



Birds on wire.



Painting with birds.



Painting of trees.

Artist of the Month, Norway

From planes to paintings

After working for Scandinavian Airlines' marketing and communications department for ten years, Solveig Skogseide decided it was time for her creative skills to blossom. Therefore, she leaped into a new life.

By Idha Toft Valeur | Photos: Solveig Skogseide

Seven years have passed since Skogseide walked out of her marketing office and into the shoes of a full-time painter and artist. Looking back on how her life was suddenly spent more in front of an easel than a computer, her career change makes perfect sense. "I grew up in a family full of creative minds. My uncle was an artist, my dad was a musician and my mum paints, just like me. So it makes sense, even though I never considered studying for a degree in arts. I looked for a degree where I could use my creative mind, and that is how I ended up doing marketing," Skogseide explains. "My art has always been a part of my life, and it gradually developed into becoming my livelihood. So, when I had my third child, I decided 'this is it', and I went for it."

The easiest path for Skogseide would be to stick to what she knows – Sartre paintings with a dusty finish. But she will not take the easy route in her career as an artist. "It's important for me not to feel stuck in a specific form, but to take that step out of my comfort zone and do new

stuff. I've, for example, experimented with silkscreen images and etchings," she says.

During her artistic career, Skogseide has had a great deal of interest from abroad, and she has exhibited her paintings in multiple countries. "My paintings have travelled to New York, Paris, Rome, Madrid and London, and of course that was a high point in my career – not only being able to exhibit my work abroad, but also selling paintings as a result of the exhibitions definitely spiced up my career as an artist," she smiles.

Opening her own gallery

While receiving attention from abroad and being featured in several galleries in eastern Norway is an exciting prospect for any artist, Skogseide's ultimate career high was when, in June 2016, she opened SOOT gallery in Bærums Verk, a creative hub in Bærum outside Oslo. Skogseide runs it together with the metal sculptor Tobbe Malm and the textile artist Tore Wilhelmsen.

"My focus at the moment is my gallery. It really is a dream situation to be in. I have my atelier on the floor above the gallery, which has opened up a whole new opportunity for interaction with my audience. They get to see paintings in process and then it often ends with them buying the painting when it's done. It feels very local and green to create my paintings in such close proximity to where they are being exhibited," says Skogseide. "For me, it's all worth it when my art can cause a reaction, a feeling, a response or move someone. With art, it's never a one-person conversation."



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