

A Walk Into Abstracts Vol. 4



How Did They Do That?

Sue St. John

Copyright © 2012 by Sue St. John

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form without written permission of the copyright owner. All images in this book have been reproduced with the knowledge and prior consent of the artists concerned and no responsibility is accepted by producer, publisher, or printer for any infringement of copyright or otherwise, arising from the contents of this publication. The artists retain full copyright privileges to their work. Every effort has been made to ensure that credits accurately comply with information supplied.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my husband and manager Danny for his skill, patience and support in the creation of this book. I would also like to thank my parents for their constant encouragement throughout my painting career. I would like to thank Kyle DeWeese, Mary Ann Beckwith and Barb Gingell for their professional guidance. Finally, to all the talented abstract artists whose works make this possible. And for freely sharing years of experience and a deep appreciation of abstract art.

Author: Sue St.John



About the Author

Sue St. John has been painting for more than 40 years. Like many Midwest artists, she began with painting rural landscapes, barns and florals in oil. Having lived for several years in the beautiful hills of Brown County Indiana, world renowned as an artist's mecca for landscape painters, this was natural.

Over the years she became bored with painting landscapes in oil and began working more in watercolors moving toward more abstract paintings. She found the challenge of watercolors and abstracts to be a wonderful outlet for her creative talents. She loves abstract art where color flows freely giving the effect of stained glass colors.

"What fun it is to be able to share my work. I truly enjoy painting in the privacy of my studio. I love to see each piece begin to take shape and convey a feeling, and love to experience the response of others to something I have created.

We who create are very blessed to put something into this world that is totally and uniquely us. It completes the circle to be able to share it."

Sue is a Signature Artist Member of the Kentucky Watercolor Society.



"Out on the Town"
By Sue St. John, KWS



"Unspoken Time"
By Sue St. John, KWS

Table Of Contents

<u>Artist</u>	<u>Page</u>
Lynne Baur, MnWS	12
Lisa B. Boardwine, BWS	16
Mickey Bond	22
Todd Breitling	26
Carol Carter	30
Elizabeth Chapman	32
Susanne (Sue) Darius	40
Sue Donaldson	44
Autry Dye, FWS, TWS, WSA	48
Judy Gilmer, ISAP	52
Sue Hamilton	54
Kathryn Hart, NWS, NAWA	62
Cathe Hendrick	70
Carlynn Hershberger	74
Bob Kevin	78
Witha Lacuesta	80
David Leblanc	88
Monica Linville	96
Carol A. McIntyre, TWSA	100
John McLaughlin	108
Catherine Mein	112
Julie Elizabeth Mignard	118
Roberta Morgan	122
Patricia Oblack	126
Dr. Craig Peck (CWP)	134
Lee Pina	142
Susan Prinz	146
Gayle Rappaport-Weiland	148
Sue Reynolds	150
Jane Robinson	156
Kathy Blankley Roman	158
Chris Romine	166
Eric Harley Schweitzer	168
Alan Soffer	172

<u>Artist</u>	<u>Page</u>
Pat Stacy	176
Cecilia Swatton	180
Lynne Taetzsch	184
Liz Walker, NWWS	188
Janet P. “Jan” Wright, TWS, MOWS	192
Ed Zey	200
 Artist Directory	 202
 Resources	 206

Introduction

Did you ever say to yourself, "If I see one more painting of a barn, I'm going to scream"? Well, I certainly have and I bet many of you have as well.

But there is a different way to see, a different way to work and a different way to compose a painting. An abstract painting often has no recognizable object in it to inform the viewer what the painting's subject matter is. But the viewer can respond to the painting's colors, shapes, and values and sense what the artist was trying to convey. The viewer can feel the mood of the painting--a mood that is most effectively carried with color. We don't have to know what a painting is if we know how it makes us feel.

Abstract artists employ symbols to represent the particular subject matter of their painting, but these symbols do not have to be easily identifiable and understandable. However, not all abstract artists paint abstract art in the same way. Some artists simplify their images. Other artists severely distort simple shapes. Finally, some artists limit the amount of information they include in their painting to a mere suggestion of their subject matter. Clearly, there is more than one way to paint abstract works. The choices are vast. Abstract painting is hard to do and even harder to do well.

The range of the abstract approach is very broad. Each abstract artist approaches painting in a different direction. They have to consult their inner selves and thus are totally dependent on internal information. They invoke their internal feelings, intuition and imagination. That is why each abstract artist's images are very different.

A viewer of abstract paintings might pass by one painting in a show and yet be caught up in the image of another. The viewer responds to the arrangement of one painting's color, line, shape, or texture over the other painting they have just viewed. They are engaging in the power of great abstraction.

Artists like myself want to peek through other artists' studio keyholes because we are curious to see what other artists are doing. In other words, "How Did They Do That"? People learn from other artists and artists learn from each other.

Aren't you curious how artists do what they do and might want to try it? People need to know what it feels like to make a painting that way. The reason people want to read how abstract artists make their paintings is so they can try to do it but differently.

This book is a source of techniques and ideas from other abstract artists. It is like being in their studios watching the act of painting. Most of the abstract artists in this book would say that their art is more real than other painting styles as the colors and textures they create are real.

Enjoy the creative process of abstract art in which nothing is wrong. Realize that you can create something by yourself. In this book you will understand each artist's methods of painting and use of tools.

People are constantly looking for new forms of expression and this book offers you the opportunity to satisfy these needs with abstract painting. This is a practical book so I have included artists whose work I like. You will need to familiarize yourself with their working processes before you start a painting. These working processes will help you learn abstract painting. This book

will give you clear information on the artists' methods, materials, and techniques to help you work on your own paintings and develop your own techniques and style.

I am very pleased to be able to introduce you to this unique way of learning and to discover what abstract painting is all about. After reading the working process and studying each artist's work, you can then strike out on a path entirely of your own and develop your own style.

Even if you do not have drawing or painting experience, you can learn the abstract methods without any complicated techniques. Even if you prefer to paint reality, abstract art can help you get motivated to develop your own original, individual and creative art.

Let us open "A Walk Into Abstracts" and have a look at what is in this book. All the artists have a picture of their art and their working process on how they did the painting from beginning to end. The working processes include materials and techniques used and the artists' work sequence. They are not intended for you to copy, but to help you produce your own work. There is a lot of information to take in, but do enjoy the learning process.

This book allows for the observation of many different styles, techniques, colors and applications. The number of beautiful abstract images in this book is stunning.



"Hot Sand"
By Lynne Baur

Hot Sand

By Lynne Baur

Mixed watermedia on Arches 140# rough

12" x 16"

Working Process

The Irish say we live in three realms: earth, sky and water, woven together by the light of the sun, moon and stars. Where these realms meet and mingle—a river bank, storm waves lifted into spray, sky reflected in water, hot wind on desert sand—there resides mystery and magic.

In watermedia, when colors meet and mingle under the action of the water, there also resides mystery and magic. I invite this magic into my work by using mostly water rather than a brush to move the color. Hot Sand is one of a series of paintings exploring the meeting places of earth, sea and sky, using the magical and mysterious meeting and mingling of color in watermedia.

I use rough paper to encourage granulation. These works have many soft edges and subtle transitions. Granulation creates variations in texture which add interest to the piece. I lay the paper on plexiglas and gently float water onto the surface, turning the sheet over repeatedly and floating on additional water until the paper is thoroughly saturated. I want to completely saturate the paper, but leave only a thin film of water on the surface. When the paper dries, the sizing settles back onto the surface, so I can still create crisp edges, dry brush work and fine lines.

Once the paper is saturated, I staple it to a support. Then I begin pouring strong color in swaths across the paper, tilting the support and coaxing the flow with a brush to encourage the colors to mingle and flow into land, water and cloud forms. As the colors begin to dry and move more slowly, I charge in water with a brush or small spray bottle or pour water or paint from a small cup to encourage additional flow in selected areas or to create wet-in-wet effects such as back-runs or stronger granulation, developing the emerging land/sky/water-scape through the action of moving water. The brush merely delivers or removes water or washes of color; I don't use it to push color around.

Continued --->



"Hot Sand"
By Lynne Baur

Continuation --->

By carefully observing the dampness of adjacent areas, I am able to encourage the development of landforms, cloud shapes or waveforms through the action of the moving water. The process can't be completely controlled—and that's a very good thing! If I enter into a dance with the water and the pigment, that's when the magic appears.

