

the art of passion

by Charmain Pieterse



Salome Briers, Full-time artist

This perfectly encapsulates Salome Briers' personal views on the significance of her artwork, as she draws her own inspiration from her direct environment. "Colour is energy and definitely my biggest inspiration and most important tool," says Briers. "It is important that people can feel my work emotionally and physically, and then identify with it."

The beautiful settings in the Boland District Paarl where Briers grew up, is what first evoked a desire within her to start painting. After completing her studies in art at the Cape Technikon, Briers worked as a graphic artist for several years before she held her first exhibition in 1999. This was when Briers decided to pursue her passion full time and embrace the challenges that came with a creative, yet often uncertain career.

"After my first exhibition, I had very little confidence in my own abilities," recalls Briers. "This encouraged me to develop a good support network for myself and to build solid relationships with other artists by exhibiting my work alongside theirs. To date, I still practise consistency within my work and service to my clients, something I learnt to value early on in my career. You have to be reliable and trustworthy."

After shaping her career for several years and developing her entrepreneurial skills, Briers has become a leader within her field, enjoying much success through numerous exhibitions in South Africa. She has also gained international exposure by exporting much of her work to countries such as Australia, Europe, the USA and North Africa and has just finished a consignment of 25 paintings for Korea.

Pablo Picasso has been quoted as saying, "The artist is a receptacle for emotions that come from all over the place; from the sky; from the earth; from a scrap of paper; from a passing shape; from a spider's web."

"Leadership should be based on values, and people should respect others irrespective of their age or background," notes Briers. "Good leadership makes a company or business thrive, but apart from the goal of making money, there needs to be a more active approach to motivating and inspiring people to achieve their limitless potential in a positive working environment."

Briers firmly believes in applying authenticity to leadership by remaining true to herself and her inner values, exuding a passion for what she does and living out her true potential. "Everyone should empower themselves with leadership capabilities and traits by having a purpose in life and feeling in control of one's destiny," highlights Briers.

"Being positive and making decisions based on my values are definitely my strongest traits, and through my art, I can exert an influence on others and convey my objectives by taking people on a journey with me. This is why I take great pride in building good relationships with others."

As an entrepreneur in a straining economy and a competitive industry, Briers has had to rely on her ability to be innovative and different, especially as the art industry is saturated with many talented artists. "Because art is a luxury and the economy is declining, I have to work so much harder to sell my art, while at the same time ensuring I establish my own signature and brand," explains Briers. "But looking back at my career, what stands out the most is definitely not the amount of paintings I have sold, but rather the amount I have learnt about myself, life and other people."

Briers is already leading the way as far as talent, passion, creativity and determination are concerned, inspiring others to truly follow their own hearts and be brave enough to travel on the road less travelled.

"I want people to remember me as a caring, positive person, and not only for my art," concludes Briers. "My career is an extension of who I am and must become a wonderful lifelong journey for me."

