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DISCOVERY  
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# When art runs in the family

What is it like when everyone in the family is an artist? Is it competition or co-operation?

Meet the **Scouller family**

**G**len Scouller and Carol Marsh met when they were studying at Glasgow School of Art in the 1970s, and now their daughters Kim and Lara are award-winning artists, too. Glen, who is widely collected and a member of the Royal Scottish Society

of Painters in Watercolours, and Carol, a graphic designer, live in Ayrshire, south of Glasgow. Their daughters, after studying at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design, Dundee, both now have studios, Kim in London, and Lara in Dundee.

**Glen Scouller, Steeple and Swallows, Montfort sur Argens, oil on canvas, 76x81cm**

## Glen

I met Carol at art college in the early 1970s. She was a couple of years behind me. I did a four-year fine art course at Glasgow School of Art – then a postgraduate year and travelling scholarship, so I ended up spending five years there, and it was the best time of my life.

I didn't want to go into teaching but in those days there weren't too many avenues open to people who left art school. I taught for about 15 years but I was always painting at night and at weekends and just tried to get on with the work. I was able to give up teaching altogether in 1988 when Kim

was aged eight and Lara was about five. Stopping teaching was a major step and I thought long and hard about it. I had a show in London at the Portland Gallery and the Fine Art Society in Glasgow and both went really well. So I took the plunge and gave it up and I haven't really looked back.

I noticed Kim and Lara were interested in art early on – they were always drawing. It is not something we pushed down their throats. We just let them get on with it. They have certainly exceeded all my expectations having done extremely well in their short careers. They have both won quite a few major awards. Kim has had work in the BP Portrait Award and won the Aspect Prize [for Scottish artists]. Lara has won more than one art award each year since she left art school, recently winning the young artist of the year award at the Royal Pastel Society.

I don't think there is a competitive element between them – they both get on exceptionally well together. They are always texting each other and picking each other's brains about different things. Don't





**Left: Glenn Scouller, Mid-day Shadows, La Basse Gaudie, oil on canvas, 76x81cm**

**Right: Carol Scouller, Shady Hammock, Collioure, pen and watercolour, 28x38cm**

get me wrong – times are tough for young artists. The fact that they are winning awards doesn't mean they are living a life of luxury. They both have jobs at framers to pay the rent. Competition is stiff, and there is less money around at the moment.

[www.glenscouller.com](http://www.glenscouller.com)

**Carol**

I have always filled sketchbooks with drawings and watercolours. When Glen goes on his painting trips, I generally work away while he's painting. Sometimes I can't because I have graphic work on the go but during the summer I generally go with him.

When I met Glen he was studying fine art and I was studying graphic design. Kim was born about four years after we married, and Lara three years later. Competition was never a problem between Glen and I because I was pursuing my graphic design career – but even if I was painting full time I don't think it would have made much difference to be honest. We both support each other from a work point of view. I feel I get a lot of support from

Glen and it works both ways.

I stopped working for a while when Kim was born, but not for very long. I was working as a graphic designer at the Burrell Collection at that time, and prior to that I worked at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museums. Working in my sketchbooks continued throughout this time, but now I can devote more time to it since the girls have flown the nest.

Kim lives in London, so we don't see her so much, but Lara is up and down a fair amount from Dundee. Of course, we are very proud of their achievements.

I think it's good for them that we are artists too because we understand what you have to go through. It's not an easy path to follow and certainly not when you're young. We understand how difficult it can be and we often talk to them about it.

I haven't shown my work in galleries much, although I recently sold a painting in an exhibition at the Wade Gallery in Elie, Fife, and that was quite a boost. Everyone tells me I should exhibit my work more, and so I should.

[www.carolscouller.com](http://www.carolscouller.com)

**Carol Scouller, Breakfast, Puglia, pen and watercolour, 28x38cm**

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**Kim Scouller, Shoreditch Man,**  
2013, gouache on paper, 70x50cm

**Lara Scouller, Sir Roger the Elephant,**  
2008, pastel on paper, 49x63cm



**Kim Scouller, Ropstein Lady, Stockholm,** oil  
on panel, 15x12cm

### **Kim**

If people asked me what I wanted to do as a career I'd always say I would like to be an artist. That never changed. There was never any pressure to do it, although it would have been hard to rebel and become a scientist, or something. I enjoy making art. It is part of my life, it's not a job. My dad has always over emphasised that it's "not a walk in the park". You have to work really hard.

I can remember painting in my dad's studio when I was about four, wearing one of his old painting shirts. My sister and I always had access to painting materials when we were growing up. It was quite normal to go to the big cupboard with lots of art materials. It was only when I was older that I realised that not everyone had those opportunities.