Once the paper is too dry to continue this initial wet-in-wet phase, I set the piece aside to dry completely. I carefully intensify color in some areas, mute it in other areas, enhance or soften edges, add small linear or organic shapes, always striving to merge these enhancements in a way that honors the magical gifts offered by the action of the water moving the paint. I try not to do too much. It's the water that makes the magic; my job is to invite the magic, and to showcase and celebrate it when it appears.

To finish the piece, I mount the paper on cradled archival painting panels (Dick Blick Artists' Boards or Ampersand Artist Panels) using acrylic matte medium,. Then I seal the surface with 3-5 coats of Golden Acrylic Water-Based Varnish (Satin). I generally use 1 1/2 -2"-depth cradled panels. This gives a bold, dramatic, clean presentation that beautifully offsets the soft, subtle magic of the water in these pieces.



"Hot Maple Toddy"
By Lisa Boardwine

Hot Maple Toddy

By Lisa B. Boardwine

Acrylic

12" x 16"

Working Process

This painting was created very intuitively with color, line and texture leading the way to the finished piece. The unpredictable quality of working in this manner is very exciting. The rich warm colors and undertones, with a touch of metallic zing at the finish, gave me the idea for the title of what the enticing drink in autumn would look like if captured in paint.

This painting was created on gallerywrap canvas. The building of an underlying texture is very important to me in my work so I first begin with a layer of white gesso on the canvas. I spread the gesso using plastic scrapers of various sizes in a random fashion. Other textural materials are sometimes added to the wet gesso to give the piece interesting marks and edges.

When this is dry, I begin with Golden Fluid Acrylic paint and start a layering process. I apply a dark pigment like Vandyke Brown Hue in some areas, then begin to add rich warm color in an abstract design all over the canvas. I use different brushes as well as my fingers to push and pull the paint in the direction it needs to go. Some colors I enjoy using are Quinacridone Nickel Azo Gold, Naphthol Red, Yellow Ochre, Nickel Azo Yellow, Titan Buff, Cobalt Teal and Magenta. I use spray bottles of both water and isopropyl alcohol to move the paint and add more texture. Lifting and tilting the painting allows the colors to blend over each other and this builds the layers of depth.

After letting the painting dry between layers, I continue to add warm tones in shapes, both geometric and organic, that are pleasing to me. Glazing over, scratching through, stamping into, and the addition and subtraction of marks allow the painting to have a life of its own. After several layers are applied I add heavy body acrylics in certain areas for impact. Highlights of a metallic gold are placed in strategic areas for a touch of interest. Dots and other symbols are pressed into the wet paint as well as painted on top of the last layer.

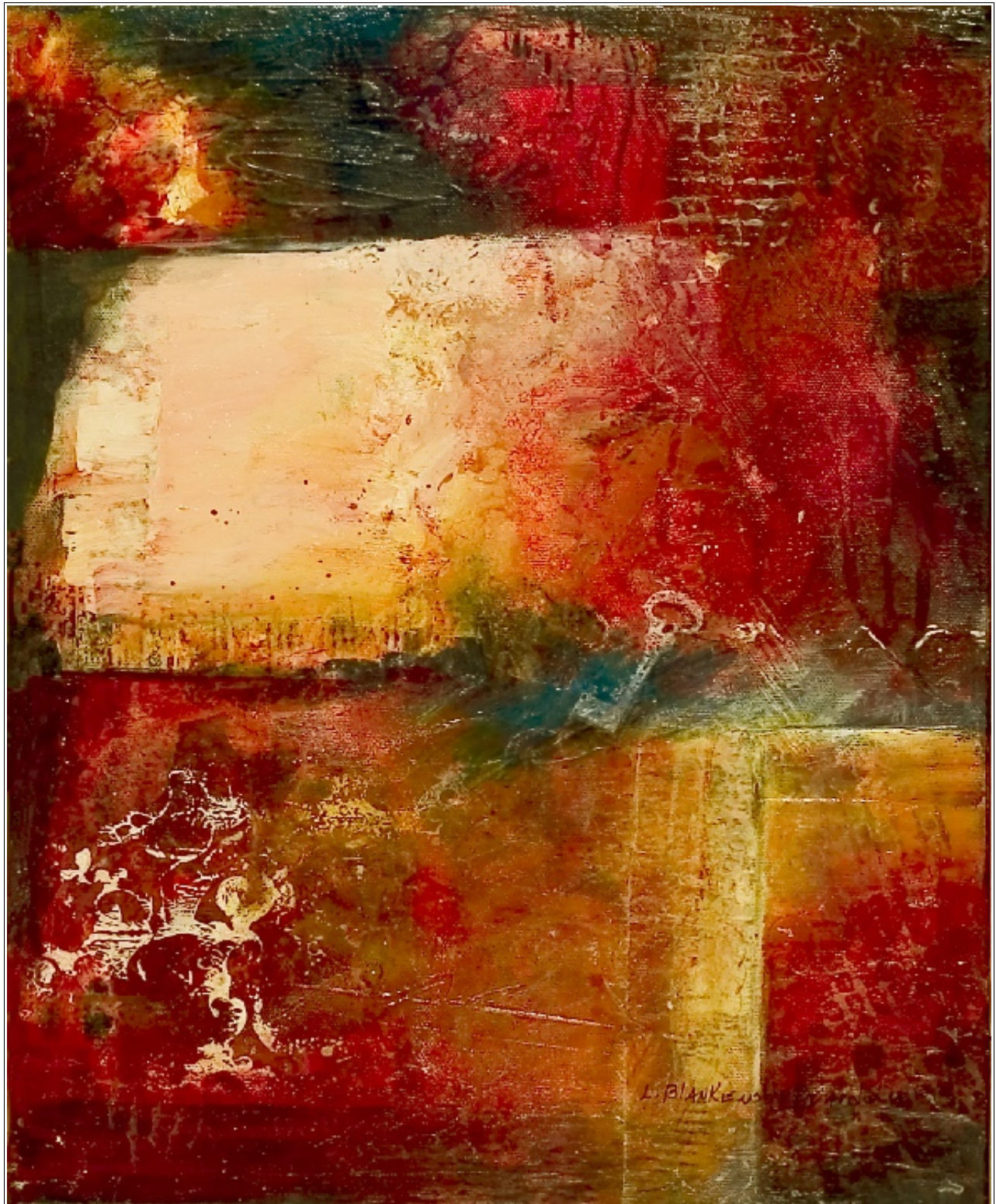
Continued --->



"Hot Maple Toddy"
By Lisa Boardwine

Continuation --->

The canvas edges were painted black. When completely dry, I varnished the painting with Golden UV Satin to complete the look and protect the painting.



"Secrets Revealed"
By Lisa Boardwine

Secrets Revealed

By Lisa B. Boardwine

Acrylic

12" x 16"

Working Process

This piece was painted on a 12" x 16" gallerywrap canvas. A textural layer of gesso was applied to the canvas with an old credit card and different plastic scrapers, some with jagged edges, to make lines and shapes for the beginning texture. Before the gesso was completely dry, I pressed different shapes and textured materials into the wet gesso to add more interest.

The first layer was intuitively painted adding the light areas first. With Golden Fluid Acrylics and Golden Heavy Body Acrylics, I layered in areas of Titan Buff and Aureolin Yellow in geometric shapes, keeping some edges soft and some sharp.

The hot, vivid reds came next. Blending, dripping and splashing Naphthol Red, Magenta and Quinacridone Crimson into the light areas gave the piece dimension. By adding Vandyke Brown Hue, Ultramarine and Violet Oxide next, the rich depth appeared. Touches of Jenkins Green and Cobalt Green were added for a cool balance to the warm reds.

As the layers progressed, I used various textural materials such as grid, lace, cardboard and stamps to press into the wet paint. From the patterns and shapes that emerged, I got a sense of mystery from the painting.

Certain sections were lightly glazed with iridescent gold. At this point I decided to add just a hint of realism. The key, which is a favorite symbol for me in my paintings, seemed to be a perfect fit for this piece, something that reveals and unlocks a mystery.

The edges were painted black. When dry the painting was varnished with Golden UV Satin varnish.



"Runes: Harvest Hues, 2"
By Mickey Bond

Runes: Harvest Hues, 2

By Mickey Bond

Mixed media

36" x 24"

Working Process

This is a mixed media abstract painting featuring acrylic paint, acrylic mediums and torn tree-fiber paper from Thailand, Japan and Nepal. My process involves many layers and applications of acrylic paint, polymer mediums and other materials that resist paint, including rubber cement, plastic wrap and small rocks or stones. In addition, I layer free-form collage elements torn from mango, banana and mulberry tree-fiber paper.

