

The best of both worlds

ANNE Smerdon has mastered the art of producing whimsical folk-fantasy work, created by juxtaposing beautiful women with animals.

The Gold Coast artist, who is set to showcase her first solo show, *Symbiosis*, said she was privileged to collaborate with photographer Kelly Hammond and makeup artist Amy Hope to create compositions and scenes.

"(Inspiration) often starts when I catch a glimpse of an interesting girl in the street or when I am out and about and I just think, 'I have to paint this girl!'," she said.

"Often what they're wearing, the way they walk... all has an influence on how I cast them into a story and create a character from their look."

Her portraits tell tales of girls who have bridged the animal and human worlds to become one with nature.

Smerdon described her works as visual narrations of the stories from within her head.

She also took inspiration from architecture.

"The term symbiosis, meaning living together, made an impression on me ever since I first heard of the term in high school biology," she said.

"It's a phrase that describes two species that live together in close association for a long period of time. It's a philosophy we should all live by."

● *Symbiosis* runs from February 18 to March 17 at 19 Karen, Mermaid Beach. Visit 19karen.com.au



Artist Anne Smerdon will this month host her first solo exhibition, featuring works such as (above) *Deaf Eyes Moist In Moonlight*, 2011.

