

## OFF THE PALETTE TRACY BECKER



Tracy, you own North Shore Advisory Inc., a credit restoration and education business in Tarrytown. So how did you get interested in painting?

"It's a very strange story. I lived in this castle in Forest Hills, Queens. I had this huge apartment that belonged to an artist. Even though I had never drawn or painted before, I had this strange desire to start painting."

This might sound off-the-wall, but do you think that the artist might've imparted something of his aesthetic spirit?

"That's why I tell people this story. It's such a bizarre thing for someone to suddenly take up painting without any training, although I did take a class at Purchase Col-

lege that was excellent. Once I started painting, things started to snowball. When I lived in Nyack, I went to this coffee shop, the Runcible Spoon, and did a series of paintings of children who used to come to the coffee shop with their parents for breakfast. One of my paintings – of a bulldog eyeing a muffin – still hangs there."

You really like doing whimsical oil portraits of dogs. "I adore dogs. They're very innocent and trusting. They're very beautiful beings. A lot of my dog portraits are a way to express my own feelings."

How does painting animals differ from painting people?

"Painting children and dogs, their innocence and energy are very clear. They're not encumbered, like adults. When I've done paintings of adults, they come off more serious. It's hard to get my quirky humor."

Do you have a dog, and does your pooch pose for you?

"I have a Shetland sheepdog who has been my companion for 9½ years – Gertrude. I named her after my grandmother who was not very nice. She has posed for me many times."

Studio: Piermont

Website: [northshoreadvisory.com](http://northshoreadvisory.com)

