

FORENSIC ARTIST
 SHARON LONG, 74,
 TALKS TO HER COLLEAGUE
 STEVE SUTTER, 57.

Sharon Long: I had been working four and five jobs a day, seven days a week, for twelve years. I worked at the Dairy Queen, I cleaned a dentist's office, I painted apartments, I worked as a secretary in different departments at a university—and I was worn out.

I had raised my two daughters as a single parent, and when I was enrolling my oldest in college, I said, "Geez, I sure wish I could go to school." But I was forty, and I thought I was too old. The lady filling out my daughter's financial aid paper said, "You can! I'll help you." And I thought, *Whoa—OK!* So I started college, and enrolled for an art degree.

I had to take a science class, but I told the adviser, "I'm not any good at science. So what can I take?" And they said to take anthropology. Didn't even know what it meant. *[Laughs.]* So I went home and I looked it up, and I thought, *The study of mankind—that sounds interesting.* So I took physical anthropology and *bang!* I decided what I wanted to be when I grew up.

While I was doing my sculpturing degree, I branched into taking all these anthropology classes, and I got really into forensics. My anthropology adviser, Dr. Gill, said, "You know, you're an artist. Why don't you try making faces?" And he encouraged me to try facial reconstruction. He gave me a skull and said, "Let's see what you can do with it."

When I brought it in, I didn't know if it was any good or what, but Dr. Gill said, "Man, that guy looks alive!" He took some pictures and showed some of his friends from the Smithsonian, and next thing I knew, he called me and said, "We have a team from the Smithsonian going to Easter Island. Do you want to go?" They wanted me to make molds of skulls, since you can't ship human remains.

I didn't ever believe in myself, but they all encouraged me, and it felt good. I started getting one skull after the other—and it's just been a succession of skulls ever since.

The human skull is one of the hardest things that you can possibly mold and cast, because it's very intricate and there are

so many little facets. It takes almost as long to prepare the mold as it does to build the face. I spend twenty or thirty hours just making the skull mold and cast.

Then, when I prepare to build the face, I keep the skull in front of me for a while, just looking at it and forming it in my mind. I kind of meditate about their life, and depending on their age, I try to go by when I was that age. I've researched the time period—what they would have been wearing, where they lived, what they ate—and I try to think about them as a person like me, because they were, once upon a time. They loved people and families and ate and drank tea with their friends. I don't talk out loud to these people like some kind of wacko, but I am thinking to myself, *OK, help me out here. Guide me a little.*

I get totally psyched in to what I'm doing, just like people must do when they write music or paint a painting—anything artistic. It doesn't even seem like much time goes by. You forget to eat, you forget to get up, you forget to drink water. Everything just goes into suspension. And then fifteen hours later, I have a face.

I really don't know how I do it; it just comes out the tips of my fingers. But I do observe *a lot*. I watch people pretty closely in restaurants, in airports, people I work with. If you look at people closely, you'll notice one eye might droop a little more at one side, or the nose will be up a little

higher on the other side. I just read every little thing in their face.

Steve Sutter: I remember talking to you once, and you started staring at my forehead, and you said, "Can I feel your brow ridge?" [*Laughter.*]

Sharon: Aren't I awful? With friends I can say, "Can I poke on your face a little?" [*Laughs.*]

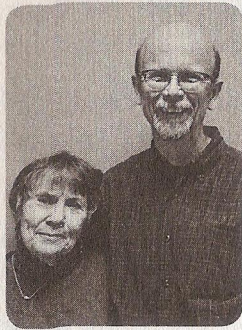
All the skulls I've done have been joys, but it can be really hard on me. I've done forensic work for murder victims, people being tortured, and I've had nightmares. You try to eliminate those things from your mind, especially because if I think about them in pain during their dying moments, their faces will come out looking like that. It stresses me out—big-time. Because it isn't just some dead person's face you're making; you're actually bringing them back.

I've done something like eighty-six skulls, and I have a file on every person. I look back and I think, *I can't believe I did all that*. But now I'm tired—my hands hurt. I've got arthritis. I know what they're doing with facial reconstruction on the computers now, and they have state-of-the-art equipment. It's amazing to see. What I do is a thing of the past, and I think technology is moving so fast that I can't keep up.

But I will miss it. I just felt like I was trying to help someone tell their story, and that was exciting. Every time I did a

CALLINGS

skull, I thought, *This is probably the last one I'll ever get.* But people kept calling me. It just seems like it's all been a big long dream.



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NBA REFEREE MARAT KOGUT, 31, TALKS WITH HIS DAD, LEON KOGUT, 63.

