



Famous for her vibrant seascape portraits hand-painted directly on surfboards, ZOE's creative life as an artist has coexisted with an extreme love for surfing. Her scenes of Hawai'i, brimming with tropical colors, capture an unmistakable island ambiance where her experiences in the water translate to inspired works of art. "Being in the water I see the beauty and the colors—the fish below me, the gorgeous waves peeling, the surfers with their boards, and the island from afar. All of its richness is really inspiring...it makes me want to create," ZOE expresses.

Acclaimed internationally, ZOE's designs are found throughout the world in private home collections, restaurants, and businesses in France, Italy, Germany, Denmark, Mexico, Japan, Singapore and the Virgin Islands. Her extensive globetrotting has been fueled by a perpetual search for swell and surf, though she admits Kona's always held a distinctive place in her heart.

Creating from her intimate studio space on the east side of the island, ZOE's surf art mastery has become a Garden Isle specialty. The bright, expressive colors of her meticulously painted boards incorporate diverse elements of island culture. From coconuts to canoes, waterfalls to rainbows, dolphins, whales, tiki, and drums, the acrylic-based artwork is a surrealistic representation of Hawai'i.

## SURF ART MASTERY

WORDS BY AMBER NIGHTINGALE

IMAGES BY KENT CHASTAIN



Although they are technically made as fully functional surfboards—painted on a shaped foam blank—ZOE<sup>®</sup> affirms that these wall-hanging masterpieces are hastily ruined by wax and pressure ding (wisdom acquired from first-hand experience). Beyond the boards, she also has a talent for colorful works on canvas, rocks, driftwood, and miscellaneous architectural renderings and murals.

Immersed in a surfer mentality and lifestyle since childhood, her youthful days in Southern California blossomed into a powerful journey as an artist. What began as a mother-approved crayon exploration of her bedroom walls soon evolved into talented paint proficiency. A born and self-taught artist, ZOE<sup>®</sup>'s family of surfers, including two older brothers, also encouraged surf prowess at a young age.

Riding Swami's surf break in Encinitas, California, her artistic inclinations were supported in a burgeoning surf community. Hand-painted wave forms on magnet-backed stones and sweatshirts (hundreds of them) became popular items at the local surf shop. At the age of 14, she was already painting surfboards and notes her stylistic turning point after witnessing the famous 1974 surf film promo poster, "Forgotten Island of Santosha," by Bill Ogden. ZOE<sup>®</sup> began seriously painting and selling her surf art in a newfound pictorial niche—working closely with her first board shaper and glasser, Craig Hollingsworth.

As her creations grew, so too did her surf finesse. Winning numerous first place recognitions surfing competitively in ASP (Association of Surfing Professionals) amateur for six years, ZOE<sup>®</sup> admits the happiness surfing brings her. She explains passionately, "Surfing really good waves has been the thrill of my life. If the waves are good, everything shuts down—I'm surfin'. Every time I get a good wave...I'm just so thrilled. That truly, truly is everything."

Surf-motivated travel and painting savvy quickly

became main components of ZOE<sup>®</sup>'s life. She toured the world, notably Mexico—where she "left her mark" painting palapas, surfboards, stunning landscape canvases, and even a famed scorpion at Scorpion Bay Cantina in Baja. Her desire to study art history led her to Europe, where she contemplated classics in endless galleries and museums. The lush allure and creative spirit of the Hawaiian Islands eventually drew her, landing on both O'ahu and Big Island—yet always covering Kaua'i.

Now, painting Bali Hai (one of her favorite landscapes) alongside surfing Pakala's and Hanalei, ZOE<sup>®</sup> is grateful to call the Garden Isle her home—where the visual charm is a continual inspiration and the waves are swell. Exclusively featured statewide at the Martin & MacArthur stores known for their exquisite handcrafted Koa furniture and accessories, ZOE<sup>®</sup>'s surfboards can be viewed at their location at the Grand Hyatt Kaua'i Resort in Po'ipu on the South Shore.

As exquisite collector's items, these unique surf art designs are also available for private commissions. ZOE<sup>®</sup> loves donating to the environmental non-profit Surfrider Foundation, and is grateful to her chief board maker, shaper and glasser, Dave Implem of Imua Surfboards.

When the sun rises, ZOE<sup>®</sup>'s day is sculpted around the waves. If she isn't in the water surfing with her husband Steve, she is likely to be found painting intently in her studio, tending her garden, playing with her two beloved dogs (Scruffy and Nahu), feeding her 14 cats, or rescuing any animal in need—like her recently adopted blind rooster.

In the midst of her travels, an artistic medley of life on land and in the water, ZOE<sup>®</sup> found an important message that continues to exhilarate herself and others. Smiling, she says, "Find your place and go there. Whatever it is in life you wish...find it and then do it." Find ZOE<sup>®</sup> online at [www.zoesurfart.com](http://www.zoesurfart.com).