



Unique 3D portrait figures A perfect gift idea

As a photographer Ulrike Kiese has consistently pushed the limits of portrait photography, taking it into another dimension. Inspired by a television broadcast on the topic, she discovered that it was possible to scan people's faces and make tangible portraits of them using a 3D printer. Shortly thereafter, she realised her dream of bringing this concept to Switzerland.

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Today's 3D figures have come a long way since their conception, explains Ulrike Kiese, the mastermind behind the idea, who has worked determinedly the last few years to create the perfect 3D reproduction of a person. "I've learned a lot," she says with a smile. "Perfection is only possible by learning, trying out everything, testing all the pathways, and developing your own methods – it needs all of the above, combined with an unlimited amount of time!" Working with 3D printers, the current pinnacle of the technological scene, requires the perfect blend of know-how, high-tech

equipment and craftsmanship – a code it seems that Kiese has cracked. With her company PocketSize Me, she's the most sought-after producer of high-end 3D figures in Switzerland.

"The idea of seeing yourself three-dimensionally is absolutely fascinating," she says with a broad smile. "And this fascination spans across generations and social classes. Once you've realised that it is actually possible to see yourself as a sculpture, then you'll never be able to forget the idea," she laughs, "and from this very fascination,

you'll see just how easy it is to cross the gap from the initial idea of scanning your body to seeing the 3D figure for real."

"By creating a 3D figure of yourself, you're shaping history, creating a piece of heritage," elucidates Kiese. Company directors often approach Kiese to obtain sculptures of their employees, as do newly-weds, pregnant couples, bachelors and bachelorettes, bankers, explorers, politicians, boards of directors, private firms, males and females – they've all got the bug. Often, they're creating the sculptures as a gift to themselves or their nearest and dearest. Yet PocketSize Me isn't confined to private customers – their figures are entered into competitions, presented at trade fairs and model shows. "The sculptures are purveyors of love with their faithfulness to detail and complete uniqueness. Immortal and yet so contemporary, they're a piece of history that you can own," she says.

But just how do customers react when they first see themselves in 3D form? "The reactions we see are just as individual and varied as the figures themselves – anything from moved, to touched, to excited. They obsess over all the tiny creases in their



clothes, analysing themselves from all angles and holding themselves in their own hands. In essence, meeting themselves all over again." With regards to feedback, Kiese takes immense pleasure in seeing her clients' happiness – and they're more than happy in return to show her the figures at home in their new environment.

"Every project can perhaps be considered a little unusual," admits Kiese, "we all have our own quirkiness. Of course, every scan, every setting and every figure is designed to meet the exact wishes of the client. Whether it's someone who envisages themselves in five different scenarios – from the entrepreneur during the day, to their naked self at night. In this way, they'll have an honest impression of themselves and the opportunity, of course, to scan themselves again in a few years."

The technology for body scans is equally as varied – whether it's the hand scanner that places the body directly in the scene or the enormous photogrammetry scanner in the studio in Zurich, Switzerland, it is the customer's particular desires that define this. The Zurich studio has the capabilities for dynamic poses, for athletes, dancers in mo-

tion and duos. It's also particularly suitable as a scanner for small children and animals.

Quite remarkably, Kiese explains that the time between scanning and printing is little more than a few hours, but the entire process could be described as "a digital sculpture", so the average process does take between 14 and 30 days until completion of the art work. She warns that the PocketSize Me are not immune to the pre-Christmas rush either, and unfortunately any requests after the end of November will have to wait

until after Christmas for delivery. However, she suggests purchasing one of their PocketSize Me vouchers, which gives the receivers time to plan their visit at their leisure to Zurich or Aargau.

Up to and including 30 October 2014, anyone who wishes to undertake a body-scan is entitled to a 10% discount and will certainly get their sculpture before Santa Claus descends the chimney – or at least, she promises, before 23 December 2014.

www.pocketsizeme.ch

