

DON GIDLEY ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Like many artists before me, my work has been influenced by other artists I admire. Some historical, such as Picasso, Matisse, DaVinci, Michelangelo, and especially Frieda Kahlo and Salvador Dali. Other influences have come from artists and sculptors I have had the great pleasure to work with and know as friends: [Miguel Horn](#), [Pedro Sedeño](#), [Martin Montoya](#), [Doc Whitson](#), and [Russ Calvert](#).

Having lived in San Diego, California and Santa Fe, New Mexico, where I was exposed to Mexican folk art, there is also that influence in my work, which became naïve and somewhat purposefully primitive, cartoonish and brightly colored, satiric and fun:

- “Las Meninas,” my take on the Velasquez masterpiece
- “Restaurant at the end of the universe,” my play on Douglas Adams’ second book in the *Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* trilogy
- “Just another cigar store,” which takes a little jab at some of Santa Fe’s most successful artists, R. C. Gorman and Amado Peña, for their repetition of imagery and the galleries that handle them

Having been a successful artist/colorist for Eclipse Comics, helping to create *Strike*, *Man of War* and *Merchants of Death*, as well as many others, my artwork from this period also has a strong fantasy element. In 1995 this culminated in an exhibition at Bildungshaus Lainz in a show called “Phantastische Geschichten” (“Fantastic Stories”) in Vienna, Austria.

Still looking for a more individual and unique style, I played with media, pouring paint from a cup onto the canvas and manipulating the imagery, sometimes with partial washouts. A primary example is “Damaged.”

The more recent work of ghostly images, where faces and hands seem to be pushing through the canvas from behind, I consider ghosts, spirits and other apparitions. Oftentimes, these pieces reveal themselves as they are painted or drawn; others appear in dreams or visions, already complete, and are then transferred to the selected medium:

- “Lauren,” a portrait of a friend, developed as her spirit became more apparent as I painted, which caused me to add her signature red lipstick
- “The Smile,” channeling Leonardo, should be self-explanatory
- “Schizophrenia,” “Purgatory,” “Dante’s Inferno” and many of the others are obviously influenced by writings, religions and the times in which we live
- “The Silence” is my homage to Edvard Munch, the artist of “The Scream”

For anyone who has viewed this website in the past, please note there are new pieces coming. I also hope to have some new sections to include personally held older pieces and collector-owned paintings.

Stay tuned.