

## What Makes a Painting Original?

By Donna Caputo

We learn through imitation. As young children we imitate our parents. As teenagers we imitate our peers. And as budding artists we imitate those artists we admire.

At some time in our learning process, we must stand on our own two feet and know who we are and what we want to say. How boring we would be if we were just copies of our parents and our friends. The same holds true for your artwork.

Our creative thoughts are nothing more than a compilation of our experiences and as artists we take those creative thoughts and express them in some way new. That is what makes art original. We are all influenced by what we know and what we see, so in art we need to learn how to be inventive, to break the rules, to be adventuresome, to be experimental. When you bring yourself into your art you are unique.

Uniqueness: it is something that comes from your inner self. No one can say it but you. When you copy other's work, you lose that. Art is a journey, to find imagination, creativity.

Original art is truthful. Don't copy others. Use books. Classes, workshops only as steppingstones for your own art. Use your own photographs as a guide, but improve on them in doing your art. If a painting isn't better than a photo that was used to inspire it, then you've wasted your time and effort. Just take a photo! Reach for creativity wherever you go – the beach – the supermarket – at work – at play. Look at everything through the eyes of an artist. Then take an everyday subject and make it your own. Remember:

“There is only one me”