



human canvas

This Brisbane-based artist covers her skin in makeup and body paint for a living.

Georgina Ryland is a professional makeup artist and self-taught body painter. She creates her looks in front of a mirror, where she draws and paints on herself in a backwards motion.

"I accidentally got into makeup by doing a Halloween look for an event. I loved it so much I started face painting as a hobby shortly after," Georgina says.

She then focused on body painting as a whole to develop her skills before pursuing makeup and special effects professionally in 2014 at the Australian Academy of Cinemagraphic Makeup. There she learnt prosthetics, 3D body forms, wounds and injuries, historical makeup, facial hair, bald caps and more!

"Being in an environment where I could hone my skills only deepened my passion for creating," she says.

Her first piece of body art to go viral on social media was a Harry Potter mural of Hogwarts castle. She spent roughly five hours putting the look together and says she could have painted for a few more hours!

Georgina says her most exciting project to date was a stop-motion piece she did for American band, Paramore, who shared her work online!

"I painted for over 2 days and 17 hours to create a short 30 second video. It was a big challenge, but I loved it! I am still

proud of it considering how difficult it was," she says.

Following her rock star success, Marvel Studios reached out to Georgina in 2017 to create a body painting time-lapse for one of their upcoming films, Guardians of the Galaxy 2.

"I was sent some images, and picked one to paint for the movie's release. I filmed the process, which is very similar to regular painting – outlines, base colours and details – then edited the 10-hour process down to about 2-3 minutes' worth of footage. It can be a very tedious process, but it looks great at the end," she says.

Most of Georgina's paintings are done on herself – be it a lionfish, Frankenstein or a scene pulled straight out of a Disney film – and average around 6-8 hours to complete. On another person, she averages between 3-6 hours to finish a piece.

"I can't get the same level of detail on them as I can on myself, but it's always a treat making up others. Body paint doesn't just sit on a wall like a canvas. It breathes and moves around. It's a walking illusion."

She's especially enjoyed working on film sets and theatre productions, most notably Thor: Ragnarok and with the Queensland Ballet.

"Seeing my work on the big screen and on a theatre stage were surreal moments for me, and I'm incredibly grateful."

Georgina has also competed in makeup shows around the globe to develop her skills and showcase her creativity. In 2014, she was placed second in Sydney's Battle of the Brushes and made the Top 6 for the NYX Face Awards in 2018 in the Beauty/Fantasy Category.

But all of Georgina's successes in the makeup industry haven't come easy. As her mum puts it, she's a six-year-overnight-success!

"I've been painting for almost six years so far and I'm still learning! If you're looking to break into the makeup industry, you need to practise, practise and practise. There is a lot of saturation in the business, but if you are genuine and easy to work with, it will make you more desirable. Don't ever compare yourself to anyone else and don't overwhelm yourself. Let it come naturally and enjoy the process. And have a good attitude!"

What also helps to spur Georgina on in her career is having the support of her boyfriend and parents.

"I am very lucky to have them. They're my biggest advocates and I'm sure would argue they're each my #1 fan!" Georgina says.

When she isn't spending time with her loved ones, painting her face, or on a busy film set, she's dangling from an aerial hoop performing circus tricks! She also has a beagle named Charlie who she hangs out with a lot.