My first step is to swirl a stream of acid-free rubber cement (such as Best-Test Paper Cement) in looping arcs across a gessoed canvas or wood panel. In this case I used Joe Miller Signature Series artist canvas. As I pour the rubber cement, I bear in mind that these marks form the initial shapes of my composition. I vary the thickness of the rubber cement as I pour it to generate both fine lines and wider marks. After the rubber cement dries, I pour passages of blue, red and yellow Golden Fluid Acrylic paint in various dilutions with acrylic medium such as Golden GAC 100 in various concentrations.

As I pour I tip the canvas at various angles, allowing the paint to pool and mix in some places but not others. I contrast pale washes of paint with denser color zones. Before the paint dries I press recycled plastic wrap into some of the paint as well as other objects that will leave impressions, shapes and marks. In this painting you can see the pebbly, irregular marks of gravel, rock and larger stones. Wherever I place these objects, I add more paint in a heavier medium such as polymer medium gloss so that a slightly raised edge will appear once the gravel and stones are removed. Further color mixing occurs as I pour off excess paint, both underneath the embedded plastic wrap and between the embedded rocks and stones.

I leave the canvas to dry until the paint beneath the plastic wrap and embedded objects is dry enough to hold the shapes that have been created. The paint is still tacky and often forms small pools under the larger stones.

Continued --->



"Runes: Harvest Hues, 2"
By Mickey Bond

Continuation --->

I may spill these pools or add more color and more objects to form shapes within shapes, or add paint if I find too much white canvas left. Eventually I remove all the plastic wrap, gravel, and larger stones. Now I let the painting dry completely. I then remove the rubber cement exposing a variety of white lines and shapes.

Now I begin to add tree-fiber paper in a variety of colors and opacities. Each paper has its own character and fiber. In some papers tiny speckles of leaf matter can be seen. In others whole leaves or parts of pods appear, while the most translucent papers contain fibers like fine hair. I use a cheap foam brush and GAC 100 to apply layers of paper to my canvas. I like to tear the paper when it is both dry and wet to form irregular shapes that recall the spontaneous forms I've created in earlier stages of the painting by dripping, pooling, masking and embedding stones.

At this point I return to adding more paint in various ways including pouring, staining, and mark-making with a tube of paint. In this piece, I have enhanced certain passages with washes of zinc white and heavier marks of yellow ocher. I continue to layer paint and paper until the painting is done. Ideally, this is when paint and paper with all its layers, shapes, and marks form a composition that feels both spontaneous and inevitable.



"Crazy Circles"
By Todd Breitling

Crazy Circles

By Todd Breitling

Oil on canvas

30" x 36"

Working Process

This painting began with the selection of a paint brush. To me, this is always an intimate part of the process, as I prefer to use the same brush from start to finish. The type of brush I selected was a Loew-Cornell round white nylon brush.

Next, I decided to select the compatible colors of Cadmium Pale Yellow, Permanent Light Green and Ultramarine Blue. I added a Titanium White to infuse a different hue and to highlight the other colors.

The first color I used was blue, placing a long swooping line in the middle of the canvas. I followed that with a similar line of green near an outer edge of the canvas. This was followed by a yellow line on the opposite edge of the canvas. These lines were then enhanced numerous times to add luster and fullness to them. Soon, I had a "living" painting. I proceeded to add other symmetrical lines of blue, yellow and green until the canvas was nearly covered in paint.

The next step was to add some Titanium White to the lower central portion of the painting to give it some contrast. I also added some to the lower left portion of the piece to offset the white in the middle of the painting. At this point, the canvas was entirely covered and all I had to do to complete it was to go over all the lines I had previously painted to fill them in and touch up any overlaps. This was time-consuming yet fun because I knew had just completed a painting I would be very proud of.

I let the painting dry for several weeks and then applied two coats of varnish to it.



"Troop of Echoes"
By Todd Breitling

Troop of Echoes

By Todd Breitling

Oil on canvas

24" x 30"

Working Process

This painting began with the selection of a canvas. I decided on a fairly large 24" x 30" artist canvas. The first step was to paint the entire canvas in Winsor & Newton Lamp Black Oil Paint. I used a Utrecht 4" painting knife to spread the paint on thickly. I let the paint dry for 10 days.

Next, I applied Utrecht Stand Oil, also using the painting knife to spread it evenly over the canvas. While the oil was still wet, the next step was to apply some titanium white in a broad arcing line from right to left. I used a serrated Utrecht painting knife to apply this line. Once this was sufficiently in place, I applied a parallel line of both orange and cerulean blue. These two colors blend well together and also seem to further highlight the white line.

I began expanding the white line by branching off of it using a painting knife to create a web-like look, which is at the left side of the piece. On the opposite side I added in more cerulean blue, while on top I added some acrylic cadmium yellow and cadmium red. I used the serrated painting knife to create "branches" or "trails". This was fun because it gave it the astronomy or galaxy look I was seeking.

After letting the paint dry for two weeks, I mixed an Envirotex solution which creates the epoxy resin that seals the painting and gives it the high gloss look. I spread the resin using a trowel and let that cure for approximately 48 hours.



"Swamp"
by Carol Carter

Swamp

By Carol Carter

Watercolor

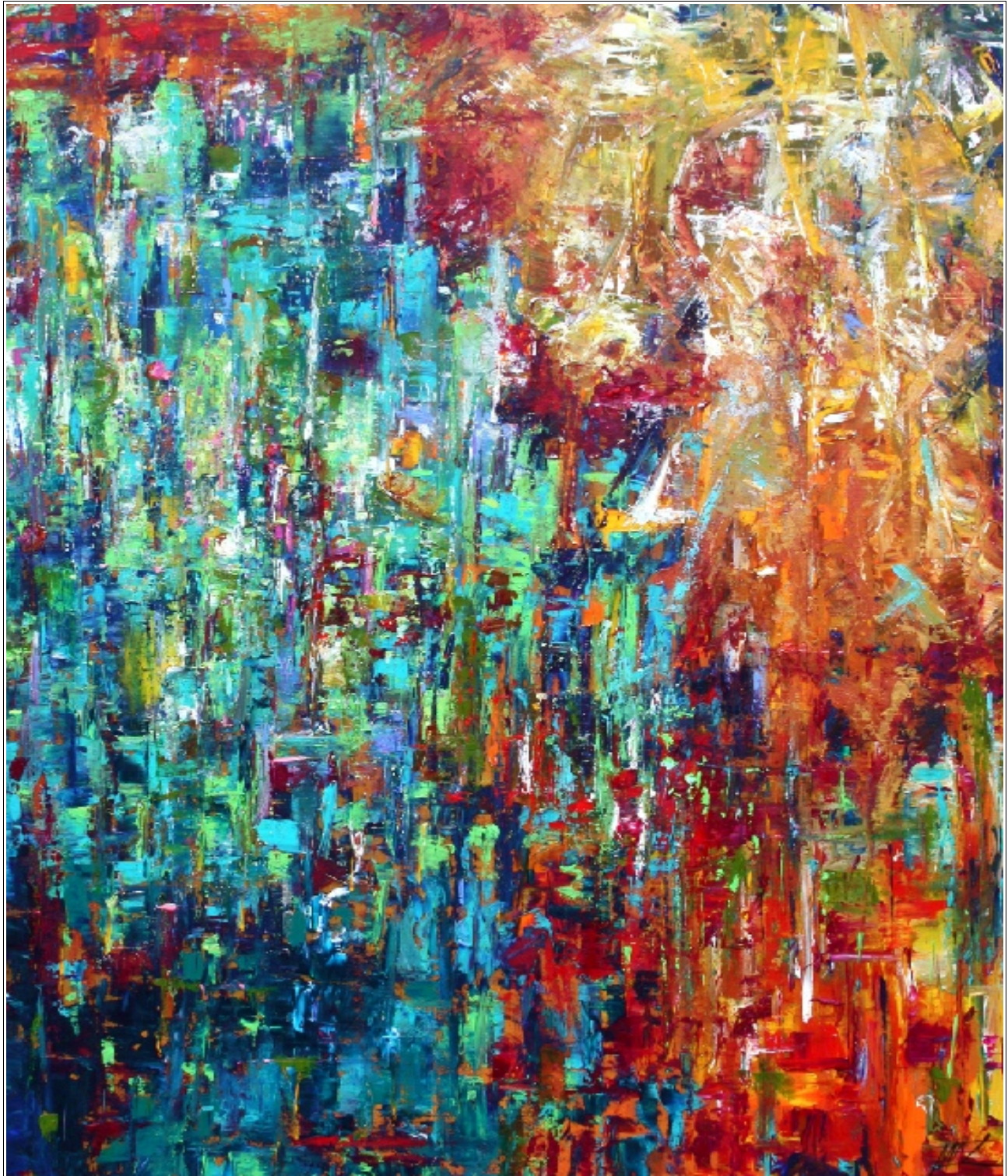
46" x 34"

Working Process

First, I lay down a pencil outline of the image to be painted. Using a resist, I paint mostly the leaves and twigs protruding from the water as well as ripples and reflections. I wet the entire paper with clear water from a spray bottle.

