



BONNIE GLORIS

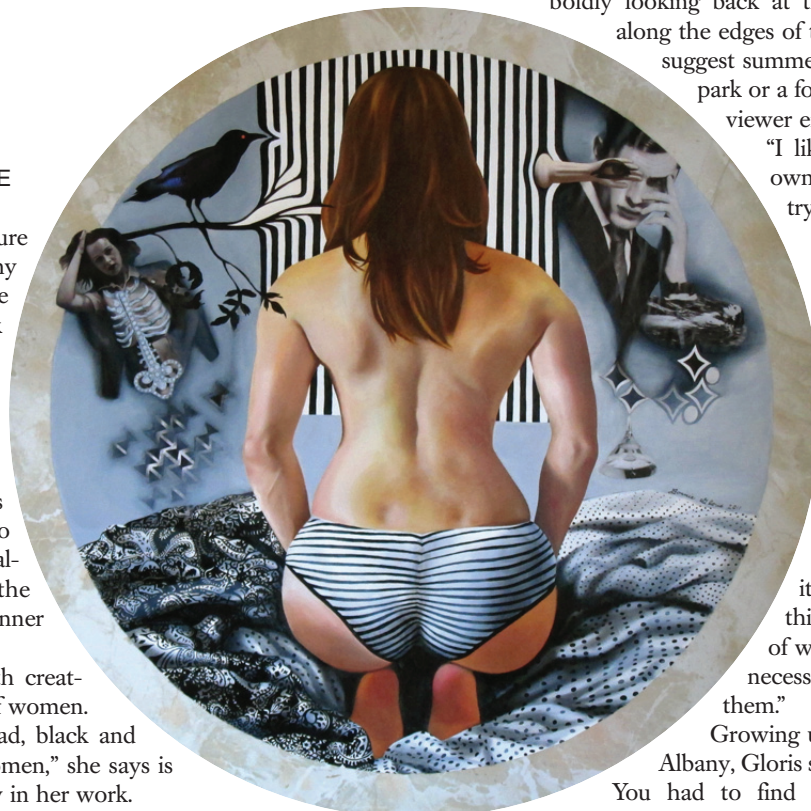
CELEBRATING THE FEMININE

BY DIANA SCHWAEBLE

Crafting a realistic figure is a lifelong goal for many artists. Whether a piece is sketched in stark black and white or rendered with layers of color, an artist attempts to breathe life into the work. For Bonnie Gloris, the mission is harder; she wants to express the inherent duality of women, not the archetypes of saint or sinner so often depicted.

Gloris is obsessed with creating balanced portraits of women.

"The good and the bad, black and white, the duality of women," she says is what she tries to convey in her work.



Her recent work, which was selected for a solo show at the Boca Grande restaurant in Jersey City, explores those themes. The largest piece in the exhibit, "Sisters," is a portrait of the artist and her sister.

In it, the sisters are pictured from an aerial view sitting on a flowered orange blanket. It focuses tight on the pair with their gazes boldly looking back at the viewer. Grass peeks out along the edges of the picture, and their clothes suggest summer. The women could be in a park or a forest depending on where the viewer envisions the cozy scene.

"I like to let people make their own interpretations," she says. "I try not to over analyze it."

Gloris began with the feminine and classic when painting the piece, yet wanted the viewer to see the women as a whole. The picture could be pastoral, evoking an escape from the city to the perceived innocence of the country, except for the knowing look in both women's eyes.

Yet her sister doesn't think it looks like her, she says: "I think people have a certain idea of what they look like but it isn't necessarily how other people see them."

Growing up in upstate New York near Albany, Gloris says there wasn't much to do. You had to find ways to occupy the time.



PHOTO OF THE ARTIST BY DIANA SCHWAEBLE

Gloris happily immersed herself in art. While she was busy making plans to escape and study art, her older sister took the traditional route and married, settling close to their hometown.

Gloris has painted herself realistically in "Sisters" and in other self portraits titled "Vamp" and "Vamp II," unlike some artists whose self portraits seem abstract or skewed in some way. Yet her image in oil is softer than the polished finish in the flesh. Gloris is also a runner. She looks tiny in person, with the muscles of her arms and legs clearly defined from all the running. There is a quiet focus about her, whether walking or describing her future plans. You notice her manicured hands, which remain mostly folded on her chiseled knee. Poised is a word that springs to mind and not one usually associated with a young artist.

And she should be content at 27 having established herself enough to get portrait commissions and illustration gigs. She graduated from Parsons, the New School for Design in 2006 and began working immediately. No small feat for an emerging artist. She has exhibited her work in dozens of group shows and her illustration clients include Cassinelli Winery, Quincy Films, notable medical journals and Disney.



ARTWORK COURTESY OF BONNIE GLORIS. CLOCKWISE: BENEATH THE SURFACE, OPRAH, VAMP II, SISTERS, BETWEEN THE LINES.

"Everyone says you go to school for connections, and I found that the professors were very helpful," she says.

For all of her recent success, Gloris remains realistic about the future;

she's contemplating going back to school for a master's degree on the business side of art.

"I want to be in the art field, but I also have to be practical," she says. —JCM