

Dear Miss Adventure,

Send your questions to:
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Color Me...: Interview with Gary of GGP Studios -By Scarlet Apron

A copy of Sports Illustrated and a mid life crisis are what got artist and photographer Gary (last name withheld by request) started in a new venture, body painting. Using you as the canvas, Gary creates amazing living art: from freestyle to themed, from funny to erotic fantasy, his vision follows the models' form for inspiration. Here, he tells us what it is like to put a brush where no man has put a brush before...

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED, GET INTERESTED IN BODY PAINTING?

When I saw that 2008 Sports Illustrated body painting spread of girls in body painted bikinis, I knew I had to try it. I looked around on Model Mayhem and to my amazement, the very first model I asked, accepted! I told her I had no experience, and this was totally an experiment. She asked me tons of questions, I had to figure it out as I went along. That list of questions and answers turned in my BodyPaintingGuide which I ask every model to read before I book them for a paint session. That very first session was a little awkward at times, but she was very patient, and we helped each other through it, and both had a wonderful time!

WHAT ABOUT IT APPEALED TO YOU?

There are so many aspects of body painting that are interesting; It's creative, It's true artistic expression in its purest form, It's a personal connection with the model. All of those, but I'd be lying if I didn't say that painting designs directly onto a nude woman's body isn't the coolest thing I've ever done. All of this aside, it's important to remember that the primary purpose is to create a unique piece of art. There really isn't another medium like this!

HOW DO YOU COME UP WITH THE DESIGN CONCEPTS?

It's a joint effort between myself and the model. Sometimes they have a very definite idea of what they want, and other times I simply make something up. The lingerie and clothing designs are pretty straightforward real world, but the abstract designs require creative thinking. Transforming someone into an animal is an interesting challenge, too.

DESCRIBE THE PROCESS.

I start by doing some head shots and clothed photography, and work into doing some artistic nudes with the model. It gives us both a chance to get to know each other a little before I paint. Then, I do "before" shots which are basically nude mug shots, 4 views, which get repeated after the painting is complete. This allows me to see the transformation more clearly. In preparation, the model must shave. I should also mention that I take a number of sanitary precautions to avoid transferring bacteria from one model to another through my paint/brushes. I don't know of another body painter who does that, but I think it's important to do everything I can, to keep my models safe. To start the painting, I usually draw a few outlines with a fine brush to get the design laid out

on her body and visualized in my mind. Body painting is a very personal and intimate process and it's imperative that the model feel she can trust me completely, in order to allow this level of intimacy. I find that this intimacy forms a bond between us, that makes the finished artwork truly personal and special. We have some very interesting, and personal discussions during painting sessions, partly due to the personal nature of the process. My models generally become my good friends going forward. Some I've painted 5 or 6 times.

PEOPLE'S REACTIONS TO GETTING PAINTED?

Out of the sixty or more models I've painted, only one has changed her mind as we were about to start. All the others seemed to enjoy it immensely. The most memorable comment I received was "It's an experience I'll remember fondly all my life". That made me feel really great! How can it get any better than that?

IF SOMEONE IS HESITANT, WHAT DO YOU TELL THEM ABOUT THE PROCESS?

I have every potential model read my Body Painting Guide which explains every detail of what will happen during the session. Some decide after reading it that it's not for them. The last thing I want is to have a model panic and leave during the session. I know other painters have had models faint from fear in the middle of a session, because they weren't prepared.

WHAT'S YOUR DAY JOB?

For two years while I was laid off, this was my job. Now I'm back to work as a software engineer. It's not nearly as much fun as painting naked girls, but it pays the bills.

DREAM (CELEBRITY) PERSON TO COAT IN LIQUID LATEX OR PAINT?

Lady Gaga! Or Yvonne Strahovsky from the T.V. series "Chuck."

MUSIC YOU'RE LISTENING TO?

Classic rock (Eagles, Led Zeppelin, Beatles, older Stones, Elton John) and yes, Lady Gaga!

FOOD YOU CAN BE SEDUCED WITH?

Lobster casserole (or fried clams), onion rings, champagne, Lindt's Chocolate truffles.

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN GARY'S WORK, CONTACT HIM AT EMAIL:

Gary@GGPstudios.com or check out more of his art at <http://BodyPaint.GGPstudios.com/> and <http://www.GGPstudios.com/>

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