



## PASCAL LECOQCQ

TITLE OF WORK: *DEEP DENTAL DECAY*

Artist Pascal Lecocq is both deep and a blue. I'm not talking about his mental state; he is actually very pleasant and upbeat. It is the niche that much of his work embodies – that is both deep and blue. Lecocq is known worldwide for his ocean-based diving art. He describes his style as photo-realistic, figurative and narrative. He has a sense of whimsy both in person and in his art. Sometimes you have to take a second and third look to get the humor or insight into his work. For example, his piece below is entitled *Deep Dental Decay*, which depicts a diver operating as a dentist on a shark in a dental chair. First, sharks continually shed their teeth; some sharks shed approximately 20,000 teeth in a lifetime – thus never needing a dentist! Second, if you look closely at the painting, on the tool cart is a very small VHS tape of the movie *JAWS*. Trust me it's there. I've seen a bigger version of the painting.

How did this creative individual become known as the Painter of Blue? Did he grow up near the ocean? Is he an avid scuba diver? The answer to both those questions is no. "I grew up in the town of Fontainebleau, France close to Paris. Fontainebleau is surrounded by large, dense, green forests, so I think I was seeking open spaces like the

sky and ocean. Thus the color blue, to me, feels like the color of open space and freedom," explained Lecocq.

Lecocq started painting at an early age and took some night school art courses. Eventually, he had his first art exhibit around the age of 18. Lecocq also discovered the work of Salvador Dalí at this time and was enthralled by Dalí's technique called "double image" where one painting contains two images, as in *Slave Market with the Disappearing Bust of Voltaire*.

"My parents did not want me to pursue an art career; they wanted me to get a traditional university education. So we compromised. I went to the university and got a Ph.D. in art. After that, I became a set designer for operas," reflected Lecocq. However, it was here on an opera's stage where he would stumble upon his diver motif.

"In 1986 I created the set designs for the opera *The Flying Dutchman* by Richard Wagner. One day the musicians came to rehearse, and they are set down in the orchestra pit. The pit was covered with blue cloth to symbolize the ocean. And since the orchestra pit sits below the stage, I thought I'd rather be a diver than drown in the ocean down there in the pit. Also in French, the word "tuba" is also the French word

for "snorkel," so I came up with the idea for painting divers in the ocean playing a violin and tuba," explained Lecocq. The rest is history. Lecocq's art career took off. The majority of his work is within the blue genre. He loves to incorporate humor, history and poking fun at political correctness within many of his paintings.

Lecocq started exhibiting and selling many of his paintings at dive shows. He ended up in the United States, as most of the large diving shows are based here. Eventually an individual came to Lecocq and wanted to reproduce his images on a variety of commercial products. That individual was based in Fort Lauderdale. Thus with our proximity and his love of water, Lecocq finally settled here and calls Fort Lauderdale home. 

