

## DoodleWash Featured Artist – Kris DeBruine

Title: Created to Create

Name: Kris DeBruine

Location: Bellingham, Washington, USA

Even when I was just a child, I loved to draw. I remember drawing lots of animals, especially horses. I loved the feeling of creating something out of nothing, using just a pencil and paper. When I started high school, my art skills developed because of a great high school art teacher, Mr. Rice. He encouraged my abilities and guided me through the use of many types of medium – charcoal, tempura, acrylic and oil. I took every art class I could fit into my schedule. In my senior year, I was chosen by Mr. Rice as the *Artist of the Year* and was asked to create a painting for the school. My finished oil painting still hangs on the high school library wall some forty years later. In college, I earned a degree in Graphic Design. However, a lack of confidence in my abilities and other pursuits led me away from my art for decades.

In 2018, I participated in a “Hike and Sketch” plein-air watercolor workshop in the mountains near my home. While sketching a bridge in the middle of an alpine meadow I suddenly exclaimed – out loud – “I feel so alive!” The feeling took me by surprise. It seemed as if I was connecting with a part of me that had laid dormant for years – a creative impulse. In that moment, I decided I needed to devote myself to painting again – and this time watercolor became my medium of choice.

I’ve experimented and explored these last two years. I’ve taken a few workshops, watched lots of YouTube videos, poured over books and participated in a number of local art groups. I experimented with techniques and styles; I found I developed the most when I challenged myself to paint every day. Challenges like *Doodlewash* keep me motivated.

Early in my journey, I was encouraged to share my work on social media. I set up my Instagram, Facebook and YouTube channels and started to share my work with the world. Wow! The feedback from friends and acquaintances was exhilarating. Each “Like” or “Subscribe” was a small encouragement to keep on painting and keep on improving. People started asking me to paint a beloved pet or flowers for a friend. This started a season of doing commissions. I earned just enough to keep buying art supplies!

About a year ago I set up an art studio in my home and invested in quality supplies. I love Daniel Smith watercolors, but have also been very happy with the less expensive Mijello Mission Gold Pure Pigment paints. I always use Arches 140lb cold press 100% cotton paper. I actually purchase it in a big bulk roll and cut it to size. I really like the Silver Black Velvet watercolor brush brand. I most paint with round brushes, sizes 2 to 14. But I’ve also recently started using Quill brushes and absolutely LOVE my new Ooku Professional Quill brush set. I highly recommend it. Check out my [YouTube channel](#) where I share a tour of my studio and share in depth about my watercolor journey.

When I paint I believe I am responding to something deep inside of me. I really believe I was created to create. When I create something out of nothing I am most like The Creator. When I capture the beauty

of the world through my art, I am better able to celebrate it. I am inspired by the natural beauty that surrounds me in the Pacific Northwest – mountains, water, trees and tulips.

I also found there were certain subjects that I was drawn to – old mailboxes, sunflowers, and cedar stumps. I keep painting these subjects over and over again. I find each time I return to the same subject my understanding of it increases and my confidence grows.

I recently returned to that alpine meadow where I had my earlier epiphany. I painted the same bridge I sketched almost exactly two years ago. It was a way of recognizing the spirit that called out to me then and continues to inspire me to paint today. Maybe I will make this an annual trip back to the place that started this watercolor journey. One thing is certain, I will keep on creating.

Links:

Website: [krisdebruine.com](http://krisdebruine.com)

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/kris.d.art/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/kris.debruine.art>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/krisdebruinestudio>