

rufe-squirrel: An interview with the furry Artist

As i said in my Other interviews, i like to interview artists that like to get feedback, and rufe-squirrel is one of them, not Only he liked and accepted my review, but he also gave me good feedback for my reviews.

And for that reason, he absolutely desrved an interview like this one

1) thanks for agreeing to participate in this interview! For my first question, I would like to ask, how did you found out about, how you joined the furry fandom?

I came into the fandom in 1999 or so. I already knew that I had some strange attraction to animal toons through all my childhood and that it was proto-sexual as well as creative.

Then one day in 99 I was browsing old internet and was searching for images of a book character I liked and the first thing that I did see was the adult artwork of one Ollie Canal and quickly took a look at that. I was a teen at the time yes, but it probably was the better because Ollie's art actually showed me what sex was when previously i didn't even know what was happening to my body and neither my parents or the school wanted to teach me.

My family even saying to me that babies were made because sperm traveled through clothing when people that love each other stand next to each other! And my school was very anti sex ed too in the deep South. Also Ollie's art presented to me two pictures of both hetero pairings and homo pairings and the moment I saw homo pairings I knew right away I really liked that more. I never socialized with anyone until 2004 when I joined Yahoo Groups and was 18.

2) And do you think the furry community was good for you and your arts?

Absolutely. Though of course that's my personal opinion. But it did eventually lead to me dropping out of the system as normal as well as coming to terms with having queer feelings even from childhood. It made me realize there was a deeper connection to other people than just religion, competition, nationalism, and moulding yourself to fit the dogma of the leaders.

3) did you ever imagined that you would have the many fans you have today when you started?

I never thought about how many fans I would have back then too much but I was grateful for all those I did get then. I actually feel like I have less fans than before because of how large and expanded the online space is especially with the intro of AI pulling peoples minds away from browsing for new things and creating an instant gratification button. Its not finding the thing but the journey of getting there.

4) do you have any criticism about the furry art websites?

Sometimes? But after seeing what happened to deviantart and tumblr having a place like FA is very important. Especially for helping to keep this a social art space instead of a marketplace and viral boosting place like youtube, tiktok, instagram etc. We must MUST keep our community. Everyone needs a community!!

5) one thing a lot of people like about your arts, is that your style looks 100% like one of a looney tunes short, do you think looney tunes had a great impact in you starting to make arts? and what art tips you can give to new furry artists in the community?

I'm very grateful you think so! I always look at my work and think I need more work. Or envy another artist. But yeah I keep this skill through years of constant drawing and also constantly returning to the source material for visual cues. And once you get incredibly good at looking like the exact thing, just add in a little bit of character or offhanded tweaking to it and some insane magic comes into the drawing! My best suggestion is to keep drawing at all times you can and keep looking at the source material, and try and imagine the object in 3D in your mind. Try also practice works where you try and do quick fast drawings that capture movement and expression rather than just strict precision. And for those who are really good at gestural, try drawing more precise! Observe human figures or models to understand where bones and body parts are intuitively and then incorporate that so that your bendy rubber characters have now a real life weight to them!

6) you have made a lot of arts of the looney tunes skunks, specially pepe le pew, could you give me your opinion about each of the three popular skunks, pepe, fifi and pitu? and do you think pepe or pitu would be a better boyfriend to sylvester?

Pepe is very cute and attractive. That's all I can say! I loved Fifi a lot when I was younger and may on a few occasion return to art with her. Pitu is just a jock I might use once in a while LOL. And at least for me, much much more happy with the Pepster pairing rather than Pitu. Pitu just wants to lay pipe is all. Pepe needs someone to be nice to him as well!

7) you are a furry socialist, is not common to see people in the community being openly socialist, considering that most of the community is capitalist, could you share with us how you became a socialista? and what do you think of the crisis the united states is in because of trump capitalist decisions?

Damn your asking for a big response. No I don't think most the community is capitalist, the least I can say is that most of us are liberal which is technically capitalist but socially furries go a lot more for personal liberty and equality and fairness, theyre just stuck in this system that tells them living in this happy free space must be contingent on marketing yourself and selling a brand or holding down a job to eat and survive. Hence why ive never hid my art behind a paywall like other artists. I came here for community more than making money, because in the end well all suffer without money anyways! It is indeed the root of all evil.

As for trump, hes in charge because democrats also failed us because they would not actually provide serious policies that make peoples lives better, only 'hope' and a pageantry promising do this and you can be assured youre a good person. That's not going to work when the other party is fully about "dominate and punish anyone that annoys you, watch your enemies die, bring the wrath of god upon the enemies of the nation, etc Your life will suck and get worse but you can watch the thief and drug user get tortured" I have a fully conservative family and they have always as long as Ive known them been mortally paranoid that SOMEONE is coming to get them: be it a criminal or an immigrant or a government employee. But if that govt authority figure is 'good', then they celebrate and are openly happy to do whatever this authority asks of you. They very much love leaders and messiah figures.

