

# **Mysteries Magazine**

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### **The Spirit Portraits of Rita Berkowitz**

Rita Berkowitz is a woman of exuberant energy, with a ready smile and a pixie haircut. But looks can be deceiving for when she opens her mouth, the deep timbre of her voice awakens powers unseen and things not understood. For Rita can communicate with the spirit world. She is also co-author of the books *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Communicating with Spirits* and *Empowering Your Life with Angels*, has a master's degree in psychological counseling, and is a spirit artist.

Rita always had an uncanny ability to tap into her own psychic powers. At the age of 13, she used a Ouija board with such accuracy that her mother became frightened and threw it away. Even as a young adult, Rita was often able to predict who the person was on the other end of a ringing phone and even diagnose illnesses in friends and family members. But it was not until her mid-30s when a friend encouraged her to take a class on transfiguration that she discovered her talent as a spirit artist.

### **The Development of a Spirit Artist**

During her life, Rita has encountered experiences and events outside the realm of everyday reality. One of the most influential occurred in the mid-1980s while at MA's Swampscott Church of Spiritualism, where she had gone to hear a Rabbi talk about spiritual healing. While waiting for the service to start, she was visited by the spirit of her grandmother, whom she had never met (as she had died during the Holocaust, before Rita was born).

"My grandmother told me that she was okay and that I should stop worrying about her," Rita says. Although her grandmother's visitation was profound, Rita simply brushed it off as a one-time experience and continued her studies in the healing arts.

Then during her studies in holistic and energy healing, Barbara Fairwell, a mediumship teacher, told Rita that she was going to be a spirit artist. So when Barbara invited Rita to sit in on one of her mediumship classes, she reluctantly agreed. At the class, Rita was asked to draw what she saw. Using her intuition and innate psychic skill, she drew three images: a Native American spirit guide, a middle-aged man, and an adolescent boy.

Afterwards, a man in the class came up to her, took a photograph out of his wallet, and showed it to her. It matched the picture of the young boy she had just drawn. He told Rita that she had just drawn his son who had died in a car crash at the age of 17.

Then another member of the class began to cry when she saw the picture of the middle-aged man. “You just drew my father,” she told Rita. This experience encouraged her to become a spirit artist.

### **Images in the Mind’s Eye**

When drawing a spirit portrait, Rita must pay attention to the images in her mind’s eye, as well as to her client’s spirit guides and ancestors, who often impart profound messages to the recipient. Through her portraits and the messages given by the visiting spirit, she is also able to give her clients a sense of well-being and hope.

Rita also has a talent for connecting to spiritual guides, essences in the spirit realm who help us through life (similar in idea to a guardian angel or animal totem). These spirit guides often provide profound messages that are specific for the recipient (rather than providing worldly knowledge or information).

Despite meeting these energetic beings, Rita says that it is rare for a higher being to serve as a spirit guide and it happens only when a person works with spirituality on a daily basis. “Higher beings are hard to categorize,” Rita explained. “Sometimes they look like swirls of light, sometimes they resemble traditional angelic figures with wings.”

When drawing a portrait, Rita must mentally be in two places at once. A portrait is a physical, concrete item and the drawing of it grounds Rita in this world. At the same time, she must be listening to the spirit who has contacted her, giving messages to the recipient as they are given.

Rita, who is clairvoyant, sees images as though they are a movie, and senses colors and items that are especially important to the spirit. Rita usually sees the spirit and the messages that s/he wish to give to the client, rather than hearing or feeling the information.

Communicating with spirits is not an exact science. Sometimes people relate to the drawings, sometimes they do not see the connections or understand the information given to them until days later. People learn what they can, pushing aside doubt in order to gain insight from those who have passed and Rita is there to guide them through the maze of the Spirit World, healing with her drawings, offering reassurance of life after death, and providing spiritual assistance. “I feel like I have been chosen to perform very profound work and I am blessed to be able to do it,” Rita concluded.