**L’ART DE VIVRE POUR L’ART**

*Art does not have to be pretty; it has to be meaningful.*

Duane Hanson, American photorealistic sculptor

Welcome to the life of a Kritika Gaba, a self-taught artist. At nineteen years old, Kritika has developed an intense passion in the world of visual and physical art creation, and has accomplished various achievements in the same field. Her art can be viewed at her Instagram page, @artNsoul. “I pour my soul into my art and make every piece beautifully, with a lot of hard work”, she responds to the frequently-questioned choice of name for her online art portfolio.

Kritika is currently pursuing psychology at the University of Waterloo, Canada. This comes right after her graduation from Ryan International School, Noida, with a 92% score - on-par excellence. She is a prominent face among the class of 2024 of the University of Waterloo. She is a registered service volunteer at the university, helping those availing its AccessAbility services with her exceptional note-taking skills. Contributing in many such ways has led to the soaring academic success of many of her fellow peers at the university, and has academically metamorphosized the lives of many at the university as well. Students with disabilities have been bolstered by her volunteering services, and has led to the achievement of their academic goals in “the best way possible”.

Kritika is also associated with the Waterloo University Students’ Association, or WUSA. She has collaborated with other volunteers in helping welcome new and returning students at the university, and organize various other events, including Warrior Breakfast during Fall Welcome Week, and Warriors on Ice during the Winter Welcome Week. She is also a campus tour guide for the university, and collaborates with external visitors in helping navigate the campus while understanding the college at a cultural and historical level.

Kritika has extended her volunteering services since before being admitted into the University of Waterloo, and has always believed in giving to the community. During her time at Ryan International School, she volunteered to handle the Slovenian cultural event. She took up various responsibilities, including guiding a group of forty through the school campus and organizing various enactments to express their appreciation of Slovenian culture. Apart from contributing to her school community, Kritika also took part as a fundraising volunteer at Humanity Welfare Council, under the Well India Program for fighting against deadly diseases and to help uplift lower socio-economic classes, and at HelpAge India, where she collected funds to help alleviate the burdens of the backward class community present in various societies.

Kritika has also taken up various jobs at various times in her life. Currently, she is a community manager at Inventiva, a one-stop news portal for everything about the world of entrepreneurship and technology. Among her many responsibilities include the maintenance of various social media platforms of the company, including Twitter and Instagram. Community engagement is one of her many strengths, thereby enabling her to be an effective community manager for the organization. Mastering the art of communication skills has also helped her to tie-in the company with various brands, celebrities, and other institutions and promote their brand integrity. During the month of May, she worked as a Psychology intern at Counsel India Network, for which she has been certified by the organization. Her key responsibilities included extensive notes-taking and conduction of mental state examination tests, a part of which are SWOT analysis, MISIC (Malin’s Intelligence Scale for Indian Children), and TAT (Thematic Apperception Test) or picture interpretation.

Her work experience at Counsel India has also improved her basic counselling skills, which helps with diagnosing various mental illnesses by the process of physical and oral analysis of people. She is also well-versed in cognitive behavioral and psychoanalytic therapies, and understands the kinks in the preparation of case histories and case studies for clients. Prior to that, during the first quarter of 2020, she was employed as an assistant sales manager on the campus of her university, where she worked at a tuck shop set up by the university’s undergraduate psychology students. Various responsibilities at the shop included the maintenance of cash and log books, and the sale of edibles to the hungry and clarification of doubts to the confused.

Kritika has started her own art page on Facebook, titled ArtNSoul3217. Her works have been published in her university’s magazine, Quetzal. Quetzal is run by the Imprint Press arts publication, and is handled by the students at the University of Waterloo. Her interests in art surpass the genres they are restricted within, and she views them as challenges to be conquered in the course of mastering art. “The best thing about being an artist is that it opens up a whole world of connections and friendships”, she states. No matter the academic obstacle, Kritika manages to flawlessly hurdle past her educational obligations while managing to output masterpieces of painting as well. “I love creating a painting that is a personal breakthrough, or that others like.”

To Kritika, art is a form of expression; it allows the human heart to express things that words cannot. “The power of art is limitless – it soothes my mind and soul.” And while her love of art is unbound, she took it up as a side hobby, for she did not want to take up something as fun to be her profession. According to her, most of her leisure time is spent analyzing previous art pieces and the suggestions she receives from those that appreciate her work. “Sometimes [I] even randomly sit with art stuff which makes me think and then I eventually end up drawing [sic]”. And this passion for art, if anything, is a work of art itself.