



Karen Hutton

Life in Snippets

Digital artist Karen Hutton knew almost from the moment she began walking on this strange and breathtaking planet that she had a story to tell, something she wasn't intended to keep to herself.

She still vividly remembers the vision from her early childhood that sparked her lifelong sense of purpose: "I was standing on stage, either speaking or singing. A large column of light streamed down from above, ran down through my head and out through my mouth, hands and mid-section. It poured out into the theater, where it washed over everyone

in the audience. Incredibly, it healed them and they walked out transformed. It wasn't so much about me on a personal level as it was about the power of light."

"Like a heat-seeking missile," Hutton took aim on a course to make this vision a reality.

Hutton was born in Kentfield, California and grew up on a ranch in the wine country of Glen Ellen. Always feeling that her true home was in nature, she spent many of her childhood days roaming the hundreds of idyllic acres surrounding her, which nurtured her growing spirit. She thrived in the



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hot, dusty summers, drawn to the outdoors and to the heart-pounding thrills of athletics. She eventually became a gifted horseback rider and figure skater.

But she was never alone in her adventures. Coming from a family of avid photographers—dating back to the early 1900s when the Norwegian side of her family immigrated to the United States and began “photographing everything in sight, especially, and most hilariously, each other”—Hutton always had a camera in her hands. It was her constant companion, and her photographs became a powerful medium for sharing the light she found in the world—her vision. In high school, she made up her mind to become a professional photographer and began down

this path in college.

Though her health prevented her from working with darkroom chemicals and temporarily delayed her pursuit of professional photography, she discovered in 2009 that she could create the same stunning effects she had created in her film photography prints with a digital camera—and then some.

As she continued to develop a high level of artistic expression and precision, Hutton’s work began to attract a large following. Millions of viewers have discovered her work through social media, and her prints now grace a variety of home and corporate spaces.

Her mastery of digital editing tools has al-

ways been an important part of her fine art photography, but as she continued to experiment with her digital medium, she found that she could achieve another level of artistic expression and storytelling, and a new body of art began taking shape alongside her photographic work.

Each of these new digital pieces is “a pastiche,” as Hutton explains, “containing elements which may seem unlikely, but they

work together to delight and inspire me in ways that words never can. Vintage bits, watercolor ingredients, graphic elements and my own photographs (both as impressionistic elements and featured ones) present an abstract approach.”

Her new direction is fueled by the unapologetic quirkiness of artists like Maggie Taylor, Vladimir Kush, Mel Brooks, and Gahan Wilson and by the strange stories that



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spring from life itself. “Sometimes big, epic ones—told in strikingly simplistic ways. Often they’re like story snippets, laden with meaning and feeling.” She continues, “I find humor and startled meaning in unlikely pairings and groupings. This is true with people, life and art. Imperfection rules.”

Hutton’s process is intuitive and deeply authentic. “I love to create them the way my mind thinks,” she says, “with some humor, strange characters and connections, simple brushstrokes of feeling, always fully alive. They are about our precious hearts and souls which seek to thrive in this sometimes inhospitable world, each one a reminder that everything can shift in an instant and that nothing is as it seems on the surface.”

By combining a variety of digital elements in unique and surprising ways, she creates visual stories, often containing a hint of magical realism, that have been called “authentic,” “unmasking,” “delightful,” and “thought provoking.”

Hutton describes the pieces as “strange little worlds.” Most of the compositions are squares and halves, and their limited shapes and dimensions allow her to infuse them with the feeling of snapshots and snippets, small captured moments that are filled with intent.

“Some pieces are goofy, some deep, others are like brushstrokes of a feeling,” she says. “I see them very much like how we cobble one big meaningful life out of the snippets and memories and feelings we’ve chosen to weave together.” Sometimes they may seem nonsensical, but they always make a point.

Though her home base is nestled in the gorgeous Lake Tahoe Region, Hutton has traveled extensively in the U.S. and around

the world. When she is not telling mesmerizing stories through her art, Hutton is often out hiking, snowshoeing, or perhaps reading the works of authors who inspire her to reach new levels of creativity and of thinking outside the box. She also does professional voiceover work. To her mind, everything she does is an extension of her original



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artistic vision, which springs from her deep and abiding need to share light with the world.

Hutton’s photography has been featured in exhibitions around the world, from California to New York to Tokyo, in a number of magazines, including Fujilove Magazine and Wild Planet, and in both print and ebooks. Along with her “Artist’s Voice” photography retreats, she has had the honor of speaking and teaching about photography through established outlets, including KelbyOne.



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Hutton was also featured in the mini documentary “Karen Hutton: Framing the Journey,” created as a one-of-a-kind collaboration with Fujifilm and SmugMug, two of her major partners in the photography world. It is available on her website and YouTube.

Through stunning imagery, humor, thought-provoking ideas and a genuinely positive outlook, Hutton inspires people to discover their artistic voice—while making

it all feel like an unforgettable and eye-opening adventure.

“Life is a bouillabaisse of our impressions, experiences, a myriad of ideas, lessons learned, truths, half-truths, and expressions in between. An elbow in the ribs. A gasp of surprise...or awe. A feeling. A message. A reminder. The surprise of learning something for the first time...or the 50th time in a new way. My pieces speak of those things.”

Praise for Karen Hutton's work:

Gazing at the brilliant colors and textures, I felt a deep inner awe. Soaking up the beauty of each line and image, I could tell there was a powerful message behind each piece. I wasn't quite sure exactly what the story was...how it began or ended... but I could feel that the creation was trying to tell me something. It was trying to tell me the truth about life, love, myself, and the world. It was begging me to open my heart, my eyes, and listen to what it had to say, because if I did, I could experience the bliss of peace.

Nicole Iacovoni

Your Voice in your art reaches wide, touches deep, inspires many.

Dalene Meyer

Absolutely beautiful! I could sit and look at it for hours and be continually captivated by the depth of each piece.

Alice Taylor

Such a rich and beautiful re-creation journey portfolio. I love your breath of realism melded with imagination... they bring me to a contemplative vibration. Thank you!

Debra Tufts.

