

Tittles, tattles, true

Illustrator, artist and wonderer Willemien Ebbinge prefers trees over people, "you see, trees don't talk back". But does she though? After a career in advertising, she's doing what she loves most, creating Tittles. Her latest work was done for the Amsterdam UMC hospital.

Break Free

As a child Willemien was told to go to art class at the prestigious Van Gogh Museum. This is where she drew a 'simple' rainbow and was told off for doing so. It was expected, even for young children, to create something complicated, art with a capital A. She decided then and there that she was not an artist. She was wrong, talent is strong stuff. There comes a time, for each of us, when all crap is erased, that's when it becomes interesting, that's when you break free. For Willemien Ebbinge it was in 2016, on an Austrian ski-slope. Willemien accompanied her husband and sons on what felt like, yet again, the obligatory and uncomfortable act of skiing. It was then she said, 'enough is enough, I'm going to do, want I want to do'. She marched into the tiny village and bought a box of wax-crayons. Her very first Tittles, or as they are called in Dutch 'Petietjes', saw the light of day. 25 different skiers, all in colorful rainbow suits.

The beauty is in the imperfection

Tittles are impactful miniature drawings, in wax-crayon, of approximately 5x5 cm. The sloppy accuracy invites you to take a closer look, remarkable abundance of detail on the square millimeter. The impact of the image on this tiny surface equals a large painting. The Tittles portray a realistic image with a level of detail that draws your attention repeatedly.

A small 'clin d'oeil' or wink, is often part of it; for example, in her work 'One legged Wintour' where the annoyingly perfect, Editor in Chief of Vogue U.S, is portrayed with just one leg.

Shut up, I'm working

"I'm drawing because I do not want to talk, my words stumble and do not keep the same pace as my images."

Well, there is something to be said for this attitude. Did you know it only takes 13 milliseconds for the human brain to process an image, 60,000 times faster than text?

In her tiny atelier a photograph of the Acrobat/Photographer Isabelle Wentzel, a second-hand De Sede couch from Ebay and her own work, of which she is finally proud, adorn the space. For years she said, "I just scribble", as if to say;" What I do is like drawing rainbows at the van Gogh and hardly can be called art". It doesn't matter what you call it, or what your title is, it is the impact and the emotion that determines whether your work is good."

After her silent morning walk with dog Siep, "We should all reconsider the necessity of no-words, that's when the beauty comes in", she sits down to work.

Kids are told to shut up, phone is on mute, post-it scribbles: "Do not displace, this is work in progress" are all over the house. Inspiration is drawn from empty loo rolls with socks and almost dead branches with a few greenish leaves and a faded flower.

Willemien prefers working with small wax-crayons on small paper. At the end of day, when the house transforms into a cozy family place, where she laughs, loves and cares work in progress is safely tucked away, no wet paint, smudges or huge stuff taking up space.

Author Kate Maat www.brandsparkle.nl
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