



Working on new paintings in the studio.

## Artist of the Month, Norway

# One painting tells a thousand stories

From the mysterious forests to the snow covered mountains, Norway's unique nature is raw and ruthless, yet soft and tender. Karianne Gruer Torp captures the bond between man and nature in the most beautiful ways.

By Andri Papanicolas | Photos: Jarran Flokkmann

In her renovated barn located at the end of Steinsfjorden, Norway, lies Karianne's atelier. Overlooking the vast landscape

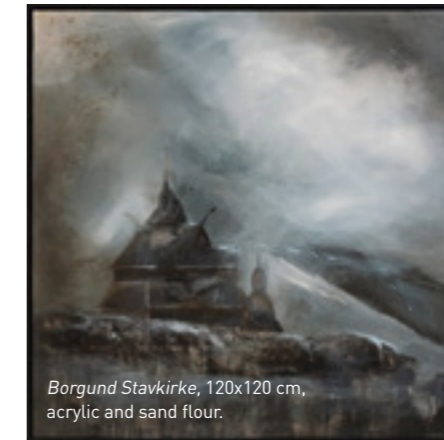
in every direction, Karianne is used to observing the day as it rolls by. "Sometimes, I only see silhouettes, other times

I see rays of light. The landscape can be deep and mysterious or crisp and clear," Karianne says.

Starting each day with a walk in nature, Karianne has witnessed the many moods mother earth has to offer. "Some people assume I am a hunter because of my three cocker spaniels," she laughs.



*Kyst, 80x80 cm, acrylic and sand flour.*



*Borgund Stavkirke, 120x120 cm, acrylic and sand flour.*



*Fjellegg Hemsedal, 80x80 cm, acrylic and sand flour.*

She likes to explore, going off the beaten track to find her own breathing room in the landscape. Sometimes she spots an elk running gracefully away or skittish deer hiding behind the trees. Karianne explains that nature will always accept you as you are. "I guess I am a hunter. I catch the atmospheres and the rhythms," she adds.

### Take a leap of faith

Karianne has been painting and drawing since childhood, nurturing her eagerness to create, and her inner artist has never waned. Eventually, she felt a calling to tell the story of the vast nature around her through art.

Passing the age of 40, she finally decided to be bold and take a leap of faith.

She sold her business and invested fully in her paintings. Today, she is a nationally renowned artist with multiple exhibitions to her name.

Since Karianne's first art exhibition in 2013, A lot of Norwegians have an original KGT (Karianne Gruer Torp) painting hanging in their homes. "When I talk to people, they find a resonance in my work with their own stories, I am glad people can relive memories through my paintings," Karianne says.

### Close to home

There is a deeply emotional self that lives inside all of us, and spending time in nature heightens our connection to it. For thousands of years, the forests, rivers and mountains have been human's bread

and butter. Our dependence on nature for survival has created an unbreakable relationship between humans and the wild.

"The most powerful experiences I've ever had took place when I was alone in nature. I find stillness and a deep sense of calm. That is the most important feeling that I try to convey in my paintings," Karianne says.

One of Karianne's artistic strengths is the way she captures the feeling of belonging. To achieve that, she often paints what people are familiar with – such as a weather phenomenon in the mountains, famous landmarks, or a special energy.

Karianne has several paintings named Senhøst Bitihorn, Sommerregn Jomfru-



"This painting is a work-in-progress and the subject is from Hallingskarvet and Tvergastein, the cottage of philosopher Arne Næss. It was a very strong and beautiful nature experience."