Next, I float in pure color such as antwerp blue from the bottom and sides of the paper, leaving the center mostly white. I allow this to dry and puddle, controlling the blossoms to stay in the center of the paper. Then, I float in the secondary wash of shadow violet and moonglow to add depth to the water. I allow this to totally dry and remove the resist masking. I then paint in the leaves and twigs using a combination of shadow gray, quinacridone burnt orange, and aureolin.

The last stage involves painting in various ripples using the colors from the water.



"New Dawn"
By Elizabeth Chapman

New Dawn

By Elizabeth Chapman

Acrylic

30" x 40" x 1.5"

Working Process

I began this painting on a 30" x 40" x 1.5" Edge gallerywrap canvas with an undercoating of Holbein's yellow ochre gesso. As the paint would be applied purely with a palette knife, I knew that there could be the possibility of parts of the canvas peaking through. I did not want the white to show through and felt that the yellow ochre would neutralize this effect.

The first choices that I make are often the most difficult. As I work intuitively this will determine the direction that the work will take. I chose to begin on the left side of the canvas using my palette knife and blue colors. When working with a palette knife painting, the paint is directly applied to the knife from the tube or jar. The mixing of the colors occurs on the canvas itself, and with the left side it was done with a vertical and horizontal movement. Colors used: Golden Heavy Body Acrylics: Light Green, Ultramarine Blue, Cerulean Blue and Cobalt Teal; Liquitex Heavy Body Acrylics: Bright Aqua Green, Vivid Lime Green, Light Green Permanent and Chromium Oxide Green. All of these were mixed with Golden Cadmium Yellow Medium creating more varieties in greens.

Later, I worked with the warm colors on the right side being careful that they didn't become too strong and overpowering. It was also at this point that I used tidbits of the warms in the blue side to create unity. Warm colors that I used were Golden Cadmium Yellow, Cadmium Red Dark, Cadmium Orange, Pyrrole Red and touches of medium magenta.

Lastly, I changed my direction and technique in the upper right corner. Still using my palette knife I loaded it with Golden Nickel Azo and Liquitex Iridescent Rich Gold. Using a circular motion with lots of arm movement, I created the feeling of warmth from the sun as a new day begins. As I mentioned I work intuitively, so much of the time I continue to work believing that it will come together at some point. It was at this step after adding the metallics that I saw it, thus the title "New Dawn".

Continued --->



"New Dawn"
By Elizabeth Chapman

Continuation --->

The finishing touches are what I call the jewels. These can sometimes be the smallest and most subtle details, but can also make the biggest impact on the final painting. In this painting, I added small squares of color in the blue to differentiate an area and have a variety of sizes. I normally paint my sides but with this painting I left the sides the original yellow ochre of the underpainting. The painting was then finished off with a Liquitex Gloss Varnish for added protection from sun and dust, and wired on the back. Ready to hang!!



"Traverse"
By Elizabeth Chapman

Traverse

By Elizabeth Chapman

Acrylic

36" x 36" x 1.5"

Working Process

This painting was begun on a 36" x 36" x 1.5" Edge gallerywrap canvas and uses a variety of techniques. First the canvas was textured by applying Golden gel medium with a palette knife. As these textures were being applied I thought about how the canvas was to be broken up. As I work intuitively, the only choice I made as I began this painting was that it would be a mostly red painting.

When this was dry, I used a large #14 brush to mix the various reds (Golden Cadmium Red Dark, Pyrrole Red) mixed with Cadmium Yellow, Burnt Sienna and Burn Umber. With this technique the paint is applied to the canvas with the brush using a circular motion to blend and soften the colors together. The canvas was layered and covered with the dark colors and reds.

As I began to see a composition emerge, I switched over to using a roller to add the rectangular shapes. The roller was applied softly to indicate various sizes of contrast with cooler colors of Golden Cobalt Teal, Light Green and Magenta. Smaller brushes were also used to further emphasize smaller rectangular and square shapes.

I decided to add the horizontal band of black creating a high horizontal composition. This created unity and balance--yet I still felt it was too much and there was something lacking. I pondered over this for many days before an idea came.

The solution seemed to be a value issue. The painting needed to have some lighter values added to it and so I added the lighter white on the left. To balance this area out I carefully added various mixtures of white (Golden Titanium White mixed with a bit of some of the other colors I had used) and lightly applied them in a feathering type of motion to the upper right. At this point I continue to pull these whites down over the horizontal line breaking it up so that it wasn't quite so obvious.

Continued --->



"Traverse"
By Elizabeth Chapman

Continuation --->

Lastly, I used the side of my palette knife and fine skinny brushes to draw circular and straight lines using a bit more black to balance the center band. I look for these in the painting and simply help to draw them out. With the finishing touches down, the painting is then ready to be sealed with two coats of a Liquitex Gloss Varnish for added protection from the sun and dust. The sides were painted black and it was wired on the back



"Compartments of the Mind"
By Sue Darius

Compartments of the Mind

By Susanne Darius

Acrylic

24" x 30"

Working Process

I prepared my canvas with two coats of acrylic gesso. In this particular painting, I applied the first coat with a large angled house brush, letting it dry between coats. The second coat of gesso was applied with a large palette knife to give it texture and allow the paint to cling to it differently as it moves over the canvas. These two coats of gesso allow the light to penetrate the successive layers of paint and bounce off the white gesso, giving my paintings a luminous quality.

I then applied one thin coat of quinacridone gold acrylic paint to the gessoed surface, working quickly to cover the canvas. This needed to dry thoroughly before I continued. I paint with a collection of heavy body paints and fluid acrylics.

I then assembled all my reds: orange red, quinacridone violet, crimson and burnt orange, and covered the surface of the canvas with different shades, allowing the edges of one color to overlap with the other colors, then dry brushing the paint over each other with lots of variation. I kept the reds darker in the corners and lighter in the center. I kept applying the paint until it got sticky. There seems to be a point when there is enough paint on the surface of the painting when the paint can adhere to itself and create interesting effects. I worked at it until the surface looked like red leather.

After this dried I decided to divide the canvas into compartments (like the name). I made a rectangle in the upper right corner and dry brushed an off-white border around it. I mixed some of this green paint with some orange and made a square, almost the same size as the one in the corner on the bottom middle edge.

Next, I laid the painting on the floor on a drop sheet and put some fluid paint into disposable plastic baker's pastry bags with tiny holes in the end. I squeezed off-white paint out of this bag in several lines and squiggles.

Continued--->



"Compartments of the Mind"
By Sue Darius

Continuation --->

I flicked a fully loaded large paint brush with green paint and made two lines vertically down the right side. Black was also squeezed from the another pastry bag. Using lots of arm gestures with the pastry bag gives a fluid, fanciful movement to the painting. The finishing touch was some bronze metallic paint here and there to catch the light.



"Gulf Stream"
By Sue Donaldson

Gulf Stream

By Sue Donaldson

Acrylic

16"x 20"x 2"

Working Process

This painting is about movement and the interplay of intense colors. I used nature as a starting point: the impact of the BP oil spill on life in and along the Gulf of Mexico. We were all appalled by the explosion and what it brought: havoc for the environment and man. Devastation, disappointment and death were everywhere!

On a cradled wood-panel, 16"x 20"x 2" surface, I "slapped" on white gesso creating texture as I went. I loosely drew lines with watercolor pencils to depict the flow of water and the shoreline from a bird's-eye point of view. I used watercolor pencils knowing that the lines would melt into the acrylic colors. I considered color, movement and energy. Energy is everywhere flowing within us and around us. Color, line and form are more important to me than the details of the subject. Dark rich angry colors of invading death are depicted. They swirl near the greens and yellow expressed as life desperately fighting to survive. The blues/turquoise suggest life maintaining itself. Dots, lines, swirls and circles complete the picture. When I create, I express what I feel rather than illustrate what is seen.

The colors I used include: Golden colors: Quinacridone Burnt Orange, Diarylide Yellow, White Gesso, Holbein Acryla colors: Compose Blue 2, Violet, Katsura Blue, and Nova colors: Phthalo turquoise and Yellow Green. The colors blend and flow together to create both hard and soft edges. After painting the edges of the cradled wood sides with black acrylic paint, I varnished the painting with a protective covering.

