

Featured Artist | Heather Losey McGeachy



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Personal Statement

My latest series of digital paintings is based on my life as Sistina Smiles. The world I live in as Sistina exists in a Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game (MMORPG). This virtual environment exists on several servers somewhere in North America, also on the continent of Tyria, also in my apartment in Pullman.

I've been documenting my virtual lives for a few years now. My paintings are a reflection of my thoughts and inspirations during my many adventures. The piece for the cover of *Land Escapes*, "Elona Reach," was inspired by the quest that earned me enough skill points to finally obtain status as a level 20 necromancer/warrior.

The moment portrayed is at the instance of obtaining this level, and then dying in the game world. It was both glorious, satisfying, and frustrating because I had to replay the quest again from the beginning.

I include layers in my paintings to represent the layers of data that surround us. Each layer sits on top of the others, like a stack of paper. What we see when we look out across a virtual landscape looks like one view, or one window. But it is actually constructed of various layers of imagery, scripts, programming, textures, behaviors, etc.

—Heather

Heather Losey McGeachy is an artist and video game addict from Grand Ledge, Michigan. When she outgrew skateboarding and snowboarding, video games filled the void. Now she uses her virtual world experiences as creative inspiration for her paintings. She is currently pursuing a graduate degree in painting/digital media at Washington State University, where she also teaches Introduction to Digital Media. You can find her online as Sistina Smiles in the virtual playground of your choice, or at www.heatherlosey.com.