I have painted portraits of my parents in the past few years, but I have painted Lara most. At high school I used her as my model for my final year project. I persuaded her to dress up as a ringmaster and she got to skive off some of her classes. She wasn't always a willing subject, and she falls asleep quite easily. I have also sat for Lara and the pictures are amazingly like me, which is a bit scary. I have a very good relationship with Lara. We're kind of muses to each other.

I don't think there is a competitive element in

the family. I might be slightly envious of Lara winning a lot of prizes. I say to her “not another one”. What tends to happen is that if one is doing better than the other, the other tends to be supportive. We all sympathise with each other. Lara and I got to know each other a lot better when we were at art school together. At that point we became more like friends than sisters.

Mum and Dad are quite happy to give advice – not always when you want it. I suppose it is quite unusual to have parents who do much the same thing as oneself. Friends whose parents aren't involved in art are probably less critical than ours. You generally get constructive criticism – praise and then criticism. Mum gives more praise than Dad, and with Dad you get a bit of both. If you're

not happy with your work, it's good to get that feedback.  
[www.kimscouller.com](http://www.kimscouller.com)

### **Lara**

I have early memories from when I was about seven years old when we went on holiday to France, and Dad would paint the landscape, and I would be with my mother and Kim sketching at the campsite. I still have drawings from then – there are lots of drawings from my imagination, but not of the campsite.

I never had any doubt I wanted to go to art college. I went to same college as Kim in Dundee – Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design. I had been there to a degree show a few years earlier and I liked its emphasis on painting and fine art, which is the focus of my work.

I went to Florence in 2006, my

final year, on a scholarship and discovered the exotic animals and taxidermy at La Specola, the Museum of Zoology and Natural History. It was very inspiring. It was during that time that I was able to develop my pastel technique, which has become the medium I now work in.

I would set up in the museum with a big drawing board and paper to draw the taxidermied animals from life, and tried not to get in the way of other visitors.

I speak to Kim a lot who gives me support and guidance and I try to do the same for her. We are always trying to think of artists the other one might like. We are very supportive of each other and not at all competitive. We spur each other on.

What's the worst thing about having a family full of artists? We all have our own opinions.

[www.larascouller.com](http://www.larascouller.com) ●

**Lara  
Scouller,  
Indian  
Crested  
Porcupine,  
2012, pastel  
on paper,  
49x61cm**





# A room of your own

Having the right work space can be just the inspiration you need to make your work flow. Four artists describe their own studios

Above:  
artist Gina  
Parr in her  
Devon  
studio



Right: Iain  
Holman's  
garden  
studio

### In the garden

Before Iain Holman built a studio in his garden, he had been painting on the landing of his house. "The house is open plan and you hear all the sounds of a family home – it was unfair on everyone," he says. He had considered buying a log cabin-style construction available in garden centres, but opted to get one built by a joiner to his own specifications. "I wanted a pitched roof so it would have a high ceiling, windows on three sides with two smaller windows in each apex, so there would be no dark corners in the roof space," he says. "We settled on double doors and two side windows to the front, allowing as much natural light in as possible.

### Shared studios

Commuting to your studio can be an excellent way of getting personal and professional support. Alexandra Blum has had a studio at the Chocolate Factory N16 in Dalston, east London, for six years. The complex, restored from a derelict factory in the 1990s, has space for 30 artists, designers and ceramicists. "It's a great place to work with the



Devon Open Studios event, with usually paint splattered walls freshly whitened, the floor cleared of lumps of paint, and some art materials still lain out on a table.

**Glen Scouller at work in his studio**

## Converted cowshed

Glen Scouller moved into his studio, a renovated cowshed in Ayrshire, about 15 years ago, although he has continued to modify it over that time. A window that faces Loudoun Hill and a short partition that created more wall space and an area dedicated to water-based media are additions to the original design by Scouller and an architect friend, Robert Johnston. The studio's spaciousness allowed him to increase the size of his work and lets him view his paintings in near-gallery conditions, which is useful when planning exhibitions such as a solo show of his work at Edinburgh's Open Eye Gallery in February 2014. ●

**The Chocolate Factory N16**

studios opening onto a cobbled courtyard, encouraging communal summer lunches and conversation between the people who work here," Alexandra says. "I love being part of such a dynamic, creative community, and the discussions I have with others working here are important to my practice."

## Open studios

One of the advantages of having a separate workspace is the opportunity to take part in open studios events. Gina Parr has a studio space at her home in Devon – her husband, the photographer Ian Hoskin, has a darkroom behind the studio. She is shown in her studio (opposite) as it is prepared for the annual

