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November 14, 2012

iPad Art Heads to Miami Beach

By Erin Schumaker | Art

Winged Goddess by Sheila Elias

Image by Sheila Elias

After years of using a paintbrush, Miami-based artist Sheila Elias is exploring a new medium—digital painting on Apple's iPad. Vividly colorful and full of movement, the large-scale works, printed on canvas and then touched up with paint, appear to be portraits from another world.

In October, Elias demonstrated her craft during a live event at the Apple Store on the Upper West Side of New York. After showing at Manhattan's Mayson Gallery, she is taking her series, "iPaint on My iPad," to Florida for a pre-Art Basel Miami Beach kick-off exhibit starting December 4. (She will also be showing her more traditional works within Red Dot Art Fair, which is part of Art Basel.) We caught up with the artist for insight into her innovative technique.

Q: How is using an iPad to create art different than painting with a brush?

A: I painted these without tools and enlarged abstract shapes that took on mysterious, unnatural forms. The iPad differs [from painting with a brush] because it has impact in the degree of immediate responsiveness. And the final composition is translated to a larger format.

Q: Has it been a difficult transition?

A: I have been painting on my iPad since 2011. Creating on the iPad is different than traditional painting and drawing in that you are confined to the limitations of the app and must expand your abilities to take into account those boundaries.

Q: I noticed that many of your works have mythical or celestial titles —Sphinx and Griffin, Strange Deities, Winged Goddess. How does using technology to create art connect with these otherworldly themes?

A: I love the juxtaposition of antiquities with the modern universe. Painting with your finger is what the cavemen did, and I find it so amazing that today's technology could relate the past to the present. *On view by appointment from December 4 to 9; 1510 NE 130th St., North Miami; 305-892-9198 sheilaelias.com.*

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