

**Artist Bio:** Kim Stephens, Graphite and Charcoal Artist

Kim Stephens is a self-taught artist who strives on acts of kindness, believes in God given gifts, and is one of a humblest nature. Although she was born in the Pacific Northwest, she has resided in Montana for more than 30 years and has since happily retired which gave her the opportunity to hone in on her artistic talents. Growing up, she was the oldest of three children and when she wasn't helping her parents raise her siblings, Kim spent a lot of time in the woods playing amongst the trees and drawing as a means to pass the time. She always yearned to apply for private art schools yet, as the oldest, had an obligation to work to help make ends meet. Eventually, life got in the way, raising a family became a priority so Kim's art was temporarily set aside, but this did not dissuade her from reaching her dreams of one day showing her artworks, for she knew that when the time was right, her art would take back off. At the ripe age of 68 she has found herself alone with her eye for surrealism and a blank canvas in which to explore.

Being drawn to the naked human form, Kim has seen every opportunity, obstacle, and criticism as a steppingstone to self-growth as an artist thus validating her true calling, surrealism. Art to her is "Like breathing, you have to do it in order to survive. It would be irresponsible, even criminal, to not use your God given talent." Kim believes that art is subjective, and you need to do what appeals to you, for art defines who you are. Kim has been inspired by many artists growing up, as a girl she would study the painting techniques and nude art forms of Rodin, Rembrandt, Michelangelo, and the Early Blue Period works of Picasso. What makes her hungry for more is artists that inspire other artists. She understands the importance in supporting one another and sharing each other's creativity in hopes of inspiring the community to contemplate a deeper meaning.

Using Graphite and Charcoal, these mediums are Kim's favorites because there are no lines in the artworks, it is deep enough to illuminate highlights, and she takes a considerable amount of joy in creating the highlights and shadowing.