Marat Kogut: Growing up, I played basketball at the rec center by us, and when I was about fifteen I sprained my ankle. I couldn't really run, so I asked my coach if I could referee the practice instead. I was terrible—had no idea what I was doing—but it was a lot of fun. And so I started volunteering at games on Saturdays and Sundays.

Most kids grow up dreaming that they could hit the game-winning shot of a championship. I was the one that said, "I want to be the referee that blows the whistle and says the basket was successful." Being a player, sometimes you may have to sit on the bench. But I always wanted to be right in the middle of the action—and when you're a referee, you're the one controlling the game.

Leon Kogut: When you told me someday you're going to be

a referee, I said, "Yeah, sure." But it was your goal, and so it became our family goal. Then one day you came from school and said, "Dad, can you give me two hundred dollars to get a course for referee?" Remember? It was the first investment in your future.

Marat: When I took the written exam to become a licensed referee that November, about 115 people took the test. Thirteen passed, and I was one of them. Most of the people were in their thirties, forties, and fifties, but I was sixteen.

In high school, refereeing at all these rec centers on weekends was a great way to earn some extra income, but I wasn't doing it for the money. I was doing it because I really loved it.

Leon: I used to drive you to every game, because you didn't have a driver's license at that time.

Marat: Right, I only had a referee license. But you have always been supportive, no matter what I said. If I told you I wanted to be a ballet dancer, you would say, "Oh, good!" Mom, on the other hand, was totally against it. Her main concern was to marry me off. "Who's going to take a guy who's going to be a referee?"

Leon: Yeah, she wants to see you as a doctor, as a lawyer, you know. But I always remember when you asked me, "How many lawyers do you have in this country, Dad?" I said, "Maybe three, four million?" "How many doctors do we have in this country?" I said, "About six, seven million doctors?" And then you asked, "And how many NBA referees are there

in this country?" I said, "I don't know." You told me, "It's about sixty. And I'm going to be one of them."

I'm never going to forget that. You knew you were going to be there. Since that, I said to your mom, "That's it, don't bother him anymore. He's going to be an NBA referee."

Marat: My first official NBA game, my partner gave me the ball, and I'm the one that got to throw it up to start the game. I was so nervous up until I finally released the ball in the air; then all my training just clicked in. I was like, *This is just another game between two teams. I'm here, I earned my spot. Let's go to work.*

Leon: I remember your first game in the tri-state area, everybody came to the game—the whole family went to support you. I'm a barber, and a lot of customers from my shop went to that game also.

Marat: It was a hell of a turnout! And they filled up a whole section. During the last time-out, I saw a whole bunch of them start screaming, "Marat! Yeah!" My partners were looking at them like, "Wow, all those people are here for you? You have more fans than the players do!" *[Laughs.]*

I just finished my second season, and I'm exactly where I want to be right now. I got hired at thirty, and I'm planning on doing this for another thirty years.

Leon: Everybody told me, "Your son is in the NBA? No, it's impossible." I say, "Yes. He is." Now all the customers in my shop, everybody ask me about you. And everybody's looking

for your games to watch, then the next day they call me up, say, "Oh, Leon, I saw your son!"

Marat: I still go to your barbershop to get haircuts, and every time there's a customer, you say, "Hey, this is my son," and the first thing that comes out of their mouth is, "Oh, your father always talks about you."

Leon: Of course! I'm proud of you, that's why. I watch all the games on TV—I never miss even one game yet. If you work in the west and the game start ten o'clock at night and finish one o'clock in the morning, doesn't matter. I still watch to the last minute.

We came to the United States from Kiev when you were seven days old. And I choose your name, Marat, because I just



have a feeling, *This name going to bring you lots of success.* So when I see my son is in the arena, and you blow the whistle there . . . it's incredible—the dream's come true.

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AEROMEDICAL FIELD TESTER

ALTON YATES, 73,

TALKS WITH HIS DAUGHTER,

TONI YATES, 46.

Alton Yates: I was the second of seven children, and my mother passed in 1953. My dad, who was a civilian employee at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, was trying to raise the seven of us by himself—and it was nearly impossible. I knew that as soon as I finished high school, I was going to have to find a job so that I could help him take care of the family.

Toni Yates: How did you know that your dad needed your help?

Alton: Well, it was obvious. After he came home from work, he did these extra things to try to make enough money to take care of us. He had this little machine that he used to roll cigarettes, and he'd roast peanuts and then put them into little bags and sell them to the sailors on Ashley Street.