

SOUTHBURY MAKERS SPOTLIGHT



Elise Mauterer Fine Art

By Kelly Keenan, SEDC Arts & Culture Subcommittee
Photos courtesy of the artist

Q: How long have you been in Southbury?

A: I've lived in Southbury for just over a year. I moved here with my husband and son from Brookfield in June 2022. We were excited to gain more living space for our growing family, as I was then pregnant with our second son. We simply love the spirit in this area and its community support for young families.

Q: How did you get into painting, and how long have you been doing it?

A: Painting has been a lifelong hobby of mine, but my high school art classes really cemented it as my primary medium. I earned a bachelor's degree in Fine Art at Pensacola Christian College with an emphasis on oil painting. The composition methodologies I learned continue to educate and expand the development of my technical skills even though I've been outside academia for 4 years now.

Q: Do you have a favorite subject matter and/or source of inspiration?

A: I absolutely love portraying animals in the natural world with just a hint of artistic fantasy. Some of my most enjoyable pieces have been scenes involving pairs of animals interacting, sometimes with majestic grandeur and sometimes with warm, fluffy coziness. Portrait painting also excites me, and I have found tremendous joy in highlighting the unique character of each of my subjects. I also take commissions for all sorts of work including personalized pet portraits!

Q: Is there a special place in Southbury you go to for inspiration?

A: Southford Falls State Park has become a favorite of mine. I go there to relax and reset (with or without the kids haha). With all my responsibilities at home, trips to the park really let me rejuvenate my creative side, as simple as that sounds.



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Q: What is your favorite part of the process? Least favorite?

A: While working, I have found my favorite part of the process to be the stage right before the completion of a painting when all the fine details can be added. One of the best parts of creating is making a piece that continually captures an admirer's attention, even on the hundredth viewing. Capturing interest with the finery of small hairs, greenery, or other minutiae makes all the difference to the beauty of the overall work. Conversely, I find my work to be the least enjoyable when it is in what I call "the muddy process" of blocking out colors and objects before form can be added. Often I feel a little lost during this phase; everything is a little too abstract. And I personally feel that edges, textures, highlights, and form are what define an artistically phenomenal painting.

Q: Are there any other special talents or creations you'd like to share with the community?

A: Painting is my main pleasure, but I also enjoy chalk art. I do several menu and event boards for businesses in the area and am always looking to do more! I dabble in graphic design as well and have created logos and branding for a number of small businesses. I also teach canvas painting and other classes at The Pottery Factory in Brookfield for those looking to grow their art skills or simply enjoy a wonderful evening of relaxing, "no pressure" art instruction. :)

Q: Do you have any advice for emerging artists who are trying to find their voice / style / genre?

A: Practice! Practice! Practice! You MUST practice continually. Also, you have to practice. Never stop researching and learning from those before you. Talent is trained, not inherited. We live in a wonderful time period where so many resources are available online. If possible, find a coach or a hands-on teacher to guide you. Art is subjective by nature, but you may be surprised how quickly you can grow by mastering some of the technical fundamentals like drawing and composition. Be open to critiques, and learn how to give genuinely helpful critiques yourself. And keep putting your work out there!

For more information about this month's maker, or if you are interested in being featured in an upcoming issue of the Southbury Makers Spotlight, contact us at edsouthburymakers@gmail.com or visit www.southbury-ct.org/arts.



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 elisemafineart@gmail.com  [@elisemauterer_fineart](https://www.instagram.com/@elisemauterer_fineart)  [Elise Mauterer Fine Art](https://www.facebook.com/EliseMautererFineArt)