

PG LOCAL ARTIST INTERVIEW

Camela & Sierra Kiser

This month, we speak with Camela Kiser and Sierra Kiser, distinguished members of the local fine arts community.

With a strong background in the arts, Camela and Sierra are proficient in many art mediums, and their inspiring artwork has been featured in several art shows and murals around the valley.

Where are you from, Camela and Sierra?

[Camela] We were raised right here in Pleasant Grove. We are sisters in a family of four, and we've lived in the same house since our childhood. Pleasant Grove as a community has been a large part of our lives.

What are some of your earliest memories of the arts?

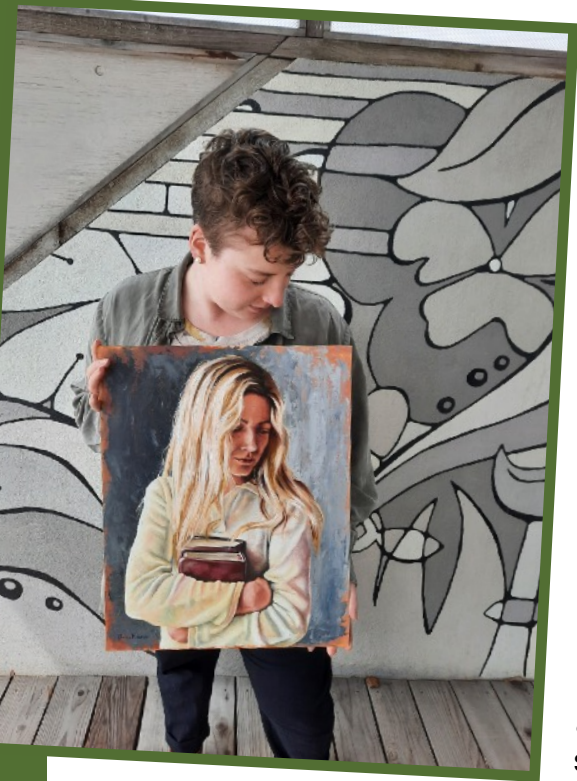
[Camela] Our mom is a private art teacher. For over 20 years, she's been teaching art instruction out of a growing home art studio, and she's worked with hundreds of art students of all ages from all around Utah County. We were very fortunate to grow up in that environment, and we've been deeply rooted in the arts since a very early age.



[Sierra] One of the earliest memories that I have of the arts was the art studio summer camps based out of our mother's art studio. These would typically last for several consecutive days in the summer, and there would be so many different planned activities as a part of the camp, including field trips. We'd go to the Bean Museum to sketch various works of art, or we'd head out to a local reservoir to paint a landscape or wildlife. These art camps have always been fun, inspiring and educational.

[Camela] One of my earliest memories was in our kitchen. My mother would tape paper to our high chairs during or between meal times and giving us crayons to draw. We would sit attentively in the high chair and construct a toddler masterpiece; once we threw all crayons off the high chair, my mother knew that the artwork was finished.

I also remember that art was incorporate into bath time! In the bath, she'd tape watercolor paper on the wall. We were given paint brushes and water color paint trays, and we'd create watercolor art while in the bath. That was probably the easiest project cleanup ever!



Where did the arts take you as you grew up?

[Camela] We've been able to take art with us through all our experiences. As a part of many family experiences, vacations, and education. We were both involved in AP Art throughout high school and we've been involved in other art opportunities in the community.

In my experience, art has taught me about humility. In Elementary school, art was a natural talent that I was drawn to, and I did very well in that subject. I enjoyed being known as an artist. It came easily to me. As I grew older, I had a wakeup call; other kids were rapidly improving their own talent for art, and I realized that I needed to work hard if I wanted to be on top. Over the years, I've put a significant amount of time into growing my talent.

[Sierra] It's so true. You can't sit still when you are passionate about something. You need to continually work to improve your skills. Otherwise, the world begin to pass you by without you even realizing it.

What are your preferred art mediums?

