

# In the SPOTLIGHT - Joan Romano

I remember the day I met artist Joan Romano. She had come into my art class quietly, keeping to herself while still becoming fully immersed in the class. Having always felt that I needed art in my life for my own happiness, I quickly learned that this was also true for Joan and we became friends. I remember wondering, in the early days, how this structural engineer had come to be in my less than structured art class. And then I watched as tiny bits of paper were transformed into train stations and city streets. That aspect of Joan's work has always fascinated me; all those tiny bits lined up and layered, and yet everything is so fluid. As artists, we know that art is more than just paint on canvas or whatever the medium may be. It is an expression of the individual; a glimpse into their true nature. Joan's art is a delicate balance between her analytical mind and her creative spirit. In our recent conversation, Joan revealed a bit more about this balance:



**Sandra:** What brought you to art?

**Joan:** My passion brought me to art. As far as I can remember, I have always wanted to paint and draw. I began to paint and experiment with mix media art in 2010. It has been quite a journey so far.

**Sandra:** What is your favourite medium to work in and why?

**Joan:** My favourite medium is acrylic paint. It is so versatile and fun to work with. I like to layer my art pieces and the quick drying time of acrylic paint really helps in the process.

**Sandra:** How does the fact that you're an engineer influence your art?

**Joan:** I see a lot of squares and rectangles in my art. As a structural engineer, I have designed several buildings over my 17 year career and I know this background is part of who I am and how I paint. I just recently stepped back in my career to find a work-life balance with my young family. I am using art to heal me as well. Change is good.



**Sandra:**Where do you get the inspiration for all of your great pieces?

**Joan:** I enjoy traveling. We travel to Europe every 2-3 years to visit family. I just love visiting all the museums and galleries; there are all types of art genres to soak in. I also enjoy visiting Toronto every chance I get and visit shops along Queen Street East and West, the Distillery District and The Japanese Paper Place. I also enjoy visiting antique market places and artisan towns like Elora.

**Sandra:**Where do you see yourself in five years with your art?

**Joan:** In five years I will be showcasing my art work in New York, London, Berlin, Italy, Japan and Paris,

France. I see myself represented by agents whom I have a close working relationship with. It's a two-way relationship between the artist and the agent.

**Sandra:**What would people be surprised to know about you?

**Joan:**I don't like to talk about my art too much, as I feel this boxes me in a bit. During my gallery shows, I walk around a lot and I don't like to stand in one place. I am still a bit shy and so wine helps calm my nerves during the opening reception events. I am meeting so many great people from galleries all around the world. So many strangers email me directly out of the blue and I just love how they can connect with my art. Art allows me to live my best life and it is such an exciting journey. I try to always be true to myself and to my art. I have found myself saying "no" to things that just did not feel right. Inspiration has to be present, and my intuition has not failed me yet.

**Sandra:**Thank you Joan. I'm looking forward to seeing what comes next.

*Joan has a show at the Holcim Gallery in the Milton Centre for the Arts, running from September 8-27, 2015 and at the Urban Gallery in Toronto in December. For more information and to see some of Joan's other artwork, visit her at [Joanromano.weebly.com](http://Joanromano.weebly.com).*

