

Gary Miller Artist Statement

Distorted Portraits is a series of colorful mixed-media work in which I explore a contemporary, exaggerated, and dynamic approach to portraiture. This approach is followed throughout all stages of my creative process, whether it be the photo sessions the images are based on using regular and camera distorted images; the materials and techniques I use; or the formal elements of color, texture, or composition that make up each piece. I work methodically by combining wet and dry mixed-media techniques to create an image that is part drawing, painting, and surface textile application.

Since I am interested in triggering a reaction, the portraits try to express emotions we confront every day, like power, dominance, submission, arrogance, or condescending attitudes - I approach these photo sessions in a direct and confrontational manner with each model. Once I paint and construct the mixed media work, these attitudes are reflected and highlighted through my use of a dominant split- complementary color scheme.

I see potential in new as well as found or discarded material, and I collect a varied assortment of tapes, textiles, embroideries, and trims. In each painting, I combine various tapes, line-drawing media, acrylic, and oil painting techniques, as well as textiles and found objects to construct portrait that conveys the emotion and character of my subject.

We do not all show our true emotions in public or a professional workplace, but in environments where we feel comfortable and safe. I create a setting where the models feel less guarded and relaxed so I can capture their raw emotions and feelings. Ultimately, my goal is to show the spirit of the model's true self and share that emotion through each painting.