

ON THE COVER

Home Sweet Home by Hervé Perdriel

Portions of the following are based on an interview with the artist conducted on June 17, 2025.

Is there a more beautiful and evocative word than “home?” Perhaps “love” or “family?” But there are not many, our cover artist is inclined to say. *Home Sweet Home* is part of a series meant to represent months of the year. Hervé Perdriel wanted to convey a different atmosphere or sentiment in every representation, and this one was designed for October or November. He felt that fall was a time when people in many countries stayed home more often, cherishing interior life as the season changed and colder weather arrived.

Home Sweet Home has a painterly quality with hints of Miró and Chagall, even Dali, but it was not produced with brush and pigment on canvas or paper. It is digital art, all done on a computer with software. Perdriel likens his method to that of a hip hop or “techno” musician who composes by sampling, copying, and modifying parts of others’ work and combining them to make something new. He does not draw or paint anything and indeed never took classes or developed the traditional skills of the studio artist. Instead, Perdriel scrolls through websites looking for interesting images in traditional painting, photography, and the visual record of life, past and present. These elements from scattered sources are then organized, collagelike, into pictures. He even uses artificial intelligence to generate imagery in the style of great artists and then selects the elements that fit well with his own vision. Some compositions remain as digital screen art, but others become three dimensional, printed on paper or fabric.

Does knowing how the cover piece was produced change how it is perceived? Remember that the artistry is in the selection and arrangement of elements not in the craft of their original creation. Why then was a woman chosen as the central figure in *Home Sweet Home*? It was because, otherwise, according to Perdriel, the picture would be too obviously autobiographical, too obviously *him*. The artist preferred to be hidden. And perhaps the figure is female, he adds, in memory of a time when he was without a partner and missed a woman’s presence. The setting and background

were meant to conjure up a theatrical set design, the artificial jarring with the intimate. Perhaps this is to remind us that the physical nature of a home is just a shell or a stage for what takes place within. The essence of “home” may be what the apparently enthralled figure is experiencing as she absorbs the atmosphere Perdriel created. In any case, it all “works” visually as an integrated design. But not without the contribution of those colored loops and balloonlike shapes. They inject an aspect of whimsy and abstract counterpoint to a serious theme.

Perdriel was born and grew up in Paris, France, and always loved art as a child but was pushed to attend business school and pursue a career in commerce. It took years for his artistic inclinations to assert themselves. A pivotal experience was working in a photography library. He was exposed to a multitude of images that gave him ideas for telling stories with pictures. Using a camera himself, however, was less enjoyable than working with existing photos. Perdriel also had the opportunity to observe how local artists produced paintings. A decision was made, and he quit his job to make art. He has shown in exhibitions and is happy to sell his work, but obtaining an income in this way is constricting and not a main goal. Half-time employment in the field of accounting engages the “logical part” of his brain and provides the needed financial support.

Two events were seminal in moving Perdriel into the art-filled existence he now savors. One was the birth of his first daughter. He wanted to be a good father, and that meant he had to like his life. And liking his life required becoming an artist and leaving his position at a commercial agency. The second event was falling in love. His first marriage ended, and a new relationship spurred the desire to express himself in pictures—hence *Home Sweet Home*. Not everyone has a home, and not all are sweet. But love and art can provide that sweetness—not a bad reminder for this or any other month.

 R. Walter Heinrichs
Art Editor