



NURAY AYDOĞDU

Fine Art

Nuray Aydoğdu is an artist whose journey exemplifies the transformative power of art. Born in Izmir, Turkey, she discovered her passion for painting as a child, creating charcoal portraits during her school years. After a 15-year hiatus, she rekindled her love for art in 2021, exploring charcoal, watercolor, and oil painting with a deep sense of purpose and self-expression. For Nuray, painting is far more than a creative outlet—it is a form of healing, a way to connect with her inner self, and a reminder of her existence in the vastness of the world. Her works, celebrated in exhibitions and competitions, reflect her emotional depth and artistic evolution. Through her art, Nuray finds peace, purpose, and a profound connection to life itself, making it an inseparable part of her journey.

Artists Statement

"Painting is much more than just a hobby for me; it is an existence, an expression, a therapy and healing, and holding on to life. Thanks to this art form, I can explore myself and travel to untouched points in my inner world. Being able to practice my art and share the works I produce makes me feel that I have a tiny existence in this huge world. My inner world finds peace with the feeling of "I also exist in this world and I continue to exist". I have not come across anything else that can make me feel the same emotions and inner peace that I feel while painting, and I don't think I will. I can feel its healing power in my entire being. After taking a break from painting for about 15 years and starting to paint again, I feel that it has now taken an indispensable place in my life. Painting is a break, a breath, a special space, a creative power for me within all the heavy burdens and responsibilities of life... From now on, I cannot imagine a life without art and painting."

Nuray Aydoğdu



INTERVIEW

You describe painting as a therapy and a way to heal. Can you share a specific moment when art brought you solace during a difficult time?

"There was a period in my life when I experienced profound depression—so overwhelming that it felt like living through a personal version of hell. During those moments, I had no hope for the future and felt trapped in a cycle of despair. Painting became my salvation. It reminded me of my existence at a time when everything seemed to disappear. Through my art, I found a sense of purpose and hope. The thought, "Despite everything, there's still a part of me that exists in this world," gave me strength. Painting rekindled the light within me, and that's why I say, "I still exist, and despite everything, I continue to be."

After a 15-year break, what was the first piece you created, and what emotions did you experience during the process?

"The first piece I revisited was a portrait of Franz Kafka that I had originally painted when I was 18. Picking up the brush after so many years was exhilarating. I rediscovered feelings I had forgotten—focus, excitement, and the catharsis of creation. It was deeply moving to see that I could still paint after all that time. That moment reaffirmed my passion for art, and I decided I would never let go of these emotions again."



You mention that painting helps you explore untouched areas of your inner world. Can you elaborate on a discovery you've made about yourself through your art?

"In the past, I felt deeply tied to external influences. My sense of self was shaped by reactions from the outside world. Painting, however, liberated my soul. It taught me to value and love myself independently of external validation. I realized that nothing and no one could truly harm me, and that I could protect my sensitive nature through my art. Painting became a shield—an armor that granted me profound freedom. This sense of liberation is rare and invaluable."

How do you carve out space for painting amidst the responsibilities of teaching and everyday life?

"In the past three years, painting has remained a constant, even under challenging circumstances. After completing a piece, I typically take a break, which varies based on my responsibilities. But when the urge to create strikes, I make time for it, regardless of my schedule. Sometimes I delay daily tasks, and other times I work late at night. My soul craves the act of painting, and I cannot ignore it. While daily life fulfills physical needs, painting is essential nourishment for my spirit."

You've said that painting affirms your existence in the world. How do you hope your art resonates with those who view it?

"My art is not merely a hobby; it's a reflection of my inner struggles and triumphs. I want my audience to feel the depth of my journey when they see my work. My hope is that they recognize the resilience and exploration behind every piece, and that my art inspires them to connect with their own inner worlds."

Have you ever questioned your abilities as an artist, and how have these moments shaped your journey?

"My artistic journey began with charcoal portraits, which hold a special place in my heart. However, after two years of focusing solely on this medium, I realized I was in a creative rut. My dream had always been to paint with oils, so I began exploring new techniques, starting with watercolor. Positive feedback on these experiments boosted my confidence and pushed me to expand my skills. I now work in charcoal, watercolor, and oil painting, and I know I'm still at the beginning of this journey. There's so much to learn, and I'm committed to continuous growth."

