About Sara Catena

“In the space between you and the work, is a bridge that invites a relationship to be formed. My hope is that you cross the bridge and find happiness there.”

As a child, Sara was raised on a diet of traditional handcrafts and pots of tea, in a small country town in New Zealand. Her parents were of the post-war generation that valued resourcefulness, and a ‘waste not, want not’ attitude, coupled with a deep sense of caring for land and community.

Sara’s journey as a Visual Artist has been quite a colourful adventure. Even after thirty years of playing and working with paint and textile, it still excites her to have a brush or needle in her hand, crafting a story or idea into life whilst those qualities she learned as a child are an integral part of who she is and how she works.

As a painter, she works with acrylic, oil, pastel and thread on recycled textiles and canvas. Her textile art includes the lyrical ‘Nest of the Lovebird’ soft sculptures made with found and re-cycled elements, threads, and fused plastic.

Rhyme and Reason (A Narrative Process)

Sara’s work is primarily narrative… that is, it holds a story or an idea.

It expresses that story or idea, filtered through the reality of how she sees the world, and is poured out onto the canvas. She captures the spiritual aspects that dance around our ordinary experiences and adds these motifs in, creating artwork full of living, joyful, colourful symbolism.

When creating a substantial piece of work, she begins with writing an actual narrative (often in whimsical rhymes) allowing the ideas to playfully emerge and images to take shape. Then working with large paper cut-outs of this imagery, she rearranges them until the composition and idea is resolved.

Soulful Symbolism

We are all heavily influenced by our visual surrounds, more than we realise. Sara strongly believes that the art we put on our walls needs to be uplifting, joyous and inspiring. She has a strong desire for her work to be a potent, visual reminder of love and truth that successfully breaks through the often chaotic and topsy-turvy reality of life.

“I want my work to delight and speak directly to the heart of the buyer, for them to feel happiness when they view it…”

There are some motifs and totems you will see consistently repeated throughout Sara’s work; the lyrical lovebird (a visible reminder that we are more than physical beings), cats (always part of her family), aeroplanes (her love of travel and adventure), and of course Angels (depicted in art for millennia). Even though we don’t see Angels in the flesh, we have an idea of what they are all about, making them the most wonderful beings in our minds. For Sara they’re all about faith, benevolence and beauty; they can uplift us.

Sara’s relationship to colour

Sara has always found colour extremely evocative and has a love of nature; how it magically marries the most glorious colours and evokes potent emotions. This aspect of life has always drawn her in; she remembers laying on her back in the luscious emerald green New Zealand grass, staring blissfully for hours at the blue, blue sky.

“Inexplicably, Sara's paintings make me feel happy and peaceful. The colour and vibrancy of her paintings remind me of a warm summers day…” – customer feedback.