I enjoyed the process of this painting. It is one of my ways to connect with others on an emotional level.

Continued --->



"Gulf Stream"
By Sue Donaldson

Continuation --->

While I am painting, I am deep in the process of creating a thought, a dream, or an idea. By using the surface of wood and holding a brush flowing with paint, I can express and share my thoughts with you.

I had a dream recently about a piece of art being destroyed by flooding but then it was saved, restored, revived and now relives. It occurs over and over and is saved again and again. I can relate that to our Gulf Coast and man's mistakes and missteps. The waters and shoreline of this area are being brought back with hard work and nature's magic.



"Earth Series I"
By Autry Dye

Earth Series I

By Autry Dye

Watercolor and acrylic

20" x 30"

Working Process

The inspiration for my painting comes from an unusual source. The trigger for this painting was from a plant that I have. The plant grows in water; various rocks and pebbles stabilize it. While looking at it one day I thought about the earth, how the big rocks were deep under the crust and the smaller rocks and pebbles came to the top. I wanted to try and get this effect.

I selected some Crescent illustration board. I wanted a smooth surface, but a ridged support, thinking I would do some pouring of the paint and let it run. When I work experimentally I am always open to what is happening on my work surface. I change my method as I see interesting things happening.

When using illustration board, I first put a coat of wax on the edges of the board by simply rubbing canning wax down the sides. This wax prevents liquids from seeping between the layers of the board and separating.

Working flat, I placed florist river pebbles above the center of the board in a design that I wanted. Using very liquid watercolor I poured this mixture around the pebbles. I used watercolor at this stage of the painting. If I had used acrylic paint it would have acted as glue and my pebbles would have been attached to the surface after it was dry. I used a heat gun to push the paint and dry the area quickly so I could see the results.

I am an impatient artist so I want to caution anyone who wants to use a heat gun to be very careful. You can get too close to the surface and damage it. You can get this same effect by letting it dry overnight or by using a hair dryer.

After this area was dry, I sprayed it with a workable fixative so it would not be disturbed when I did some reworking around the area.

Continued --->



"Earth Series I"
By Autry Dye

Continuation --->

The large bottom area was rather straightforward. Using a large brush loaded with unbleached titanium acrylic I painted this area and let it dry. Working quickly, I used a glaze of yellow ochre over this area. While the surface was still wet, I placed plastic wrap with wrinkles on the surface to break up the large area. I wanted to have the effect of vague rock shapes.

I checked the plastic wrap after several minutes to make sure the lines from the wrinkled plastic had formed. I wanted them to represent fissures in the rocky lower strata. You must not let it dry completely or it will attach itself to the work. As the lines stabilized I removed the plastic wrap. I then painted some of the shapes in white. Letting this dry, I rubbed yellow ochre glaze over the surface to subdue it. I did not want the area to dominate the rest of the painting.

Using unbleached titanium I covered the sky area. Using the heat gun, I pushed the paint out to create a circular sun. For design purposes, five suns worked well.

Tweaking the almost finished piece is the best part. I added dark green to represent water pockets among the rocks and some pure white areas as an accent to my line of top soil. To finish up the work I splattered some burnt sienna acrylic in areas on the bottom of the work while protecting other areas of the painting to pull it all together.



"Sugarcane and Summertime Days"
By Judith Gilmer

Sugarcane and Summertime Days
By Judy Gilmer
Acrylic
36 x 36"

Working Process

On a white ground, I applied fluid paints beginning with Golden Quinacridone Nickel Azo Yellow, DaVinci Cobalt Blue, and Golden Turquoise. I covered a large area of the lower portion of the canvas with this mixture and brought a little of the same colors to the top of the canvas. The use of a flat wash watercolor brush allowed for the paints to glaze and glow.

To add a flat opaque surface for contrast, I used Liquitex Off White fluid paint and made some repeating shapes.

Now I introduced Golden Quinacridone Violet and DaVinci Opus Pink, mainly in the upper right corner. Because there was some gold paint in the corner, the blue undertones in the pink and violet grayed it down to a lovely brown shade which helped to make a quiet area, without being opaque.

Note that I use the brush in multiple directions. The strokes may show a direction, but often in a "mish-mash" pattern, which creates texture.

Although the piece was quite colorful, I decided to pop some red on the surface over some of the quin/gold paint toward the center and in the upper right corner over the violet area. The underneath colors are allowed to show through. The red worked nicely, being in the same color family.

To define the shapes a bit more, I used a water-soluble pencil throughout the surface, and finished by adding a black painted area to keep it just a little quirky.



"Black Gold"
By Sue Hamilton

Black Gold

By Sue Hamilton

Acrylic Paint on Artist's Loft Cotton Duck Canvas

24" x 24"

Working Process

Until recently, painting in bright colors has been my style. But today was different. I decided it was time to create a painting primarily in black and cream just for the challenge of it. Since the way I usually start a painting is with a color scheme in mind, I already had a starting point. I began this painting by applying black gesso to an outdated credit card and scraping it against the canvas to create some uneven interesting shapes. At this stage I didn't have a design plan. Then I painted some of the middle part of the painting with a mixture of Golden Fluid Acrylic Quinacridone/Nickel Azo Gold paint and white gesso to make a cream color.

With the cream and black colors applied to canvas the design started to take shape. Now I can have some fun with my stamps. I create these stamps from Styrofoam takeout containers from restaurants. Using a chop stick I make indentations in the Styrofoam to create interesting designs. I get my ideas for these designs from many different sources—clothing, wallpaper, upholstery, draperies, magazines, nature, etc. After mixing the black gesso with a little white gesso to create a gray, I apply it to the stamp, place the painted stamp on the canvas and roll over it with a brayer. Voila, the design is transferred! Another way I use my stamps is to apply a dry stamp to wet paint, roll it with a brayer, and lift off some of the color so the underpainting shows through. I also like to use the same stamp with the opposite color such as I did in the cream square on the black on the left side with the black squares beneath it. I have also repeated this design on the right and in the middle. In doing so, I encourage the viewer's eye to move around the painting. At this stage I continue randomly stamping with different variations of the black, cream and Nickel Azo colors without giving any thought to the final design. The aim here is to just relax and have fun.

With a wide variety of stamps applied, it is time to stand back and try to figure out where this painting is going. What's working and what's not? Is there variety, texture, direction, dominance, interesting places to look?

Continued --->



"Black Gold"
By Sue Hamilton

Continuation --->

The painting seems to be interesting but I am not sure exactly what I need to do to complete this work yet. It was time to put it aside and think about it. In the meantime I would look at good art books, galleries, web sites, and my other own works of art. With Christmas fast approaching, presents to buy and cleaning to do, there was no time right now. And after Christmas it was time to go to Florida. This painting sat alone in my studio in Virginia until April when I returned from Florida.

While in Florida I worked on a number of other paintings. When I returned and looked at this painting with fresh eyes, I decided it needed a little more color. I filled in some of the black stamped areas with Liquitex Naphthol Crimson Acrylic paint. Using the same red, I stamped the painting in a number of places. Next I applied some Golden Fluid Pyrrole Orange paint to a spot near the bottom for accent. Then I added a little Liquitex Light Blue Permanent acrylic paint to a couple of spots, and some Golden Fluid Iridescent Gold (Fine) paint for interest.

I finished the painting by eliminating some of the stamps with black gesso. I decided to leave the three little white squares near the bottom right side for fun. Then I activated the surrounding black areas with red stamps and brush strokes. Lastly, I sprayed the entire painting with varnish to give it a sheen and create harmony.



"A New York Frame of Mind"
By Sue Hamilton

A New York Frame of Mind

By Sue Hamilton

Acrylic/Collage on Artist Loft Cotton Duck Canvas

24" x 24"

Working Process

A trip to New York City to see the American Watercolor Society's show and the SOHO art galleries was the impetus for this painting. Being in the city always energizes me. At the time I didn't realize how the trip would end up in my painting. Shortly after returning I started this painting in my usual manner by deciding on a color scheme and thinking about what I really liked in the previous painting. The last painting had a black background and cream middle. This time I reversed the process by painting a cream background and a black middle ground.

I started with a cruciform design in mind and scraped across the canvas by applying black gesso to an out-dated credit card. Immediately, I liked the shapes, textures and open spaces this created. Next I randomly filled in a number of the white spaces with a variety of Golden Fluid Acrylic Quinacridone/Nickel Azo Gold acrylic and Liquitex Soft Body Naphthol Crimson acrylic. Then I mixed white gesso with a very small amount of Quinacridone/Nickel Azo Gold to get a cream color and using a painterly stroke applied it to the top and bottom of the canvas with a brush. Stepping back I studied the canvas.

