

PAINTER: Renaissance artist says God is his inspiration

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to ceiling, Nazarian's art graces the newer-built home. Surrounded by keepsakes of the past, Nazarian continues to paint according to his inspiration.

"All ideas come from God. I believe that even Picasso must have received inspiration from God because he is a genius. You can be watching the sky and ideas will come to you.

You can't know why, but it is coming," said Nazarian, whose paintings at times resemble the works of some of his favorite artists.

Catching his images and ideas on paper with charcoal first, Nazarian then decides the size that his pieces should become.

"I used to paint a lot of smaller paintings that were easy to sell. But now, I find that I like long paint strokes, so now my paintings are a lot larger," said Nazarian, who has several pieces that are more than 6 feet in length.

And Nazarian doesn't restrict his work to acrylics. Hanging on a wall in his home is a woven hanging made from colored wool titled "Beethoven's Music." It towers more than 7 feet

tall and 10 feet in width. Nazarian worked three months on his piece receiving help from time to time from his 3-year-old granddaughter, Maria.

Other paintings include: "Van Gogh," 48-by-67-inch acrylic on canvas, 2006;" Leonardo da Vinci," 48-by-67-inch acrylic on canvas, 2005; "Van Gogh and Mozart," 48-by-67-inch acrylic on canvas, 2006; and "The Masters and I," 48-by-67-inch acrylic on canvas, 2004.

Originally born in 1946 in Iran, Nazarian has memories only of growing up in Yerevan, Armenia, as a young child. In Armenia, Nazarian remembers always drawing as a child.

"I have always been as artist," he said, and he later supported his fam-

ily by selling his work.

When Nazarian married his wife Maria 39 years ago, the couple lived in Warsaw, Poland, while he finished his studies at the Academy of Fine Art. After graduating in 1975, the couple decided to move to the United States, by way of Canada.

"We had friends in Canada," said Maria Nazarian, who ultimately decided to move the family to Chicago. "I wanted to live in the United States and there were a lot of Polish people living in Chicago who could help us."

That is where Maria started her own travel agency and began supporting the family. That is also when her husband, Iszchan, was able to take his art to a different level.

"I can now paint what I feel and not what I know will sell," Iszchan said. "Art should be a hobby. It is good for me."

His daughter, Ania, has followed in her father's footsteps — up to a point. An art history teacher at Ringling School of Art and Design in Sarasota, Ania agrees with her father about the changing art world.

"A lot of people don't want to buy a painting that makes them feel uncomfortable or makes them think. They would rather buy a painting that matches their sofa," said Ania, who will admit that no one knows what is in the mind of the artist — and that includes her father's paintings.

To view more of Nazarian's works, visit his website at www.NazarianArt.com, e-mail elizabethnaz@yahoo.com, or call 941-426-7559.