

Bio for Brenda Blatchford Cirioni

Turning artistic passion into a business isn't easy. Some artists worry about selling their art, while others worry about maintaining artistic integrity. Indeed, it's a delicate balance between the two. But Brenda Blatchford Cirioni has always been good at juggling.

Faux finishes and murals make up MaisonArt, a business Cirioni started in 1994 after spending years painting by day and waiting tables at night. Cirioni recounts the evening when a customer triggered her entrepreneurial spirit.

"I met someone who had gone to art school and started a painting company. She was showing me her portfolio of faux finishes and murals and I'm thinking to myself, 'I could do that.' So, that's what I did."

Of course, her art background helped this foray into faux finishes and murals. After earning her diploma from The Museum School of Fine Arts in Boston in 1983, Cirioni spent years honing her craft working in her private studio in the South End. She has shown her work in and around Boston, at the DeCordova Museum in Lincoln, MA and at the Berkshire Museum in Pittsfield, MA. Cirioni's paintings hang in private collections in the Boston area as well as in Maryland, Texas, Colorado, and Florida and in private collections at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Fidelity Investments in Boston.

Her medium of choice is oil on canvas and paper. Her subject? Landscapes. As Cirioni says, "I feel a connection to the land and when left to my own devices that is what I paint, but no matter what the subject matter is I simply love to paint."

Marriage and relocation to the suburbs in 1987 along with the birth of her son in 1990 forced her to slow down. The responsibilities of motherhood took precedence over painting. But when Cirioni's son was getting ready to enter school in 1994, she met a fellow artist who was "making it" as a self-employed muralist. Cirioni's entrepreneurial spirit kicked in. Suddenly, MaisonArt Murals & Faux Finishes was born.

Ten years later, MaisonArt Murals & Faux Finishes enjoys a solid reputation that is based on word-of-mouth referrals from satisfied customers all over Eastern Massachusetts. From painting murals of Martha's Vineyard on hallway walls to putting faux finishes in the master bedroom, no decorative art project is too little or too big for Cirioni.

Cirioni says both faux finishing and murals are options for homeowners.

"A mural is basically a painting on a wall. A faux finish is a treatment; it's a technique. The tricky part of being good, I think, is getting the right colors and the right techniques for the room. You don't just go in and paint everything with one brush."

Cirioni says there are times when she'll tell clients that they don't need faux finishing or murals.

“I was in a house today and there was a lot of clutter. It’s a busy, active house. I told the client, ‘You don’t want decorative painting in here. You have so much going on that just having a beautiful, solid color for the background is all you need.’”

In addition to faux finishes and murals, Cirioni maintains a studio at Artspace-Maynard, where she works on her own art as well as commissioned paintings. Artspace-Maynard is a nonprofit community art center in Maynard, Massachusetts. Cirioni lives in Stow with her husband, Peter, and their son, Evan.