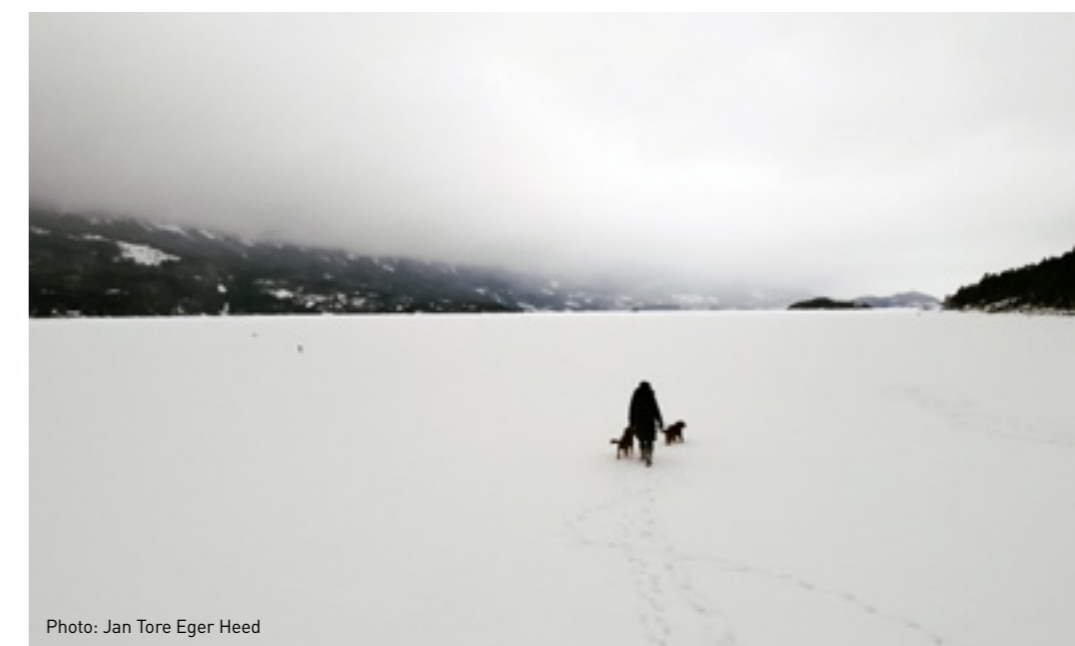


Photo: Jan Tore Eger Heed





*Oktoberdag Hallingskarvet, 400x120 cm. "This is one of the mountain areas that is close to my heart, it is with humility that I try to recreate the experiences from here."*

land and Glittertind, all scenic locations in Norway. "My work reflects real places with familiar elements. The soul of the painting is based on the way I felt at the time I was there. Afterwards, I choose the visual aesthetics and technique," she says. Her purpose as an artist is to give viewers their own breathing room in nature by capturing the atmosphere.

**Bringing a piece of nature into the piece**

When creating the acrylic paintings, Karianne likes to incorporate the surrounding nature, taking, for example, sand flour from the local moraines and mixing it with paint. "It feels like I am giving back to nature. The result is a beautiful rustic, matte surface," she says.

She explains that a painting is constructed with thick layers at the bottom and thin layers at the top, almost like the aquarelle technique. Sometimes, she painstakingly layers gold leaf on the works, giving them depth.

Combining a lot of earth-toned colours with the simplicity of nature, Karianne's paintings tick all the boxes that categorise the humble, modern Scandinavian style. "The pieces are naturalistic and abstract at the same time. They have soft shapes, earth tones, grey-blue hues, sienna and ochre," she says.



*Steinsfjorden Vintermorgen, 100x50 cm, acrylic and sand flour.*



*"When we renovated my studio, I kept the old barn wall where the horse had stood, it tells a nice story with its scratches and kick marks."*

