

# Commissioning Your Pet's Portrait

by artist *Tatiana Kalnins* [www.paintedpawtraits.co.nz](http://www.paintedpawtraits.co.nz) & [www.artfind.co.nz/artist/tatikaln/1](http://www.artfind.co.nz/artist/tatikaln/1)

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## The Portrait

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My pet portraits aim to reflect the quality and texture of fur through my own unique painting style. I do not paint "each individual hair" as I feel this produces a static image that doesn't reflect the life and energy of the animal. Instead I use multilayered brushwork skills to create a *painting* that is a timeless piece of fine art and a true rendition of your pet.

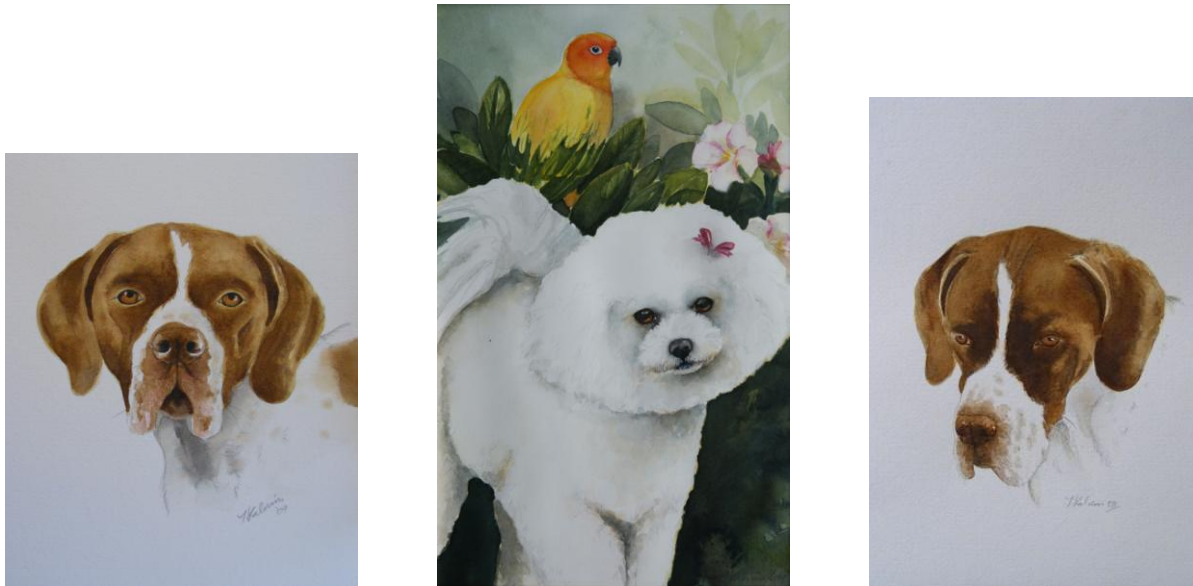
My acrylic paintings are usually done on a neutral background (see examples below) which brings the focus onto the animal, giving it tremendous impact and a classic quality. The animal is almost moving out of the canvas!

My watercolours are usually painted against a white background, although this depends on the initial colour of the animal (for example, a white animal would need a darker background to make it stand out). Again, the animal's fur is created by layering the watercolour onto the paper, with the occasional use of graphite pencil, rather than painting hair by hair.

Portraits can be painted in either acrylic on stretched canvas (complete with D-rings and ready to hang) or in watercolour and pencil on paper (unframed).



*Examples of acrylic paintings on stretched canvas*



*Examples of watercolours on paper*

Both types of painting are archival quality using only artist quality materials. Please note that some portraits are more suited to acrylics than watercolour – please contact me to discuss if you are unsure.

## **Size of the Painting**

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The size of your pet portrait depends to an extent on whether you want head and shoulders or full body. For example, an acrylic painting of the head and shoulders of a medium sized dog like a border collie should be no smaller than 12x16 inches. A watercolour painting of the head and shoulders of any sized animal should be painted on paper no smaller than A4. Larger animals like the large dog breeds, or horses generally need to be painted on larger canvases if they are to be painted in acrylics.

Bear in mind that portraits should generally be no larger than the actual animal.

Full body paintings should be larger than this to do justice to your pet. Please contact me to discuss what size would be most suitable for your pet (Stretched canvas sizes include 9x12", 12x16", 14x18", 16x20", 18x24" and 22x28")

## **Cost of the Painting**

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Cost is dependent on the size and complexity of the painting.

As a guide, a 12x16" acrylic head and shoulders painting would usually cost about NZ\$390.00.

A head and shoulders portrait in watercolour on A4 sized paper would usually cost about NZ\$210.00 (unframed).

Individual prices may vary according to the complexity of the painting and specific estimates are given upon request.

Postage and packaging costs are extra.

## **Payment and Refunds**

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A 50% non-refundable deposit is payable by cheque or direct credit at the start of the commission.

When the work is deemed to be completed a high resolution photo will be sent to you via email or the post for approval. Acrylic paintings can usually be modified at this stage if necessary, but watercolours cannot. If you consider a watercolour painting to be unsuitable, a new painting will be developed according to your suggestions. Upon approval and receipt of the balance due, the painting will be posted. Once the painting has been posted and received it cannot be returned and modified or re-done.

A pet portrait can make a wonderful gift for someone - gift vouchers are available upon request.

## **Photos**

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Please note that some photos are more suitable for painting than others. A close up shot of your pet's face is best, preferably with the face slightly at an angle to the camera. The photo should also be at their level, not looking down or up at them. Natural lighting is also usually good, preferably with slight natural shadows on the animal's face to enhance the three dimensional nature of their features. Photos taken under artificial light with a flash are not usually suitable. It is also important to include several other photos from different angles so that a good all round view of the animal can be seen.



*An example of an unsuitable photo for a portrait*



*An example of a suitable photo for a portrait. Additional close-ups of face would also be needed for detail work.*



*The finished painting!*

If the painting is to be a memorial portrait for a pet that has recently passed away, and there are limited suitable photos available, please contact me to arrange a viewing of the photos as it may still be possible to do a painting from them.

You can either send digital photos via email or on a CD in the mail, or you can send hard copies of photos in the mail. All photos will be returned upon completion of the painting.

## Completion Time

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Works of art can take varying lengths of time to complete, depending on the complexity of the subject and the size.

Acrylic paintings can usually be completed within 8-9 weeks (for a 12x16" work).

Watercolour paintings can usually be completed within 4-5 weeks (for a work on A4 paper).

***International commissions are also available. Contact me to discuss!***

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