lenovo/Thinkpad, Panasonic, Sharp, and Sony laptops... but then the markup is considerable.

For example, they're reselling the Latitude D820... for over \$2000! Not only could you get it cheaper direct, but you can get it cheaper by buying Windows to boot with the laptop!

It was a good try by Dell, but money speaks and they missed the point. We don't want to have to pay a Microsoft tax just to get good hardware from a good company.

We don't want to jump through hoops just to have a more secure system. We just want good tech cheap. Once again, shopping around helps, but sometimes you can trick the system and get it dirt cheap.

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Gissa Schilling: wow
Sas Bleriot: hi Rosa!
Sas Bleriot: hi everyone :-)
Semaj Morgan: hiya Sas
Gissa Schilling: hill street blues
www.SLTrivia.com: Gissa Schilling got the answer correctly!

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Semaj Kasei: waterworld
Xankarth Wind: The Matrix
www.SLTrivia.com: Xankarth Wind got the answer correctly!

Semaj Kasei: ?
www.SLTrivia.com: Music: In what song can the following lyrics be found? "I like buy the neatest mini skirts and stuff" (Frank Zappa) Answer: *****

www.SLTrivia.com: Music: In what song can the following lyrics be found? "I like buy the neatest mini skirts and stuff" (Frank Zappa) Clue #1: *****

Semaj Kasei: valley girl
www.SLTrivia.com: Semaj Kasei got the answer correctly!

Locations:
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100/100

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LEARNING CURVES

By DAGMAR KOJISHI
Columnist

A facet of Second Life, as any resident knows, is how quickly things change here. Still, I am stunned when I visit the New Media Consortium lands.

NMC began with one island last April. In October they announced plans to expand to seven islands, and invited member institutions and others to place islands adjoining theirs to make a sort of education continent. Those seven islands were completed a few weeks later.

Today I realized I had not been to NMC in a few weeks, and visited just to see what was happening.

In addition to the original NMC Campus, I found 12 other islands bearing names NMC Campus 1 through 12.

Scattered among them are islands with such names as Service, Outreach, Arts and Letters, Science and Mathematics. Others bear names such as Faculty Orientation, and Teaching 1, 2, and 3.

I also found Princeton, MIT, Cornell, and Ohio University, among others.

In fact, I counted 33 islands clustered together.

Compared with some residential continents, this isn't a lot. Still, it represents astounding growth in less than a year for educational institutions, which are not known for moving quickly.

I heard from a knowledgeable source that over 200 islands are now owned by educators or non-profit groups.

Do you remember when all a

business or non-profit had to do to get a story in the news media was to put up a Web page?

That stage went on for several years, actually. SL is still at the point when simply opening space in SL can generate a story, but that era is quickly coming to an end.

When NMC started, there were only about 140,000 residents (that is, 140,000 accounts). Today, there are over 4.3 million. We all know the caveats about not putting too much stock in those numbers, since so many people apparently try SL once and then never come back.

Still, taking the oft-repeated figure of 10 percent who still log in 90 days after their first foray, that leaves 430,000 people regularly using SL — almost four times as many regular users as there were accounts a year ago.

These are the boom times, no doubt. Truly, we are seeing history made.

Educators still have plenty of challenges ahead, among them:

Figuring out and documenting best practices. As we've talked about in this column before, we're very much in the beginning stages of figuring out what works and what doesn't, although early research is already giving some shape to this.

Making sure privacy issues are properly addressed. When eavesdropping on avies is so easy, what are the implications for student feedback? Plus, how do we handle the necessity of knowing the real life person behind the avatar so we can properly assign

credit? This is not the Terms of Service problem that some imagine, but it does need to be thought through.

Making sure we know who is really behind that avatar. On the other hand, since SL is really set up to shield RL identities, how can we know that the person behind the avatar is who s/he claims to be?

Registration in particular and record keeping in general. Right now, most colleges are bringing existing students into SL.

Soon, however, we will be signing up people through SL who otherwise would not have found our colleges. This is not a new problem—online classes have made this a challenge for quite some time. Nevertheless, there will be procedures to be worked out for signing up students through SL.

At least one advantage I'll be looking forward to is virtual graduation. It is possible right now to get a college degree completely online, but (as we've talked about before) students often suffer several kinds of "disconnects" in the process, not least of which is a sense of identification with the institution. SL provides connectedness.

Just as people now celebrate weddings in SL and hold church services, I expect we will begin to see graduation ceremonies that actually feel like ceremonies. It's not the main thing, but it illustrates a facet of human experience within SL that points to its strength as a medium for education.

ART

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their work.

At present there are five artists working for Druart, who she made contact with through her time as an art dealer, but as the business takes off she hopes to employ more to meet the expected demand.

To find out more about Secondlife-Art or Art2art, visit her studio in Infamy 89, 224, 41. Details can also be found on her website, www.secondlife-art.com.



THE SECONDLIFE-ART studio in Infamy is operated by Jubilee Druart. The studio offers a service whereby Druart takes images from Second Life and turns them into real life oil paintings. - Photo by MORDECAI SCAGGS

Advertising works!