



Today we'd like to introduce you to **Corinne Geertsen**.
Corinne, please kick things off for us by telling us about yourself and your journey so far.

I always drew. I began with a purple crayon in a closet. My dad was a psychologist in the 1950's and 1960's. Psychologists then would show people sets of psychologically loaded drawings and ask them to make up a story about each picture. I thought these drawings were very powerful and I was fascinated by the ties between the vivid images and stories. Because of this, I'm able to move between storyline and image and back again as I work, embellishing with psychological twists.

I've always loved old photos. My great-great-grandfather was a partner for a time with the photographer George Edward Anderson, who traveled Utah from 1878 to 1928. Many of my family's old photos were taken by him. His portraits bring out the individuality of his subjects, often in a startling way. Many of them look as if they were taken yesterday. I often use these photos in my work.

Animals are essential in my life and work. When I was seven, I dragged a horse home and put him in the backyard, in case he was lost. I've always had animals by my side. I like to have odd human/animal partnerships in my works, which often reveal what it's like to be human.

Can you give our readers some background on your art?

I make digital photo collages. I assemble my works in Photoshop from photos of my ancestors, photos I take myself, and things I paint and then photograph. I make ancestor adoptions at antique stores. My personal photo archive contains over 50,000 images and is still growing. In 2006, I took a Photoshop course to restore old family photos. Two weeks into the class I began seeing my ancestors as characters in dramas. Obviously, Aunt Hattie needed a rhinoceros.

I'm on a constant photographic scavenger hunt, outfitting ancestors with backdrops, sidekicks and belongings.

Working digitally dovetails nicely with the way my mind works. I worked over the years in many different media, not quite finding one that fit my voice. When I found Photoshop, I felt I had discovered the other half of the map.

My work spans more than a century and a half of technology. I use Civil War and Victorian era studio portraits as source material, yet I use digital cameras and work on a computer with massive memory, deep within the intricacies of Photoshop. I enjoy the contrasts and challenges of working with multiple technologies.

I print my work myself in small editions on archival photo paper with pigment inks.

My images are quirky visual narratives. I like a good plight. My art leans toward surrealism with odd juxtapositions, non-sequiturs, and an element of surprise.

What I hope people take away from my work:

1. My work mirrors personal, political and global situations in a sly way.
2. My work is about humor, fear, rescue, wonder, curiosity, individuality, absurdity. It's about living. I want someone to look at my work and feel deeply what it is to be alive.

Artists rarely, if ever pursue art for the money. Nonetheless, we all have bills and responsibilities, and many aspiring artists are discouraged from pursuing art due to financial reasons. Any advice or thoughts you'd like to share with prospective artists?

Find work that leaves you with time to make your art. Find a job adjacent to the art world if possible. Subscribe to and take advantage of the AZ Commission on the Arts Opportunities Newsletter.

Find artists in your area and work to form a tight-knit artist community. Support your peers.

Work continuously. Enjoy your creativity.

What's the best way for someone to check out your work and provide support?

My work can be seen at Gebert Contemporary in Scottsdale, Arizona, Haven Gallery in Northport, New York, Meyer Gallery in Park City, Utah and the Phillips Gallery in Salt Lake City.

My work will be in a group exhibition "We Believe" at the Shemer Museum in Phoenix from October 11th to November 8th, 2018. I have a solo show at the Phillips Gallery in Salt Lake City October 19th to November 9th, 2018.



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