

## Simon Bull

The second of four children, Simons flair for art was first noticed when he won his first art competition at the age of six. Other childhood art prizes were to follow, including several in his teenage years and a national art students painting prize while he was at college.

Many influences were coming together and shaping an inner vision of the world that was to inform Simons passion to create, not just an image, but an experience. Something to heal and enrich, something that would make a difference.

In the early years at boarding school, the sense of desolation he felt whilst away from the bosom of the family opened him up to an intense search for spiritual nourishment. Coming from a religious background had meant that a sense of God was always present with him, but as he grew older, a desire for a more tangible spiritual reality led him to the Bible and eventually to find in the person of Jesus, one who brought him the peace he so badly needed as well as a new purpose and sense of destiny.

While still at art school he married Joanna, his childhood sweetheart. As time passed the economic challenges that faced the growing family were many, but always there would be some buyer who saved the day, some last minute commission that turned up. During the late seventies and early eighties the skills in printmaking that he acquired at art school and which had especially fascinated him began to pay dividends. He sold his first three editions to Pallas Gallery in London and then entered a relationship with London Contemporary Art who sold out many of his meticulously worked multi plate etching editions.

Throughout this period Simon painted the world around him. Travelling extensively to the East, he trekked with his paints through the foothills of the Himalayas, toured the Mediterranean and spent many weeks painting the mountains of the English Lake District where he and Joanna now live with their four children. However, as each year passed a deeper creative current seemed to pull at the artist. Once again it seemed that what had happened during his teens in the spiritual realm was now touching him in the creative realm; a sense of something more, of something waiting to be touched and expressed beyond the world of visible realities. He was moving away from painting the outward things, his canvases began to be expressions of the inner world, the world of the heart and of the spirit where the real life of mankind is felt and lived.

Like a butterfly emerging from its chrysalis the rich and vibrant style for which he has since become world famous began to find expression, to find a voice. It was not until his major one-man show at Harrods in London where seventy-six of his paintings were exhibited together, that the effect of this new work came home to him.

"I remember walking around the show listening to what people were saying. I began for the first time to understand what my paintings had become. The people were telling me! People were being transported, the colors and imagery were becoming a means of conveying the viewer into another world, the miracle was happening. People were being hit right in their emotional center."

In 1997 he was rewarded with the accolade of the UK best-selling artist award shortlist, despite competing with a hand made editions program against mass produced editions. Again in the year 2000 he was short listed for the awards, this time in two categories: Best selling published artist overall and best selling original print artist. He won outright the Artist's Print Award for being the best selling artist in the UK of original hand finished prints. The prizewinners were chosen from a detailed poll of the fourteen hundred retail art galleries in the United Kingdom who are members of the Fine Art Trade Guild.

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