Things weren't working well enough for me yet, so I tried adding a Cobalt Turquoise accent line near the bottom middle, and toward the top left to see if I liked it better. Later I took the bottom turquoise out as it was too distracting. I varied the Nickel Azo Gold by mixing it with Naphthol Crimson at the bottom right and painted in some interesting shapes. Some white gesso rectangles were added at the left to create some tension. I varied them with Naphthol Crimson, and Pyrrole Orange. Next I applied some cream-colored gesso with one side of a tile applicator to a small square in the center to create some lines. When it dried I stamped over it with black gesso. Only the top of the lines got coated creating the black. Then I stamped the center with black to create the little squares. At this point my painting needed to dry, so I took a break to let my creative juices do their magic while I attended to life's other duties.

Continued --->



"A New York Frame of Mind"
By Sue Hamilton

Continuation --->

During my break, I thought about this painting a lot and looked at books, other paintings of mine, a few galleries, and web sites. Finally it came to me. Why not add one of my favorite poems. Taking a piece of freezer paper and a permanent black ink pen I wrote the first verse. Then I tore around the edges to make it uneven and applied it to the canvas with white gesso. By painting out some of the words the poem becomes more interesting. A splash of orange and black gesso mixed with white to make gray placed in and about the poem finished it. Next I painted over the area directly under the poem with heavy cream-colored gesso and used a different edge of the tile scraper to create the wider lines that showed the previous stamping through it. I painted out previously stamped sections along the side of the black squares in the center and added some cream-colored gesso in a crisscross pattern. I also painted out some black stamps above the poem with the cream mixture. When I did this a few drips ran down next to the scraped area, and I liked them and left them. Then I tore out a small section of print from a magazine, pasted it to the left to offset the poem, and covered it with a thin coat of gray.

Next I added a half circle with Golden Fluid Pyrrole Orange and Naphthol Crimson and highlighted it with a touch of Cobalt Turquoise. Then I added a few Naphthol Crimson lines above the circle. A full circle was added at the top left in Pyrrole Orange, and Liquitex Prism Violet mixed with a little Naphthol Crimson. I put wide lines of Pyrrole Orange in the center.

The center bottom originally contained black credit-card scrapings. But I wanted to vary the cruciform shape, so I painted most of that out with the cream color. Then I scraped more black gesso at the bottom right. I also did some black gesso scraping on the lower left to balance the painting, and painted three little black squares in the bottom left middle to activate that space. I finished by spraying the painting with an Grumbacher Gloss Varnish spray to give it a slight sheen.

Although I did not try to paint New York City I believe it did show up in my painting. You be the judge.



"I Hear the Notes but There's No Music"
By Kathryn Hart

I Hear the Notes but There's No Music

By Kathryn Hart

Mixed Media

24" x 30"

Working Process

This painting is part of my "La Luna Negra" series which explores my reaction to my mother's death and its impact on my identity. The first and most important step to this painting is my idea. The figure is either constrained within the shape or emerging out of it and moving towards something.

Knowing that I would be collaging weighty materials, I chose to use board as my surface. Plus, I like its immediate feedback. I started by building up the surface with corrugated cardboard, plaster-type materials, paper-mache' and other materials in a general abstract shape which I would use later. I also collaged some of my mother's sheet music and other materials which would move through the figure and transition the abstract shape with the rest of the painting.

I began painting with the deliberate choice of neutrals and more saturated color for the blue shape on the right. I first lay down lots of acrylic paint, gesso, crayon and other media, painting freely while moving, editing and scraping away. I had the general shapes in my head, so it is all possibilities at this point. I painted until I thought it was time to stop. The next day, I realized that the painting needed more...a crustier surface with history and tension. It looked too slick. Additionally, the corrugated cardboard was not incorporated. I wanted lost edges and for it to look like something had crumbled away on top of it. To achieve this effect, I needed to apply more plaster-type materials over what I had already painted the day before (and rather liked). Additionally, the painting had too much transparency and I wanted a created surface with only a little depth and translucency closer to the surface. So I repeated my first day's effort, completely covering the painting with paint and other media without totally losing the impression of the sheet music underneath. I worked until the painting needed to rest.

Continued --->



"I Hear the Notes but There's No Music"
By Kathryn Hart

Continuation --->

Now, the figure needed adjusting so it was barely there, yet had some substance and energy. I wanted tension between the figure and the shape of which it was a part. How much to show, how much to lose, which edges would remain...I worked for a while on these. I also did not want the textural shape on the left to be too similar in shape to the blue one on the right. Now I had to ensure that the surface quality was consistent, that one element didn't stick out from the rest unnecessarily. I also worked to get a feeling that the blue shape was separate shape, almost its own world, yet offered entry, so edges and transitions were very important.

In my final steps, I dripped the bronze line into a wet surface, connecting the abstract/figure shape and the blue shape. A few other drips, splatters and adjustments followed to incorporate the line and make sure it did not just sit on top as an afterthought. I stopped when it felt right and conveyed my intention.



"Memory Threads"
By Kathryn Hart

Memory Threads

By Kathryn Hart

Mixed Media

34" x 36"

Working Process

This painting began like all of my paintings: with an idea. My paintings are typically emotionally-driven, and this one was as well. *Memory Threads* is part of my "Mind Mapping Series" which is about my grappling with my mother's Alzheimer's dementia and her journey. I had this idea that a memory bank is a big mesh of threads, each one a different memory. Which ones are lost or become frayed or entangled with others is mysterious and unique to each person.

I began with a piece of unstretched canvas that I did not pull tight so that it would warp unpredictably. I played with pieces of different collage materials which supported my idea...cheesecloth, frayed material, sanding paper, and some hardware to get an idea of the general shapes which felt right. I first collaged the cheesecloth into general shapes in a haphazard manner, ensuring there were wrinkles, pockets of untouched material and lots of strings hanging about. Once that was dry, I was ready to paint.

I used different acrylics, some watercolors and other media and began painting. My palette was very limited and I used only gesso as my white to achieve a soft, matte finish. I am loose, gestural and sloppy at first, thus I paint flat on the floor. The paint does not run off the bottom but stays on the surface to be pushed around, messed with and painted into. This also means that some parts of the painting dry at a different rate than others, so I can paint both wet-in-wet and over dry parts of the painting with the same brushstroke.

I painted over the entire painting for an entire session until it felt like it needed to rest; I painted again in a different session to add, subtract, alter and achieve more depth and history to the painting. My idea called for an almost all white painting atmospheric, ethereal depth, plus an aggressive part of the painting.

Continued --->



"Memory Threads"
By Kathryn Hart

Continuation --->

Once the painting was dry again, I collaged the remaining pieces – sanding paper, hardware, unprimed canvas and the louvered pieces made out of cardboard and cloth on the upper left. I painted again to incorporate these pieces and make more changes I felt were necessary to the rest of the painting, using paint, watercolor crayons, charcoal and other media. I did a lot of splatters and drips as this was in keeping with the frayed edges of memory. Following this, I felt the dark piece on the right side needed more strength, so I darkened it further. I scattered some rusty nails across the top portion and made more adjustments until the painting felt right and said what I intended.



"Behind Closed Doors"
By Cathe Hendrick

Behind Closed Doors

By Cathe Hendrick

Acrylic on Canvas

24" x 20"

Working Process

The techniques and materials I use generally depend on the size of the piece and are often varied and unconventional. At times I've used print-making, sculpture or fabric applications to get the desired effect or to see what effect might develop.

In this piece I chose to use a lightweight Fredrix canvas. I stretch my own canvas because I like the matte and absorbent quality of the surface. I also do a gallerywrap so the edges can be painted and give the piece a sculptural feel.

After the canvas is stretched and a coat of gesso is applied I wait about 2 hours for it to dry before I lightly sand the surface.

In my abstract pieces I like to start with a foundation of color so there is a layering effect. In this painting I randomly added specific colors that I wanted to show through.

This painting was not about unusual technique, tools or material but about an emotional journey. This piece was an adventure back in time to the house I lived in from ages 4 to 17. The colors in this house have had an impact on my art and I've wanted to express this for quite some time. I feel this was my first successful attempt at expressing the interior colors of my childhood.

The final application of paint was an intuitive exercise in editing colors, exaggerating some things and omitting some details. Wassily Kandinsky said "Of all the arts, abstract is the most difficult. It demands that you know how to draw well, that you have a heightened sensitivity for composition and for color, and that you be a true poet. This last is essential."