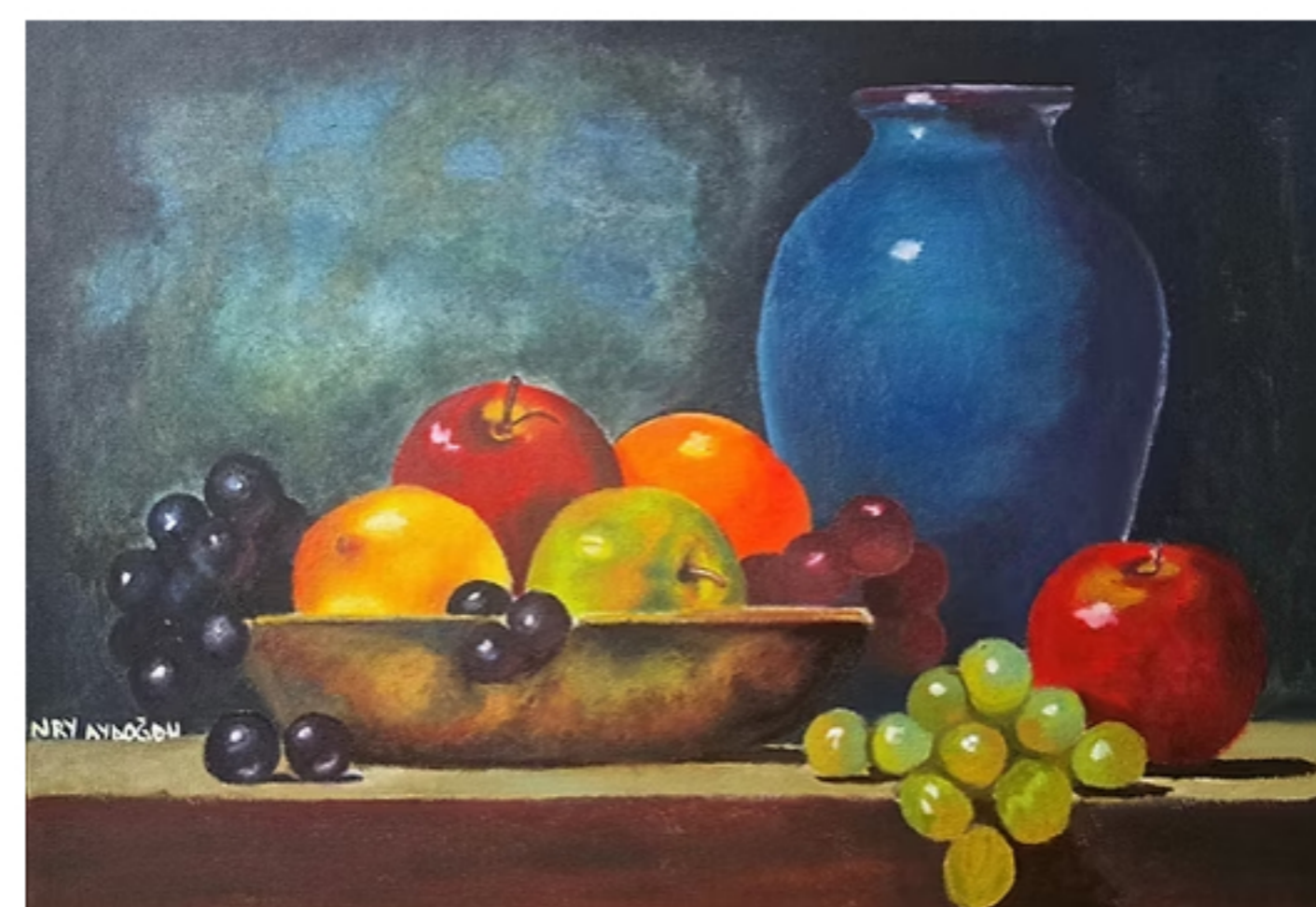


What has been the most moving response you've received?

"Last summer, during the Journey: Return to Yourself exhibition in Bodrum, an artist praised my work as one of the most admired in the show. He encouraged me to stay true to my style and warned me against following trends or compromising my vision for commercial success. His words resonated deeply, reinforcing my commitment to authenticity."

Can you describe the emotions or mindset you typically experience while working on a piece? How does it evolve from start to finish?

"When I start a piece, I feel completely detached from the world. It's as if my soul leaves my body and ventures into an uncharted realm that only I can access. During this time, all worldly concerns fade away, leaving only me and my work. The process is one of intense focus, emotional purification, and excitement for creation. If the finished piece brings me joy, I experience an indescribable euphoria—one that nothing else in life can provide."



Now that art is an indispensable part of your life, how do you envision your work evolving in the future?

"For me, painting is a never-ending journey. I began with charcoal portraits and have since explored watercolor and oil painting. While I haven't decided which medium to master, I'm dedicated to growing in each. My dream is to create more imaginative works and to continually push my creative boundaries."



What advice would you give to someone who has set aside their creative passion but is considering returning to it?

"There may be times in life when creativity takes a backseat due to various circumstances—it happened to me for 15 years. But reconnecting with creativity is like rediscovering life itself. In a world overwhelmed by external distractions, having a personal space to nurture your soul is invaluable. Whatever your passion may be, hold onto it tightly. It's a source of healing, liberation, and joy, and it's worth fighting for."

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