



“White Dream” by Gates De Santis

Original photo by Pam Nickoles:

www.NickolesPhotography.com

I have always, since a young age, had a sketching pencil in my hand. Wildlife was always my first choice for artwork. Must have been by following my dad on hunting and fishing trips, this love and respect for wildlife was bestowed on me.

Years passed and I graduated from college with a degree in commercial art. While working in commercial art for a few years, there was an unexpected fork in the road of life I had to choose, since then I find myself in the automotive industry!

With the encouragement of my wife, it is been roughly five years that I have started enjoying art again and painting wildlife. In

my case, painting is more than a passion, it’s a calming therapy. Every time I step into the countryside, from the city, I seem to get reenergized.

On a sadder note, when my mother-in-law passed away I wanted to produce a painting in her honor. This painting (“White Dream”) was for my wife to help soothe her pain and thank her at the same time for her encouragement towards my art.

Since wildlife art is my passion, what animal would best represent my mother-in-law; a strong and caring woman? Coincidentally her family tree had Native Indian flowing through the branches, so I decided on a painting of a wild mustang with a dream catcher. This is where the title of the painting derived “White Dream.”

Searching for reference, I fell upon a photo of a mustang, later known to me as Major. The photo was taken by equine photographer and avid supporter of wild horse preservation, Pam Nickoles. I figured there was no harm using Major as my subject for the painting I was producing. While attending a few community art shows and meeting fellow artists, I was set straight on the proper way of acquiring reference and asking for permission of the photographer!

Trying to do the right thing, I contacted Pam Nickoles and asked her permission for the use of Major’s photo. Lo and behold, she gives permission for some of her photos but not Major’s photo - it’s her trademark!! Telling Pam that I produced a painting of Major before asking her permission was a little embarrassing for me. What I could “decode” between our e-mails, was that Pam was not too keen on my actions. The painting as I mentioned to her was solely on behalf of my mother-in-law’s memory and not for profit. After a few other e-mails, I have “decoded” more about Pam. She’s a kind, generous and understanding person.

I sent Pam a copy of the painting and wanted to excuse myself for my wrong actions. Pam made me more aware of the plight of this beautiful animal, which is the wild mustang. I have read and informed myself about all the great foundations that Pam is involved with. **So I have decided to use this painting to rectify my actions in a positive manner. A percentage of the proceeds from the sale of prints or greeting cards with the image of my painting “White Dream” will be donated to a wild mustang organization.**

Hopefully my wrong actions will help in a way by benefiting the efforts to allow the wild mustang to remain free and wild!

Cheers,

Gates (Gaetano De Santis: g.desantis@live.com)

The print of the painting is approximately 14x18 in size and priced around \$95.00 (please confirm with Gates). They are lovely. ☺

As a reminder, copyrighted images are protected by law – please gain permission from an artist before using them as reference.