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Local artist, Jordan Pecar is making her mark in the art world producing intricate drawings of dragons, one of which was recently presented to an NDIS employee as part of the Scheme’s annual Light Up! recognition awards.

Jordan, 28, who has Asperger's syndrome and a mild intellectual disability, said she was thrilled to learn her artwork titled ‘Freedom’ had been chosen and laughed when she heard the recipient’s sons were each campaigning to hang it in their room.

Jordan said she can’t remember a time in her life where she wasn’t drawing and now thanks to ArtGusto, an independent art studio supporting artists with disability on their chosen creative journey, she’s able to reach new heights.

“I’ve always loved arts and crafts and I remember doing it right through primary and high school. I can’t think of an age where I didn’t like it,” she said.

“I’m grateful I’ve been able to use some of my NDIS funds to attend ArtGutso and work as an independent artist. I love the fact I’m here, with other artists who share my passion, and we can support each other to further develop our talents and techniques.”

While Jordan has mastered the art of intricate drawing, and was set to showcase a whole portfolio of dragons last year in a solo exhibition but couldn’t due to COVID, she’s keen to broaden her horizons, pursuing other art mediums.

“This year I want to branch out into doing sculptures. I’d also like to do more painting, but it depends on what the year will let me do,” she said with a laugh.

“I’d like to try clay, wire and paper mache sculpting. I love painting, but I don’t do enough of it so I’m looking forward to getting back to it to explore a range of different techniques.”

ArtGusto studio manager Sharon Bromley said she is proud to facilitate self-taught artists like Jordan, who is in her second year at the boutique art studio in McLarty Place.

“I’ve seen some great talent come through here since we opened in 2015 and it’s great to see artists expressing themselves, developing skills and growing in confidence,” she said.

Sharon said witnessing these artists growing in confidence and achieving their goals is one of her favourite parts of working at ArtGusto.

“We can provide them with multiple opportunities to collaborate with the wider arts community, including workshops, access to artists in residence, community art projects and volunteering.

“Some of our artists, who have come from bigger organisations, haven’t experienced working in a smaller art studio before. You can see they enjoy greater autonomy working here, helping out and making the studio run like any other professional workplace.

“They love popping out to grab lunch or going to the art shop to get supplies – they are all big parts of what happens. Just participating in the day-to-day running of the studio is helping to build their confidence and it is encouraging responsibility and ownership.

“I can see they are more confident in their own self and they can work like any other serious artist in a safe, comfortable and inclusive environment, and explore their talents, expressing themselves freely through their art."

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