

"AN ARTIST CONFESSES HUB CITY OBSESSION"

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ARTIST AMANDA FERRELL WAS INTERVIEWED BY

"THE BULLENTIN" NEWSPAPER

IN HOPES TO ORGANIZE AN ANNUAL EVENT

THAT WILL SPOTLIGHT OTHER LOCAL ARTISTS

IN THE CITY OF COMPTON, CALIFORNIA.

Hopes to organize an annual event that will spotlight other local artists

By Cheryl Scott
Bulletin Staff Writer

Amanda Ferrell showed artistic talent from the time she was a toddler, but it wasn't until she was in fourth grade that others noticed her peculiar ability to create works that grabbed the attention of students and teachers and won school competitions.

"I used to draw things when I was little, before I started school," she told The Bulletin. "But no one really paid much attention to it. But in the fourth grade we had an art time every day and that's when my teacher realized my work was special."

That's an understatement. She jumped into art time with both feet, producing assignments that stunned her mother and her teachers. She and the other art time students participated in a T-shirt project being held by the school.

"The school was going to make official T-shirts with the name on them," she said. "The art students were to come up with logos and the best one would be used on the T-shirts. Everyone was shocked by the logo I designed. I had been really involved in the project and it was starting to become obvious that I could be an artist."

The idea really took hold when she was a student at Benjamin O. Davis Middle School. "I started to learn more about different media and about producing an image that was true to life," she said. "And I entered competitions, winning many of them."

She attended Compton High School for her first years, graduating from Gardena High School on the honor roll, winning third place in a contest held for the entire student body.

But she still never considered a career in the field she loved. "I became a legal assistant, and I became very discouraged," she said. "I thought that no matter how hard I tried I would always be trapped in a job I didn't like that much. I went on maternity leave and when I went back to work, I realized I'd rather work for myself than for someone else."

An injury decided the question and she left her job for good. All along she had been painting and she decided it

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Photo provided

Artist Amanda Ferrell has a big dream: She would like to organize a new event in Compton that will showcase the work of Hub City artists. Her first step in achieving her goal is to find a suitable, affordable location for the festival. "This city has lots of new little parks and facilities that are rehabilitated from years of neglect," she said. "We are looking for the right one for our purposes, then we'll contact the city to see how we can rent it for an event."

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was time to promote herself as an artist. A friend invited her to her first art festival and Ferrell found her true calling.

"I figured that my work injury was a sign from God that I wasn't doing what I should be doing," she said. "I began to look for other art events I could participate in." Soon Ferrell was showing her work in events like the prestigious Barnesdall Art Festival in Hollywood, a show that only accepts qualifying work by established artists.

Now her work can be seen in art shows and events throughout the year in Compton and the surrounding area. She sells enough of her work, which now encompasses mixed media, to provide for the needs of her two boys, ages 3 and 10, and herself.

She also works extensively as a commercial artist, designing

logos and other artwork required in the corporate world and has begun designing clothing. She hopes someday to have a clothing line.

"Back in the '70s and '80s there seemed to be more art festivals in Compton than there are now," she said. "I'd like to work with others to start an art festival that would feature local artists, because I know that there is a lot of talent in this city that needs a place to be seen."

Through contacts she has made while promoting her own work, she has accumulated some support. "One person who has said he would like to work with me on getting the event started has been involved in community events for a long time," she said. "Another is a man who designs Web sites."

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That's as far as she's gotten, but she feels the idea has merit and that there are many local artists who would benefit from the opportunity to show their work.

She has not ruled out any part of community art activities, including the possibility of holding a juried art show with professional judges and prizes for the winners.

She hopes to hold the first show in March or April. Right now, she's raising funds by selling advertising space in the program that will be produced for the event. She also promotes the idea on Facebook and Twitter.

"I guess you can say I'm obsessed with the idea," she says with a laugh. "My friends say that's all I talk about now. I guess some people get tired of talking about it, but it's all I can talk about."

Anyone interested in getting involved can contact Ferrell on her Myspace page at www.myspace.com/AFCAC.

The result of obsession is often success. Don't be surprised if sometime during the next few months, Compton will host its own fine arts show. If Amanda Ferrell has her way that's exactly what will happen.

An artist confesses Hub City obsession



Girls B'n Girls, 2009, Amanda Ferrell (acrylic and fabric paints on canvas)