

## Art by Conni Tögel

Conni Tögel (née Cornelia D. Scherz) was born in Winfield, Illinois, on July 24, 1965 as a daughter of German immigrants. Her parents, Heinrich and Lisa Scherz, emigrated to the United States in 1961 and later became American citizens.

Conni is the youngest of three siblings, with two older brothers, Michael and Martin. In 1973, her parents accepted a missionary appointment to Germany, where she spent the next twenty-four years of her life.

From the age of four, Conni's favorite pastimes were drawing, coloring and dreaming. Her most celebrated possessions were her box of 64 Crayola crayons (with a sharpener in the back of the box!) and her coloring book. These helped her pass the time in her father's graphic design studio/office, waiting for him to be done working for the day. Weekends with the family were spent on long excursions to the Smoky Mountains of Tennessee, wading in creeks, climbing rocks, exploring old cabins and getting up close to black bears while sitting in the car.

Her teenage years were spent in a small village in Germany (population 206 at last count) nestled among the hills of the Remstal in Baden Württemberg. She spent many hours picking wildflowers and wild berries; building fairy homes out of moss, sticks and acorn cups in the forest; sledding down the old mountain road in the wintertime; helping the local farmers with the hay harvest; and baking bread in the community woodburning stove.

Conni's childhood was one that did not allow for very many boring times &mdash; boredom was sure to bring on work orders from her mother, so Conni made sure to keep herself busy exploring, playing, and staying out of work's way. Instead, she focused on honing her observation skills &mdash; something that has benefited her work ever since. During her residence in Germany, Conni traveled to many of the surrounding countries. In 1990 she spent two weeks with a group of her fellow art students, drawing and painting on location in the beautiful French countryside. Other trips included Venice (1991, 1992), Wales (1982), England (1982), Turkey (1985), Yugoslavia (1979), Austria (1989, 1993), Switzerland (1982, 1989, 1990, 2004), and Norway (1979), to name but a few.

Through her travels in combination with her gift of close observation, she developed a fine-tuned sensibility for colors, atmospheres, and situations &mdash; a perfect combination for creating artwork that appeals to the emotions of the viewer.

On April 1, 1989, Conni married Peter Tögel, an Austrian marketing specialist living in Stuttgart. She graduated in 1993 from the Kolping College of Applied Graphics in Stuttgart, Germany. As a well known graphic designer, she created magazines, logos, signs, catalogs, ads and corporate identity packages. In late 1995, the couple and their first child, Jamie-Lee, moved to the United States. One year later, Conni's second daughter, Holly, was born in Denver. To keep their extended family overseas updated on their lives, Peter and Conni developed a website in 1996 that gained numerous reviews and was featured in the European media. Their book, *Briefe, die das Leben schrieb*, made the German Amazon.com bestseller list and resulted in several appearances in magazines around the world.

In the spring of 1999, Conni started showing her paintings in the new venue of online galleries. While Conni was pregnant with their third daughter, Annie-Mae, in the early summer of 1999, the Tögels moved to Augsburg, Germany, but by the following summer, they had decided to make the United States their home once again.

So they packed up and moved back to Colorado, where Conni spent the next five years honing her skills and techniques as an artist while raising her three daughters. Her studio in Colorado Springs was a sunny room on the second floor of the house, with a view of Pikes Peak and the aspen trees surrounding their house in the beautiful Windjammer subdivision. Here she created most of her beloved watercolor fairies, wizards and landscapes.

Through her travels in Europe and the United States, Conni has collected visual and abstract impressions of each country's flair and culture. Her paintings not only reflect memories of faraway places, but also provide the viewer with an excursion into her vivid, fairy tale-like imagination.

Her sheep are not just regular sheep - her sheep are bouncing, falling from the sky, flying airplanes, being turned into Baaah-B-Q sauce, or skipping through one of her vibrant, extraordinary landscapes. Her imagination has delighted collectors around the globe.

At the end of 2004, the first limited edition print of Conni's work went into production. Unlike many artists, Conni does not endeavor to enter her work in competitions and communal exhibitions, because she feels it takes away valuable painting time. However, she did agree to exhibit her paintings in the Sacramento Fine Arts Center, the Colorado Artist Show at the 6th Congressional District in Denver, the Pickens County Museum of Art & History in Pickens, South Carolina and the Five Graces shows in Geneva, New York.

Conni's drawings, oil and watercolor paintings have been published in several magazines and are found in collections around the world. Some of her work is included in the collection of famous music producer Quincy Jones, as well as that of a former President of the United States. She is listed in the MARQUIS Who's Who of American Women and Artprice, as well as the American artist reference website AskART.com. Conni and her family now live in upstate South Carolina near Lake Hartwell. They have established their home on a five-acre parcel of land that features a separate studio/gallery building that is waiting for completion in the near future.

Her website can be found at: <http://www.charisma-art.com>