

England, there was an extensive stretch of land which my father allotted for some old vehicles that he intended to restore. There were all sorts of machines such as trucks, small steam trains, carousels and even an old Maltese bus.

“I used to help him restore their paintwork and this eventually led me to work as a sign-writer artist. Subsequently, my father succeeded in transforming his land into a museum.”

When Gaynor met her partner she had to let go of her painting since they needed to travel frequently. However in these last years they have settled in Malta and finally she has found the time to fulfill her dream.

“I find Malta’s picturesque scenery deeply inspiring for my artworks. Now I have my studio where I can work at my leisure and relish the feeling of being surrounded by my creations.”

Gaynor’s studio is a delightful, comfortable and bright space. The various oil colours lying neatly within reach are an enticing



prospect. When I visited I found her working on a painting of a wild leopard. Animals are indeed her preferred subject.

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“I find animals fascinating to paint, much more than humans, probably because they are so varied and beautiful. While I’m painting I actually feel the sensation of their presence: their wet noses, their velvety long or short fur, their strong bones or their delicate structure. It’s difficult to explain... it’s a strange and lovely sentiment. Inevitably this passion was born in me during my childhood years when I lived on the farm.”

Paintings of domestic and wild animals are displayed around her studio, but a painting of a boxer dog seems to take prominence.

“That is my favourite painting. It shows my dog, Rocky. I missed him intensely when he passed away but when I finally completed the painting, I regained a sense

of comfort since now I feel him beside me whenever I look at his image. The painting shows him exactly as I remember him: smart, proud and playful.”

Though a common tradition in England, pet portraiture is not a strong characteristic of Maltese culture. “I find this quite strange because I notice that Maltese people are very fond of their pets. I presume it’s because they’re not aware of the availability of pet artists. A painting of one’s pet is a way of eternalising its memories. It is a distinguished symbol of the deep love that can exist between humans and their animals.”

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