

An Interview with Artist Jeroen Teunen

JF: Tell us little about yourself.

JT: My name is Jeroen, and I am a Dutch artist living and working in Berlin, Germany. I am 32 years old and my big passion is painting dogs, especially Frenchies!

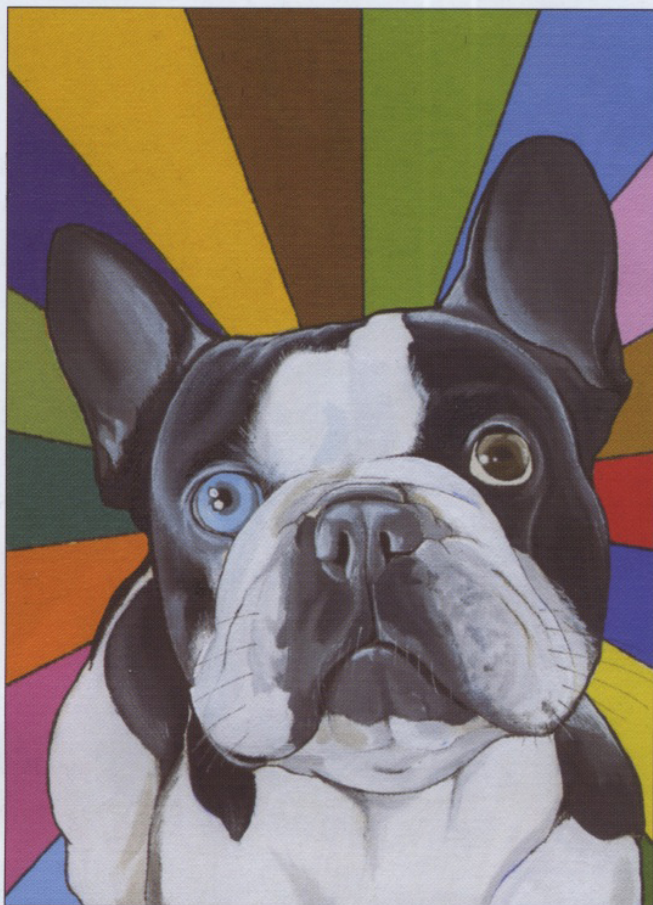
JF: Tell us about your art background.

JT: I grew up in an artistic family. My grandfather was a painter and some of my earliest childhood memories are sitting with him in his studio watching him work. He and the rest of my family would always encourage me to have a go myself and that's how it all really started.

From that point onwards I became "doodle mad!" Instead of doing my school homework I would fill my books with drawings and sketches. Also, as a teenager, I was obsessed with comic books and would copy them religiously.

After I finished high school I went to study art at the University in London.

Later I worked as an illustrator in London and Paris.



JF: When did you feel the calling to become an artist?

JT: Expressing myself through drawing and painting is something I did from an early age. I always used it to entertain myself and as a means of escaping reality especially during my time in school. I never sat down and said, "All right, I'm an artist now!" It gradually sneaked-up on me and one day I realized that there was a possibility of an artistic future.

JF: What mediums do you like to work in?

JT: When I worked as an illustrator I mainly used pen and ink and marker pens on paper. Ever since I

started painting dogs, I switched to painting with acrylic paints on canvas; it gives the image a certain depth and longevity.

JF: How did you get seriously started with your art work?

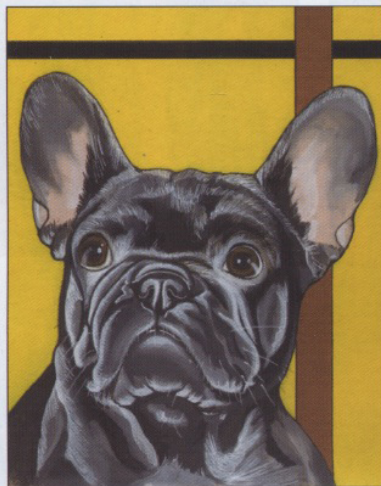
JT: Because art had always been my big passion, I decided to study it. It was at the university that the teachers made me think about what I needed to do in professional terms and that in order to make a living out of it a lot of work needed to be applied. Working as an illustrator taught me the importance of self marketing and to have a close contact with my audience.

JF: When did you have your first connection with Frenchies – and how many Frenchies live with you?

JT: I have just one Frenchie, but I would love to have a whole army of them, of course! My Frenchies' name is Mr. Big and he is my greatest muse and the reason I started painting dogs. I found him in a pet shop in Paris. I had no intentions of getting a dog, but when I saw him I had this strong feeling that he belonged to me. At the time I had no money and I had to use three credit cards to buy him. This was the best money I ever spent! Mr. Big is a little star here in Germany and he has his own television program on a children's channel.

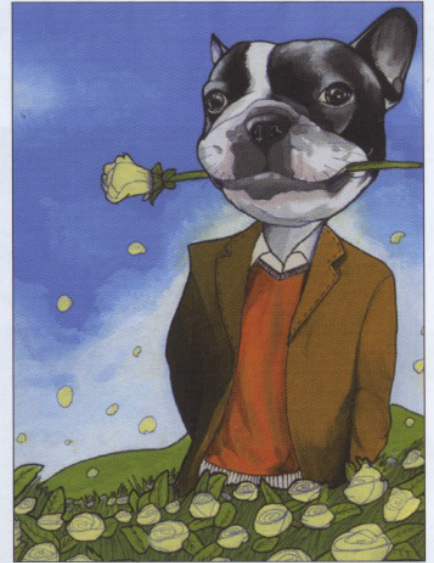
JF: Do you only paint Frenchies or do you paint other animals

JT: Frenchies are my big passion, of course. I love comics and cartoons and for me this breed of dog is the embodiment of a cartoon character come to life. They are a constant source of inspiration and joy. The term "philosopher down" is very apt for them. However, as a dog painter I paint all other breeds of dogs, too. It is fascinating to study them and to then capture each dog's unique character and expression.



JF: Where has your work been exhibited?

JT: I travel a lot and have lived in different countries. I have been fortunate to have my work seen all over Europe and parts of Asia. With the internet now it can be seen all over the world. It gives me a real buzz when people contact me from as far away as Australia or America asking me to paint their dog.



JF: Where can you be located and give us your email and website.

People can see my latest paintings on my site: www.blackspecs.de

Or they can contact me directly: blackspecs@gmx.de

I am always pleased to hear from people and to answer any questions that they might have. 🐶