"Rose Landscape"
By Cathe Hendrick

Rose Landscape
By Cathe Hendrick
Watercolor
15" x 11"

Working Process

This piece was painted on Arches 300 lb paper using watercolor paints. I started by very lightly drawing a general design on the paper using a drawing pencil. The idea was to combine the idea of a rose that would morph into the feeling of landscape. The basic design was a series of angular shapes that were softened with some curved lines.

The next step was to start applying paint. My process when using 300 lb paper is to use a wet-on-wet approach, which means applying the paint onto a wet surface. With a flat brush I wet one of the shapes and then applied the color. The result of this approach is a very soft look and is conducive to blending and shading. I go on to another shape that is not adjacent to the shape that was just painted in order to avoid bleeding. I cover the entire painting using this approach.

Next, I enhanced color by adding another layer of paint using the same method of wetting one shape at a time. This time when I wet the shapes I went a little bit over the edge. This will soften the edges.

Then I added shading and a sense of depth. Using the same method I wet one shape at a time but this time I used a darker color or complimentary color to the areas that I wanted shaded. The dark color stays where applied but the edges are soft and blend because the shape is wet.

The last step is to wet larger areas and add color. This makes the color more saturated and also helps to soften and unify the painting.



"Earth Passage"
By Carlynne Hershberger

Earth Passage

By Carlynne Hershberger

Acrylic and tissue paper on Art Alternatives gallerywrap canvas

36" x 36"

Working Process

When working on art pieces as large as 36" x 36" I like to use gallerywrap canvas. The sides are staple-free so I extend the design and color onto the sides. This way the painting can be hung without a frame. I also like the sturdiness of the deeper canvas - less chance of the canvas warping over time.

Many of my abstract designs begin with natural forms. In this particular series I began with satellite images of earth. I use these as ideas for color and pattern. I began by toning the canvas with orange acrylic. I used a large brush and moved quickly. For this step I like to use a soft body paint that spreads easily. Sometimes I'll use a spray bottle with water to give the canvas a mist and move the paint across the surface. Once this first layer of paint is dry I pull out the tissue paper. I use plain white paper only as the colored tissues will bleed color. I tear pieces of the paper into rough shapes in a variety of sizes. I crumple them into little wads and then open them up again. I use acrylic medium as glue. I brush some medium onto the canvas, take one of the pieces of wrinkled tissue, apply it to the canvas and then brush more medium on top to seal the paper to the surface. When I'm applying the tissue I take care not to smooth it out too much. I want the canvas to have some texture to it so I let the tissue overlap here and there and remain wrinkled. I move from section to section until I cover the whole canvas including the sides.

I wanted to keep the colors in this piece on the cool side so I used a variety of blues and violets and let some of the orange background come through for contrast. I usually use complimentary colors in my work. I find it gives it a little bit of a spark. I use the background color to my advantage by applying thin layers of color on top and then wiping back into the layer to reveal the color underneath. Sometimes I drybrush the contrasting color on top. Drybrushing also helps to accent the texture that the tissue paper created. So, I continue brushing and wiping various shades of blue and "finding" shapes within the texture of the tissue. In some areas I left the white of the tissue for an accent.

Continued --->



"Earth Passage"
By Carlynne Hershberger

Continuation --->

Now I'm ready to do some linear work. On the left side I wanted a vertical area that was more defined and ran from top to bottom on the canvas. Thinning the acrylic with a little medium and water and using a liner brush I painted some lines, again finding shapes to outline. Once I have my lines where I want them I decided to punch up the color. Most of the canvas is in soft, muted tones so I wanted to bring more attention to that vertical area. I used turquoise and deep violet to bring out the focal point of the painting.

Once I reach this point, I put the painting away for a while. After it's been hidden from view for a couple of weeks, I bring the work out and look at it again. It helps to have a fresh perspective. Then I decide if there's anything else I want to add to the piece. If I can't think of anything else that would improve it, I call it done.



"Vail of Color"
By Bob Kevin

Vail of Color

By Robert Kevin

Acrylic on Canvas

36" x 24" x 1 3/8"

Working Process

I began this painting with a 36" x 24" stretched canvas. I have been painting for over 40 years and this is the style of work I have been doing lately. I started with black acrylic paint on a clean canvas. I left a strip on the left side of the canvas without paint so I could add bright colors to the canvas later.

After the black paint dried I mixed shades of yellows and cream and applied this over the black paint sporadically. Then I mixed shades of gold and applied it over some of the yellow and black with a painting knife.

Next, I brought in the colors of red and orange and applied them to the area that had been left blank. Following this, blues and greens were added to the picture. A painting knife was used to apply most of the shades of color.

I came back in with black acrylic paint and gave definition where I felt it was needed. My last step was to seal the painting with a varnish to make the colors stand out more vividly.

I have painted realistic pictures of clipper ships, portraits and landscapes but I love the freedom of abstract work. It still takes as much, if not more ability, to do abstract work because it's all imagination.



"Dance Bolero"
By Witha Lacuesta

Dance Bolero

By Witha Lacuesta

Watercolor

28" x 20"

Working Process

My inspiration for a new abstract painting might be a piece of music, a dance movement or just a word. This inspiration is the genesis of penciled shapes and patterns. After making several thumbnail sketches I do a large drawing the size of my future painting as I work out the design, including different components of the thumbnails. Evolving to a satisfactory design might take several days after which I will transfer this drawing to the watercolor paper, usually 140 lb or 300 lb Arches bright white watercolor paper. I mark areas to be kept white and those I plan to use for a particular color. Then I begin the actual painting process.

I mostly use watercolors from Schmincke, Daniel Smith, and Winsor & Newton because they provide the clearest and cleanest colors for the intended outcome. I always test the properties of any new color I add to my palette. I first test it singularly and then observe its reaction to the other pertinent colors on my palette. I start my first color application with a thin wash of dominating color saving the whites in areas where I have not yet made a decision. I let this wash dry completely and reevaluate my composition in this first phase so that I will have a chance to make changes if needed. From here on I just let myself be guided by the colors, pigments and their reaction to each other. The movement and mood created is very important in my abstracts because they must support my theme. I may let certain painted areas dry completely while in other sections I might continue to add different pigments and observe their reaction. I prefer to use many of the Daniel Smith gemstone pigments because of their tendency and variation to granulate. My darkest values are all my own mixtures in variations of concentrated phthalo blue, phthalo green, alizarin crimson, prussian blue and sometimes raw umber, or even sepia. Adding or changing shapes as the work develops contributes to its spontaneity despite the original drawing. By now the original design has been considerably changed and new shapes have emerged. I continue this process until the painting feels right.

Continued --->



"Dance Bolero"
By Witha Lacuesta

Continuation --->

Occasionally, I will spray or splash some discrete areas on the painting to pull that section together. My abstracts all have a focus. Sometimes it is a selected area with primary colors or where there is a more intense value. All during this process I take many breaks to reflect on the work. Often, weeks pass before I feel inspired to continue, and as a result, I often making dramatic changes in the overall composition. The end result is a painting with as many as 30 to 40 glazes in parts and a composition that conveys positive feelings. The subtle areas which develop during the painting process will give the viewer the opportunity to always discover new aspects, shapes, color, feelings, and energy in the painting.



"Dance Danzon"
By Witha Lacuesta

Dance Danzon

By Witha Lacuesta

Watercolor

28" x 20"

Working Process

My inspiration for a new abstract painting might be a piece of music, a dance movement or just a word. This inspiration is the genesis of penciled shapes and patterns. After making several thumbnail sketches I do a large drawing the size of my future painting as I work out the design, including different components of the thumbnails. Evolving to a satisfactory design might take several days after which I will transfer this drawing to the watercolor paper, usually 140 lb or 300 lb Arches bright white watercolor paper. I mark areas to be kept white and those I plan to use for a particular color. Then I begin the actual painting process.

I mostly use watercolors from Schmincke, Daniel Smith, and Winsor & Newton because they provide the clearest and cleanest colors for the intended outcome. I always test the properties of any new color I add to my palette. I first test it singularly and then observe its reaction to the other pertinent colors on my palette. I start my first color application with a thin wash of dominating color saving the whites in areas where I have not yet made a decision. I let this wash dry completely and reevaluate my composition in this first phase so that I will have a chance to make changes if needed. From here on I just let myself be guided by the colors, pigments and their reaction to each other. The movement and mood created is very important in my abstracts because they must support my theme. I may let certain painted areas dry completely while in other sections I might continue to add different pigments and observe their reaction. I prefer to use many of the Daniel Smith gemstone pigments because of their tendency and variation to granulate. My darkest values are all my own mixtures in variations of concentrated phthalo blue, phthalo green, alizarin crimson, prussian blue and sometimes raw umber, or even sepia. Adding or changing shapes as the work develops contributes to its spontaneity despite the original drawing. By now the original design has been considerably changed and new shapes have emerged. I continue this process until the painting feels right.

