

Left: Dorrie
Right: Eric



Tracy McKenna shares the joy found in Eva Wakolbinger's delightful babies

BUNDLES OF FUN

Charmingly adorable, cute and cuddly bundles of fun. Anybody that is fortunate enough to already own one of these fabulous babies will tell you just how wonderful and highly addictive they are. Eva is unbelievable at capturing the realism and character of a real life child in all of her creations. Each one is born out of a natural love of children and in the art of sculpting.

Eva was born in Croatia but has made her home in Austria for the past 37 years with her husband. This warm and friendly couple have two children and four grandchildren to date and are an extremely close knit family.

Amazingly Eva does not come from an artistic background but she tells me her

daughter Manuela has inherited her love of art and spends much time painting and making bears, but as for sculpting she has not yet developed the patience required in the art. It seems this has been inherited by Eva's ten year old granddaughter who is already sculpting with very good results.

This artist's ability knows no bounds when it comes to different facial expressions; laughing, crying, placid or coy, the list is endless

So in the future another artist from the Wakolbinger family is highly probable.

As Eva's children got older she found she had more time to pursue her own hobbies and in 1993 she began making cloth dolls like those of Elli Riehl. She swiftly moved on to learning the process

of creating porcelain dolls with very good results but felt she had not found her niche as the dolls were hard and cold to the touch and she was eager to find something that possessed a more lifelike appearance and feel. In the same year Eva joined a class that taught her the ability to use clay. She firstly began with the sculpting of Senior Citizens and moved onto clowns, fantasy art and finally children which she loved the most.

Approximately four years ago now Eva sculpted her first baby and it was at this point she realised that she had found her true calling. Eva tells me she was pleasantly surprised with her first creation and spent very much time perfecting her technique. Eva's babies caused a sensation in the doll world, which continues to grow, and all those lucky people that own or have seen her babies will agree that they are true works of art.



Left: Theresa
Below: Anna-Marie



people waiting longer than necessary for a new baby. Her favourite prize amongst the many is the Public Prize awarded by the many collectors.

During my meeting with Eva I had the wonderful opportunity to look through her book filled with letters of thanks from many collectors worldwide and photographs of their new babies at home. Eva is very appreciative of her large fan of followers, their love of her work and wishes for continued good health in the future, which allows her the time to bring



more joy to the collectors around the world. She also hopes that either her daughter or granddaughter will one day continue her work.

Many thanks to Jo Ann who sent pictures of her beloved 'Waki' babies to accompany this feature.

Eva's babies are available from Heavenly Babies in the United Kingdom and About Dolls in the United States. ○

CONTACT DETAILS

WAKI-BABIES – ONE-OF-A-KIND BABIES

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Eva's babies who are affectionately known as Waki Babies are sculpted from either Modelene or Cernit. The babies range from 20-24 inches in length, 24 inches being the usual size, and are weighed to around 8lbs. They are granulate filled to allow for freedom of movement, ability to poise and realism. The open-eyed babies have eyes made from the highest quality hand blown crystal glass. The hair of the babies comes from the softest of mohair and each baby is delightfully dressed and given a certificate of authenticity before being allowed home to their new mums and dads. This artist's ability knows no bounds when it comes to different facial expressions; laughing, crying, placid or coy, the list is just endless.

Eva has won many prizes for her wonderful work but more recently has not had time to take part in shows as the demand for the babies continues to grow and she feels she does not want to keep



Right: Alexander