

# Natalia Piccon

Digital Creative

## My Digital Art

By now, the success of the computer as a tool to be used in quite different sectors of our everyday life is generally recognised. Nevertheless, at present it is still very difficult to admit and accept that it is possible to produce a work of art with a computer.

That the computer is merely an instrument is completely obvious: whether it is snowing or the sun is shining, this box remains totally oblivious to it all, with its organs made of silicon, plastic reinforced by fibreglass, connectors, plastic, wires, and light and heavy metals.

The computer is motionless and still; it does not do as it pleases or as we please – it does only what we tell it to do, if it is capable of doing so.

Currently, the world of digital art is still in an early stage; the path to be travelled still stretches out far ahead and, in my opinion, we are still in an experimental phase. In brief, the digital “cocoon” must open slowly, since today we are still very much tied to “easel painting.” This explains, at least partially, the difficulty of art gallery owners and managers to skim the best from the world of computer art, where it is truly possible to find almost anything, ranging from photomontage to fractals, 3-D and fantasy.

Which, then, are the roads to take? Do guiding lights exist?

It is not my intention to reply exhaustively to these questions, but here I do wish to offer some absolutely personal reflections deriving from the actual work I have faced over the years.

In the first place, I believe that, artistically speaking, computer tools must be mastered in front of the monitor: it is necessary to train the eye, to learn to judge the use of colour, to create backgrounds and paintbrushes and learn how to use them, as well as the lines of composition and the forms of the image. Only after having acquired the ability to “communicate” our mental image to the computer shall we discover that this instrument is a truly unsurpassable “helper” able to re-elaborate a given composition for hours or days on end.

My predilection for digital is a deliberate choice: I use the machine and software designed for painting (Photoshop, Illustrator, Corel Painter) as the best means for expressing myself and for exploring extraordinary and unlimited artistic possibilities.

A principle that has guided me in digital artistic composition is inner need: I choose what shapes, lines and colours to use only if at that very moment I am convinced they are in keeping with my sentiments. What counts is to succeed in expressing my emotional state through computer technology.

It is on this total blending of state of mind, creative idea and use of the computer that the creation of any one artistic composition hinges. Once finished, every picture acquires uniqueness, taking on a life of its own: it is as though it had detached itself from me, becoming an independent subject. Once the work is done, it is up to me to decide whether to print it using different techniques and different supports or to show it on a screen using a normal projector.

Finally, some remarks on the technical aspects of computer art.

Technically, the “brushstrokes” are applied by using a special pen on a digital tablet (Wacom). It is on this “virtual canvas” and with the use of specific software that the work is produced. And, little by little, the lines, shapes and backgrounds come together to form a sort of electronic mosaic of pixels, which is what so-called digital artwork is. The basic element of the digital image is the pixel. But the pixel is not comparable to a dot of classical painting, since the latter is the result of the meeting of a pre-existent support with a pre-existent object. The pixel is a formalised language that makes logical and mathematical models visible and does not translate any pre-existent reality. From this viewpoint, it can be stated that the digital work is a virtual work, and therefore an ontologically new work.

From a strictly chromatic standpoint, pixels succeed in giving the digital image an intense colour/light difficult to achieve with “easel painting.”

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