To be honest though, I'll go out on a limb and say it's actually a shame and Americans don't deserve it. They've been afraid and political figures have aggressively played off that fear. They know how broken things are but have only known a life of consumerism giving them meaning. It's been taught from day one. They know it's not working anymore but cannot see or don't want to see it is the end result of capitalism itself... Capitalism is all one big competition and so eventually there will be one winner of the game that will have the whole nation, and all of us will be losers. There is only one alternative to that and that is we are all socially equal in value and deserve equal rights, equal playing field, and we work together for all of us. You may not be ultra wealthy but you will have a comfortable life with more freedom and be part of a tight community. Instead of now where you're guaranteed to be an overworked loser, who struggles to get by and has no friends or family. If you want change now, don't look to the Dems, organize into labor and community groups to resist hierarchical powers and to do charity and altruism to your community. Live less for yourself and don't trust leaders!!

8) what would you consider to be your best art or the art you had the most fun making?

That is too hard to answer but a number of my larger scale pics I've really loved making, such as those with Rabbit of Whinnie the Pooh. Some like my newer Looney Tunes pics also contain a ton of humor in with the sexual stuff and I just adore those because I laugh so much at the situation and the characters' reactions. Like that recent one where Wile is outed in front of his friends. Some I return to because of how precious or meaningful they feel like the M'Lady Coyote drawings. An occasional few I also find myself returning to because its erotic content is that potent for me... I think of some of the Surly Grayson pics I have done or 'Bucks' or the PP Dexter pic.

9) and also, what would you say is the kink you like making art the most?

I can't tell you that but likely it's a wider narrative of unique submissive or indulgent situations with characters. It's not easy to describe. I will say this: though I have my own esoteric unique kinks, I've very much been influenced by many other furies and their kinky ideas regularly! I rely on other talented people for new yiffy

experiences all the time, and then just translate it into my art. I love to dabble in ideas when I discover them!

10) A lot of artists in the furry fandom have to unfortunately deal with kink shame and hate, have this ever happened to you? And what tips would you give to New artists about this topic?

A LOT especially ages ago on deviantart in the 2009's or the high point of trolling culture. I even have mildly done it a bit or been critical of certain kinks. Such as violence to cubs, perfectly circle bellies or boobs, etc. This is my advice, I take a balanced approach. Yes you should not be bullied for having a weird kink, I really like some myself. But it would not be fair to say that you should never have to defend your interests a little. Ive even seen a group where people said that any 'im not interested' reply should just remain silent... so all they ever see is approval. That's not healthy.

Sure it sucks if someone thinks your gross but if they are not trying to actively force you out of the community or troll your to get you to stop making art, then maybe use it as a chance to learn how to be strong in defending your opinion and not to be afraid or crumple when someone doesn't like you.

11) you have talked and showed pictures of your plush collection, how did you started this collection? and what tips you give for people who want to start one too?

When I was 7 my parents discovered my connection to my stuffed toys was a lot more odd and intimate than just playtime. They immediately restricted my access to them. My dad even torched a little tiger I won with my own money at age 13 when he found I had peed on it.

I remember that day cause I was very down on myself at school so much that I wished something awful would happen to me cause I hated myself. Sure enough I got home and that's exactly what happened! Well long story is, 25 years later I have the GIANT size version of that little swami tiger so you can see my parents harsh treatment made me ashamed and properly normal! Cured me it did!

Anyways for starting a collection... go for what you like but be extremely discerning! Most all of the newer plush are made with cheapness and limited

design effort in mind! Hence Squishmallows and Jellycat. Their fur is also thinner and made of less materials. Plus your making more plastic waste. Try instead to hunt down more vintage plush as they are a lot better.

Plush quality really started to plummet after 2006 and the beginning of the recession and has never gone back up. How about asking creators to make customs for you? Most everything sucks today,, but for modern plush go to Folkmanis, Douglas, and maybe FAO Schwarz if you want to support better quality plush companies that actually put real designers behind toys! Don't trust Wild Republic anymore. And visit thrift stores OFTEN!

12) do you have anything you want to share about your future projects for those who will read this interview?

Hold tight to the community. Be understanding and know that we're all imperfect. Don't be an isolationist. Humans ARE animals we have just forgotten how to be one in a healthy way. And our natural instinct is to reach out for love. Come try out Weasyl too if you want to see a more quiet traditional furry art board. Right now it's definitely not overcrowded like FA but it does need new watchers and I've posted my Timon Berkowitz art gallery there! <https://www.weasyl.com/~timonberkowitz>

13) where were there any artists that inspired you to start making your arts?

All I can say is here's a few artists that had some real influence on me: Ollie Canal, Squibb Squirrel/Arnold Coon, Cougr, Robert Hill, Stormdragonblue, Crackajackin, Malachai, Tategami-Sasamaru, Zen, Brainsister, Moodyferret the Tiny Toons drawn by Tokyo-Movie-Shinsha, and the uncredited artist(s) that drew the 1990 Looney Tunes model sheets that have become the immediate recognized image of all these characters. I'd also like to mention that in regards to these artists, it does not mean that I love or approve of ALL they did (especially Malachai) but that some of their drawings gave me inspiration on how I could draw mine.

14) what is your favorite animated movie?

Incredibly hard to answer. Maybe Who Framed Roger Rabbit, Arashi no Yoru Ni, Watership Down, Lilo and Stitch. At least when it comes furry animal animated movies!

15)we have come to the end of this interview!

do you have anything to say to the people who will be reading this interview?

AI is mass surveillance! Be free and independent and take on the system together!
The internet should be a free utility. Sign up for FA plus and chip in to keep the community alive! Look up 'debtors unions'!