

Do you know - Lana Shear

What's Next? Person, Place or Thing?

A question we often ask ourselves as we create something new. Artists look both inward and outward to glean that creative spark of inspiration.

Consulting my new friend, AI, I discovered this overview of themes often used by artists: Travel, history, culture, myths, legends, folklore, spiritualism, religion, and symbolism fill our art galleries with unforgettable images captured in time.

Performance art such as music, dance, film, theater and literary figures provide rich sources of subject matter. As a former professor of costume design, I love the historical clothing of periods that echo their times. The gorgeous Art Deco and Belle Epoch advertising posters are equally enticing. And I must admit to a paper doll obsession that compelled me to use it as teaching examples.

Social issues such as political movements, justice, equality, human rights, and environmental concerns are of paramount importance for historical context and have become the theme of entire museums and wings.

Everyday life and ordinary movements can be transformed into lasting works—think Norman Rockwell. Depicting joy, love, grief, anger, relationships and emotional connections can be basis for lasting impressions. I hope that the love that I feel for my children and grandchildren emerges as I make attempts to capture their images.

As for me, I have built a cottage industry with my commissions for painting the homes or important landmarks called Casa Bella Designs. I have done favorite college bars, churches, town maps, new homes, childhood homes, and collages of hometowns. I love the juxtaposition of architecture and nature, often tweaking the foliage to depict a certain season. I especially love the joy these paintings bring to people as they open their wedding and anniversary painting purchased by a thoughtful friend. I save the thank you notes!

I'm currently obsessed with the little entrances of each village in our beautiful hometown. I think we should make and sell calendars with a collection of these and other images—I've enjoyed so many that the members of this club have painted.

So whatever you choose from your photos, cameras, or any of the inspirations I've mentioned, get out your pencils, paper, and get to work!