

Pigcasso

- The Painting Pig



The 13th May 2016 was a very important day for Pigcasso and her sister, Rosie. They were two baby piglets, just one-month old, born on a South African pig farm. Life for any pig born on such a farm is usually short and that brief time is spent in a tiny cage. But Pigcasso and Rosie were lucky. They were saved by an environmentalist called Joanne Lefson who carried the two tiny sisters away from the farm in a single shoe box. Their lives changed forever.

Joanne lives on an **animal sanctuary** for rescued animals, which became Rosie and Pigcasso's new home. When they arrived, some builders were there working. One of them had left his paint and paint brushes. Pigcasso was fascinated with them. Usually, she would eat anything that could fit into her mouth. The paintbrushes, however, were different. She liked playing with them. Joanne decided to see if this tiny little pig could paint. She could.



Photos: www.farmsanctuarysa.org / Joanne Lefson

Today, Pigcasso is no longer a tiny little piglet. She weighs 171 kilos and is about 1.8 metres long! Since discovering the paintbrushes, she has become an established artist. She picks up a paintbrush with her mouth. Then, by rotating her head, she is able to express her artistic feelings on canvas.

Like all great artists, Pigcasso loves to work. You could describe her as a workaholic. Her routine is easy. She wakes up, paints, eats, eats some more, then sleeps. She does,

however, enjoy the occasional mud bath – just like any other happy pig. Instead of adding a signature to each painting, Pigcasso dips her nose into some beetroot juice mixed with black ink and makes a mark.

Joanne often takes Pigcasso to the beach or to Table Mountain, where she is able to enjoy the scenery and find new ideas. She had not been painting for very long before an American lawyer who was visiting Joanne's farm saw one of Pigcasso's works. He bought it for HK\$4,700.

Since that first sale, Pigcasso has been able to sell about 50 more to people in England, South Korea and Malaysia. At the beginning of 2018, she had her first public exhibition. It was called, 'Oink'. Critics described her painting style as 'abstract expressionist.'

Pigcasso has come a long way and her paintings today sell for much more than the first. Money raised from her art goes towards the **upkeep** of Joanne's animal sanctuary. So she has to continue to work very hard, but she doesn't mind. And whilst she is working, her sister Rosie plays and eats with the other rescued animals without a single care in the world.

