



Nordvendt Lengsel is currently displayed at Krane Galleri in Tromsø.

Kari Rindahl Endresen 2017

Artist of the Month, Norway

From the pen to the paintbrush

After quitting her job as a journalist for the Norwegian broadcasting company NRK nearly ten years ago to become a full-time artist, Tromsø-based Kari Rindahl Endresen reflects on the decision to follow her passion. She has never looked back.

By Line Elise Svanevik | Photos: Kari Rindahl Endresen

Having been commissioned by the county governor to paint a picture for Queen Sonja of Norway and exhibiting her works in New York City, Endresen explains that her success so far feels slightly surreal. "When I was standing there at a collective exhibition that I was personally invited to in New York, with lots of people and Champagne, I couldn't believe I was there," she says, adding that the royal painting was a highlight in her life.

Her watercolour paintings feature rough lines and streaks – some even describe

her art as quite masculine. "There was a customer who came into one of the galleries I was exhibiting at once, and asked to speak to the 'male artist', as he was convinced that the paintings were done by a man due to the edgy lines," she laughs.

Endresen explains that it is important for her to express speed and excitement in her work, and to bring a certain mood to it all. "It shows contrasts and that there really is life in the artworks – it's not photographs and cute watercolour; there is

plenty of tension, excitement and life," she adds.

With the grand nature surrounding the artist in Tromsø, she has recently moved her studio from the town out to sea – an hour outside Tromsø city centre, which she felt was a natural choice. "I tried to paint at home after my eldest daughter moved out, but it never worked, so for me, driving out and painting at sea with all the birds and mountains surrounding me, everything just fell into place," she explains. "It's almost a little bit magical, and it helps create peace within me."

Meaningful art books

Being both a journalist and an artist, Endresen has also published four art books, the most recent being a collab-

oration with a photographer. It is based on a theatre performance by Ketil Høegh running in Tromsø, entitled *Every Brilliant Thing*, which has been adapted from a British play by Duncan Macmillan.

"I was inspired by the essence of the theatre performance, which is about remembering the great things in life – especially when things are hard. The book is called *The greatest things in life* and features short lines including 'The greatest thing in life is good health' – that someone loves you, love, grandchildren and so on," she explains. "I have this burning passion for caring. I get more and more worried about the fact that, instead of going over to someone's house for a cup of coffee, we send a text message. It's easy to portray yourself in a great way on a mountaintop in a picture or over a glass of wine – but it's the everyday cup of coffee that shows how we really are."

Endresen has also contributed to designing scarves, and her and her friend Helene Karde are bringing out their latest two designs this autumn – one of which will see the profits being donated to Norwegian charity Leve, for those bereaved by suicide.

With this in mind, Endresen tells individual stories through her daring paintings with the nature and houses she depicts.

"It's important for me to tell a bit of the story, but not everything. I've overheard people vividly discussing the location of the things portrayed in my paintings, and when that happens I just stand there, listen and enjoy myself in the background," she explains. "I experience people discovering their own stories through my art. Some cry because they can see their grandmother coming towards them, and as a communicator, that's what I want to achieve – to let my paintbrush tell a story."

Experimenting with other art forms

Also experimenting with graphics through lithography, Endresen has been taught by Anders Fredriksen, who recently moved his studio Fredriksens Grafikk from Oslo to Kristiansand. "It's been enriching being at his studio, turning everything upside down, drawing on a rock with ink. It's been

amazing – especially to be able to work with other artists," she explains.

Endresen feels incredibly lucky to have been able to live off her own artwork for nearly ten years. "It's been absolutely amazing – it's hard work, but it's great to be able to do it for a living. I've been really lucky with a good bunch of friends, family and galleries around me who cheer me on and support me, and I'm looking forward to seeing where it takes me next."

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

September 2017: Galleri Henrik Gerner, Moss

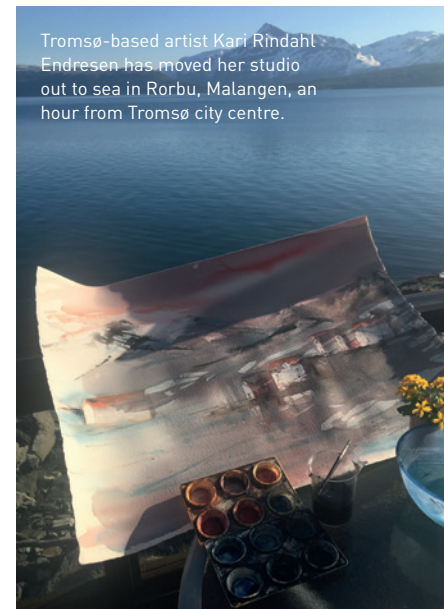
2018: Ten-year anniversary exhibition at Krane Galleri, Tromsø

Web: www.karirindahlendresen.no

Through the houses she depicts, Endresen wishes to tell the beginning of a story that she hopes others can finish.



Despite her background in journalism, Endresen has painted since she was a young girl. Photo: Lasse Jangås, from newspaper Nordlys.



Tromsø-based artist Kari Rindahl Endresen has moved her studio out to sea in Rorbu, Malangen, an hour from Tromsø city centre.