



ERIN BRADY WORSHAM...ARTIST ALWAYS!

Nashville artist, writer and speaker, Erin Brady Worsham, did not study art until she was 34.

A 1980 graduate of Western Kentucky University with majors in Theater and German, Worsham spent some years on the road as a professional actress. She married fellow actor Curry Worsham in 1987 and they settled in Nashville, TN.

She enrolled in Watkins Art Institute in 1991 and found her calling. Having grown up in Louisville, KY, with a mother who was an artist, she was no stranger to art, but had never formally studied. At Watkins she received a classical education in theory, technique and history.

Life changed dramatically for Worsham and her husband on Sept. 7, 1994, when she received a diagnosis of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS or Lou Gehrig's Disease) and was given three years to live. She was just 36. All art stopped, but not all creating! Nine months after the diagnosis, Worsham gave birth to the couple's first and only child, Daniel.

In the summer of 1999, Curry installed the software that would allow her communication device to interface with their computer and move the mouse. Worsham, who eats with a feeding tube, breathes with a ventilator and is paralyzed below the neck, began to reclaim her art! Using a switch taped between her eyebrows, she operates the computer and composes her pictures with the Microsoft Paint program. Each picture can take anywhere from 60 to 300 hours. Her first piece, "Big Wheels Keep on Turnin'," was completed in May of 2000.

Since that time her work has been seen in exhibits around the United States, as well as in Canada and Australia. Worsham's first one-woman show, "Artist Always," sponsored by Vanderbilt University Hospital and the Society for the Arts in Healthcare, began touring the country in 2003. In April of 2004, the show was on display in the Russell Rotunda in Washington, D.C.

Worsham's second one-woman show, "Artist's Proof," opened in March of 2007 at the Tennessee Arts Commission and received favorable reviews.

Worsham has participated in disability arts festivals around the world, including kickstART! and kickstART2 in Vancouver, B.C., the High Beam Festival in South Australia, the VSA International Arts Festival in Washington, D.C., and the Chicago Disability Arts and Culture Festival.

Worsham's work has garnered her several awards, including the 1999 MDA Personal Achievement Award, the 2001 Jo Andrews Award (Metropolitan Nashville Government), the 2003 Alumnae of the Year (Sacred Heart Academy, Louisville, KY), the 2004 Spirit of da Vinci Award (Engineering Society of Detroit/National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Michigan Chapter) and the 2005 Truth in Media Award (Tennessee Right to Life).

Using her communication device, Worsham gives talks on art and advocacy. She was a featured speaker at the 2006 National Right to Life Convention and the 2007 Megaconference, both in Nashville.

As a freelance artist, writer and speaker, Worsham strives to educate the public and break down assumptions about people with disabilities, in the hope that one day people will look past the disability to the ABILITY!