

BEST ARTIST PERSONALITIES

Bare Your Creativity

Richard Scott started out late as an artist and had no formal art training. He believes we all have the potential to be creative

BY SHANNON LATIMER



Richard Scott

Can you remember the first thing you painted?

No, I actually can't. But I can remember painting things

at various stages in my life. From the work I first sold, and the work I painted when I decided to start my journey into the art world, to the work I did for my mom when I left school and a sketch I did at the age of 13.

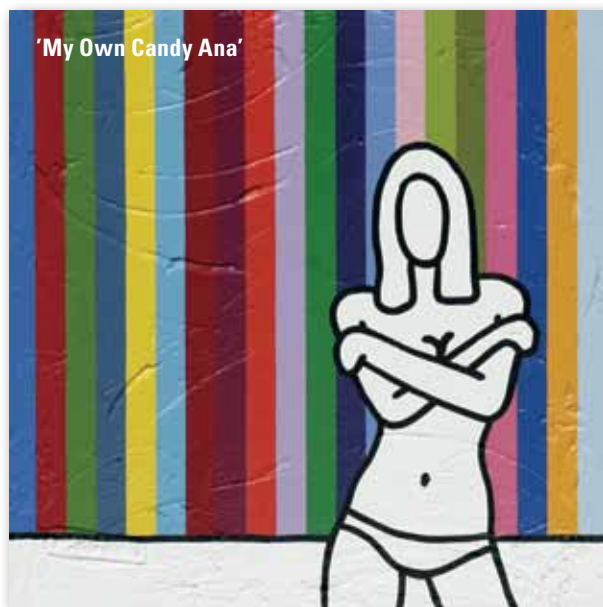
What keeps you motivated?

My kids, my wife, my family. Also cycling, and being able to get up each day and enjoy life as I planned.

You're a businessman, marketer and artist. How do you think you've managed to marry all three successfully?

Every second and every thought is art and business. My mind is 10 years ahead of what I produce. I come up with a creative idea; then my business mind kicks in and kills most of my ideas and concepts. Business is a reality; you need to do commerce in order to make money, in order to live and feed yourself and family. Art and creativity

are both dangerous luxuries. If you can get the two to balance, then you have found the main ingredient to becoming a successful artist. It's about business, really.



'My Own Candy Ana'

Talk us through your delayed journey to becoming an artist.

I had a lifetime ambition to retire at the age of 35 and focus on bringing up a family. I managed to do it at the age of 34. I was in the process of selling my equity in a business to my partner when my wife said I had better do something to keep myself busy. I decided to focus on another lifetime ambition: to paint a picture someone actually liked, and even more so, a painting I actually liked.

So I did some research, painted five pictures, and took them to the Hout Bay Gallery. The works sold in four days, and another 25 works were sold in six weeks. (Today it's around 2 500.)

The motivation to become a full time artist started to surface. My wife also said I needed to start or buy another business because my retirement money was running out. So I decided to take up art full time and put all my energy into it.

When talking about your paintings you've spoken about 'the secret world within your subjects'. What do you actually mean?

I found myself painting white with thick black lines, surrounded with solid vibrant colour.

Partly thanks to Paul Gauguin, who once told a student, "if you see pure vermilion, paint pure vermilion", and mostly thanks to my wanting to get my message across. The white represents the pureness of the subject: the secret world within the subject, the secret world within every object and creature, big or small. The secrets that we, as humans, bare only to those very close to us; the world about which we know so little. Society has conditioned us to

ignore this and focus on the outer shell, the colourful outer shell. We expose the pureness only when we break down our lines and can no longer cope with the situation with which society has presented us. We choose to see only the colourful side of subjects.

Who has been your greatest influence?

I'd say Mr Fuel, my high school art teacher. Before that I had struggled through class and had accepted that art was not going to be my forte. Then in matric, I met Mr Fuel. He walked straight to the back of the class and started to paint an awesome landscape. We asked when he was going to teach us. He replied, "This is art class, get on with it," and proceeded to paint. Some kids were confused. I grabbed some stretch paper and started to paint. It was all about his free teaching style, his willingness to share knowledge, and he was just a great teacher overall. That was in 1986. I have had no other art training.

If you could sit down and have a meal with anyone, who would it be?

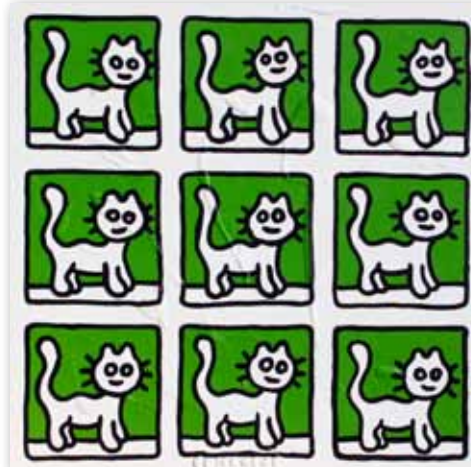
My kids in 40 years' time.

What do you do when you're not working?

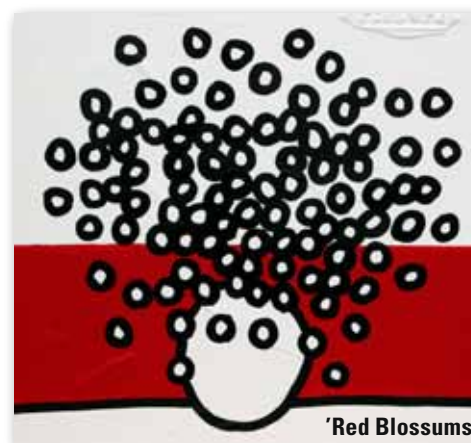
When you enjoy doing something it's not really work, is it? So I am basically in business/just living mode 24 hours a day.

What are you currently reading?

I still can't seem to finish the 12 Million Dollar Shark, by Don Thomson. I keep going back to read chapters over and over. It's my bible. I'm also reading Tony Blair's A Journey, Sue Roe's Private Lives



'Nine Green Lives'



'Red Blossoms'



'Rose Car'



'Looking for me'



'Oh my money tree'



'I can't get enough of that blue bikini'

of the Impressionists, My Canon 5D Handbook, and a newspaper I picked up in the Isle of Man.

What new developments do you have in the pipeline?

I have recently set up a studio outside London and my doing work there depends on a breakthrough in the London art scene. I prefer not to count my chickens before they hatch, but if they do, I'll tell you about it. **GT**

Richard Scott is married to Salomien. They have two children, Richard and Angelina, who are both creative. He believes we're all creative, but our creativity gets distorted by being taught by the wrong people.