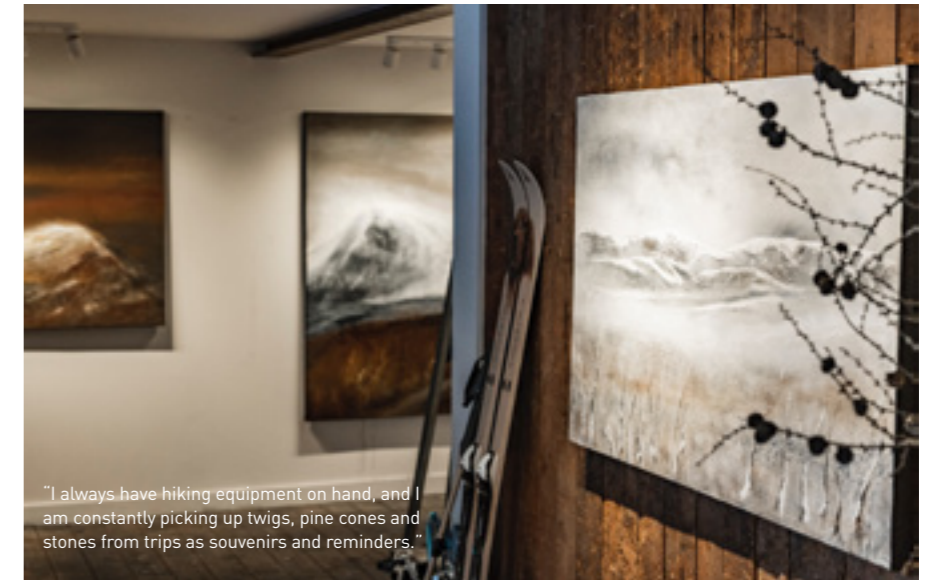
**Endless opportunities**

Like an author going away to write, Karianne has dedicated this year to working on her next exhibition. She plans to spend a lot of time in nature, taking in the calmness and stillness that inspires her to paint. The next project, which will gradually take form over time, will culminate in a new exhibition. Karianne underlines the importance of being patient and to not stress the process. "It is going to be like writing a book, but with no words, only on the canvas," she says.

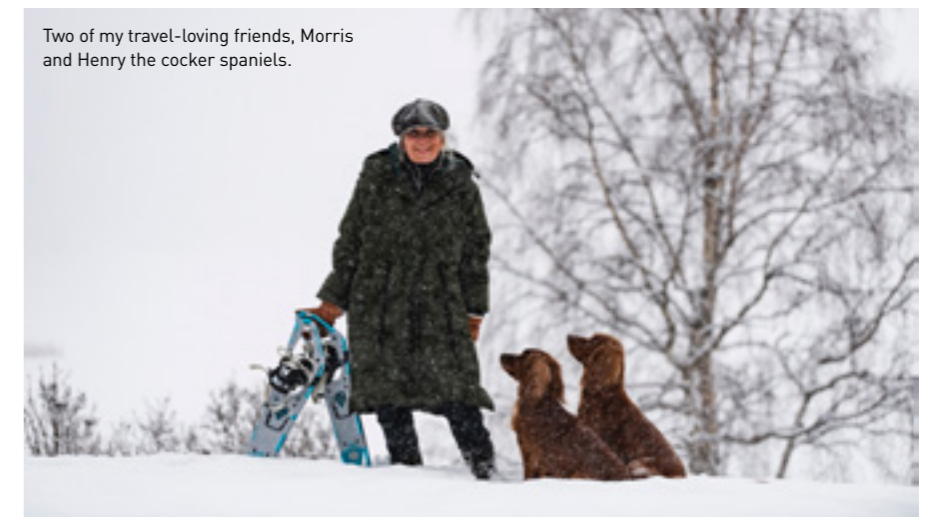
To Karianne, nature's abundance is not in its beauty, but also in the variety of feelings it inspires. This gives her all she needs to keep doing what she loves. "My biggest wish is that my art can give you a sense of calm in a hectic life. I want to pass on what I have experienced myself. I am both proud of and humbled by people supporting my work," she says. "A common love for nature is what defines those who are drawn to my art."

If you want to see more of Karianne Gruer Torps work, you can visit her website or follow the Norway-based artist on Facebook or Instagram to keep updated on her latest ventures.

**www.kariannegruertorp.no**  
**Instagram: @Karianne\_Gruer\_Torp**  
**Facebook: Karianne Gruer Torp**



*"I always have hiking equipment on hand, and I am constantly picking up twigs, pine cones and stones from trips as souvenirs and reminders."*



*Two of my travel-loving friends, Morris and Henry the cocker spaniels.*



*Høst Tanbergmoen, 100x50 cm, acrylic and sand flour.*