[Sierra] Something I've always loved about my mom is how good she is at introducing people to a large variety of art mediums and styles. I have been introduced to a great variety or artwork and styles, and I really have no fear of jumping between different mediums and styles and trying something new. I love so many mediums, but I'd say my favorites are chalk pastels and watercolors.

[Camela] We really have become a "Jack of all trades" in many styles because of all the exposure that we've had to a variety of options. I also love chalk pastels.

How does art affect your own perspectives in life?

[Sierra] Arts in general really shape how you see the world. Because I am so fascinated by art, and it's something I'm focused on on a daily basis, everything I see connects back to my artwork. For example, I may see a beautiful sunset and say, "That would make an amazing watercolor landscape." Or I may see a person walking down that street and think, "They look just like a cartoon, and I can imagine their personality!" It's sounds funny, but it's true! I am

used to seeing life in the form of a still frame canvas, and you can build a picture or bring out the imagery in any scene or place that you find yourself in with a little creativity.

[Camela] Art absolutely shapes your perspective of the world. I think every artist has a little different perspective based on their experience, and it's fun to learn from others - to see their own perspectives and try to understand where they are coming from.

Personally, I feel that there's something spiritual about art. As an artist, I almost feel like I get a glimpse into how God created his children. When I am working on a blank canvas, I get to choose the imagery as a whole. I determine the color tones, the mood of the scene that I am setting, and who shows up in the scene. I get to create the people, and in a way, I am creating a piece of their personalities on that canvas. I create who they are, what they are doing, what they are wearing, and more. It builds a connection like I've never experienced before, and I feel like I can better understand a higher power and perspective that creates this larger setting and purpose.

What has been the most memorable experience in working in the arts?

[Sierra] It's hard to choose one. Each piece of art that I've created has its own experience and story. Creating a piece of artwork is a journey in and of itself, and every outcome is different - sometimes the outcomes is entirely different than I ever imagined.

One of the most challenging experiences that I have experienced is commission work, where a client asks me to create a work of art out of an idea in their head. This could be a landscape in a fantasy world, or a portrait of a character, or something entirely different. It's challenging because I don't live in their head and I don't know what they are thinking.

I often ask the client to give reference pieces and examples to get a feel for the general idea that they are looking for. Sometimes they have a specific expectation of the result, while other times they have a general idea and nothing more. What I've found is that communication is key. You learn how to ask questions that pull the necessary information from their head so that you can begin to visualize what they are really wanting to accomplish - and eventually, you begin to share the same vision. At that point, the experience can become very memorable and meaningful to you both.

[Camela] At one point in my life I was going through a very difficult and personal experience. I began to create a representation of my feelings on a canvas as an outlet. Every brush stroke was pouring my emotions into the artwork, and I felt that it was a spiritual experience for me. The results turned out beautifully and was a very close representation to what I was going through. This was one of the most memorable experiences that I've ever had with art.



Sometimes, there's a deep connection to the artwork that I create, whereas other times there's no actual meaning or deeper connection behind the art. Sometimes, it's just a painting. But it's often fun to hear how people react to my artwork. They make up their own meanings and connections which, oftentimes are very different than my own feelings. We all connect with art in different ways, which is beautiful.

What are some of the works that you are involved in now?

[Camela] It seems like we are always up to something! More recently, we have been contracted with Splash Summit to paint murals across the water park. It's been a continued project over time; we were initially asked to paint their logo in the office wall, and it went so well that we were next asked to convert the lazy river area to a rain forest mural.

It's been an amazing experience! People visiting the water park can see us working on the murals in real time and they seem to really get into it. The artwork around Splash Summit adds pops of color, scenery that you often don't see at water parks, and people really seem like the transformation where the progress is evolving between each of their visits. If you haven't been to Splash Summit recently, you should come and check out the murals!



Where can people learn more about your work?

[Camela] The best place to find out about our work is Instagram. We have some great photos of our work, and we love connecting with people in the community. Definitely check us out and say hello!

CONNECT WITH CAMELA & SIERRA



Instagram
@kiser_must_art