Continued --->



"Dance Danzon"
By Witha Lacuesta

Continuation --->

Occasionally, I will spray or splash some discrete areas on the painting to pull that section together. My abstracts all have a focus. Sometimes it is a selected area with primary colors or where there is a more intense value. All during this process I take many breaks to reflect on the work. Often, weeks pass before I feel inspired to continue, and as a result, I often making dramatic changes in the overall composition. The end result is a painting with as many as 30 to 40 glazes in parts and a composition that conveys positive feelings. The subtle areas which develop during the painting process will give the viewer the opportunity to always discover new aspects, shapes, color, feelings, and energy in the painting.



Action Abstraction No. 6: "Battle Over the Pacific"
By David Leblanc

Action Abstraction No. 6: "Battle Over the Pacific"

By David J. Leblanc

Acrylic enamel and collage on canvas

60" x 44"

Working Process

The cover for Action Comics No. 48 explodes with the eye-catching image of a confident Superman streaking upward and punching a Japanese Zero in mid flight, before it can begin its dive toward the American naval fleet below. This dramatic portrait captures the spirit and intent of the Action Abstraction series. I knew instantly when I saw the cover in *The Golden Age of Superman: The Greatest Covers of Action Comics from the '30s to the '50s*, a book which is the "bible" inspiring this growing collection of work. When first envisioning the Action Abstraction series I saw a distinct parallel to the work of Jean Michel Basquiat: primitive figures masquerading as superheroes wading through waves of repeated sound effects, emotionally charged words and phrases and significant pop icons. However, I feared that my work in the end would only be derivative if I took that course, so I didn't.

Primarily, my objective is to take two entirely different approaches to art, storytelling and abstraction, and merge them, transforming them into something entirely new, something unique. Comic books from the 1930's and 1940's have a very narrow palette of primary colors due to the limitations of the printing press at that time. I stay faithful to this palette. However, I use acrylic latex enamel as my medium. The enamel is flexible enough that I can use it to create expressive, abstract compositions with fluid and bold brush strokes, as well as controlled drips and splashes.

The first area I focus on, in my Action Abstraction paintings, is the top third of the canvas. This painting was no different. This section on the original cover is devoted to the title banner. I use blue painter's tape to mask off the banner and the lettering. Creating these hard edges generates a contrast to the overlaying looser strokes and contributes to the layering and depth of the painting. I also collage with newspapers and comic book pages which I partially paint over to build depth.

Continued --->



Action Abstraction No. 6: "Battle Over the Pacific"
By David Leblanc

Continuation--->

Next, I build up the larger bottom section which represents the Pacific Ocean. For the section to resemble water, I mix washes to resemble watercolor paint and then build up the depth a bit by adding paint little by little, allowing the paint to drip freely. The goal is to maintain the wash's water look, and yet make sure the ocean could stand up to the brash, opaque colors of the thickly painted banner at the top of the picture.

Now, finally, I connect the two portions. By establishing the focal point, the whole piece comes together. The two main elements which make up the focus of the painting need to come into play: the plane and the hero! After experimenting with the brown from the cover, it is obvious that a starker contrast is needed to set off not only the banner and the ocean, but the centered blue, yellow, and red figure representing Superman. The plane would be black. This would bring the composition to life, and splinters it as well. I quickly decided to add more red, yellow, black, and orange strokes bursting above and through the streaking hero. This builds further depth into the painting. But there is still something missing... the space between the hero and the ocean needs something. I see the yellow and orange crescent shape of the impact of the hero and plane, and reflect that shape again as a "c" in the classic Action Comics title font.



Action Abstraction No. 12: "Powerless...!"
By David Leblanc

Action Abstraction No. 12: "Powerless...!"

By David J. Leblanc

Acrylic enamel and collage on canvas

72" x 56"

Working Process

Three years... Action Abstraction No. 12: "Powerless...!" took three years to complete! During 2008-2010 this painting would go up and down on old used paint cans that were substituted for an easel, until the final brush stroke was laid down. The significance of this piece has been its transitional nature. The No. 12 canvas was the first new painting I started after hanging my first solo exhibition at the cooperative gallery in which I am still a member. Action Abstraction No. 12 illuminated for me how difficult it can be for an artist to grow after a successful show. I had to work over a period of months to challenge myself to improve, and not allow my work to stagnate.

Immediately, I created a new challenge by the comic book cover that I chose. The cover forced me to change my palette. Up to this point I had been flipping through *The Golden Age of Superman: The Greatest Covers of Action Comics from the '30s to the '50s* for the inspiration for my series of paintings. Until now, the images were thoroughly composed of rarely mixed primary colors. For No. 12, my inspiration came from a site on the internet called Cover Browser. I wanted to expand my search for "action" covers that exemplified the iconic notion of Superman. I decided the cover of Action Comics #280, portraying a gigantic Brainiac entrapping the shrunken Superman, Lois Lane, Jimmy Olsen and Perry White, dramatically depicted the determination and courage of the Man of Steel. This was the first cover that I chose that was of a different era in the history of Superman. The palette used more pastel tones, more pinks, lime sherbet greens, and large open areas of white. Thus, Action Abstraction No. 12 was a clear departure from prior paintings in this series.

The actual painting process began with the entire surface of the 72" x 56" canvas being collaged with torn and cut pieces of various sizes from comic books, Rolling Stone magazine, advertisements, etc. Collaging the entire surface allowed me to craft a hidden story below the surface.

Continued --->



Action Abstraction No. 12: "Powerless...!"
By David Leblanc

Continuation --->

The paper was arranged to fairly reflect the colors and lines from the original cover. The collage needed to be visible in places as foundation or as an overlayer. The application of collage was a vital part of the painting process, and I found that Golden soft gel medium applied with a Liquitex large No. 13 palette knife allowed quick application for the best effect. Another thin layer of the soft gel was later spread over the exposed sections of collage for archival purposes.

I tended to masked off large sections of the painting at this point with blue painter's tape, so the picture plane was easier to manage. An example was the large horizontal area at the top of the canvas (title banner), thin lines for banner trim, and pieces of the lettering that composed the title. The hard edges of Brainiac's shoulders and head, and the tabletop, were also used to stabilize the composition.

Acrylic latex enamel was brushed on with a variety of artist's brushes and house-painting brushes. The nature of this water-based medium allowed me to use a wide range of saturations from wash to opaque. The effect enabled the paint to drip or be splashed or employed in bold strokes, but still be largely controlled and layered. A balanced composition was generated with depth and texture with many elements and came together to form something new and unique.



"3 Sisters"
By Monica Linville

3 Sisters

By Monica Linville

Oil on Canvas

24" x 30"

Working Process

Recent years have found me focusing on using a spontaneous underpainting as my guide throughout the process of each painting I do. I believe this is the painting's heart...it's pulse....it's soul. I will think of something, look at something, listen to something or all of the above and just let myself react to it with brushwork and color. I then set it up to dry and live with it for a few days in my studio, studying the dynamics created during this phase of the work. Since I call this technique "instinctual painting", describing the specifics of how it is done is difficult.

In this painting I saw a modern dance performance that captured my imagination. There were three dancers, all dressed in long, flowing skirts. They danced together as a single unit throughout the entire performance, each movement an exact reflection of the other dancers. At one point they appeared to be suspended in air, with their heads, arms and bended legs thrust backwards, their chests thrust forward leading the way. I found the energy, grace and strength that they captured even while throwing their bodies in opposing directions to be amazingly powerful. In addition, they moved together so closely that their skirts flowed together as if one, adding to the illusion of these three separate individuals being a single unit, moving together through space in a single moment.

So much of what I paint has to do with our shared energy and our connections to each other and the universe. This performance seemed to reflect that philosophy. When I approached this painting it was the memory of this dance, the movements, the power, the combined energy that I attempted to capture. I work on Winsor & Newton Deep Edged Artist Canvas with a variety of oil paint brands and colors. I am not brand loyal, only color loyal. As all brands don't make all the colors I need, my palette is made up of various and sundry brands of paint, made fluid by the addition of mineral spirits. I use no other mediums or additives. I then simply stood back from the canvas and tried to recreate the dynamics of this dance with sweeping brushstrokes and thrown paint. Continued --->



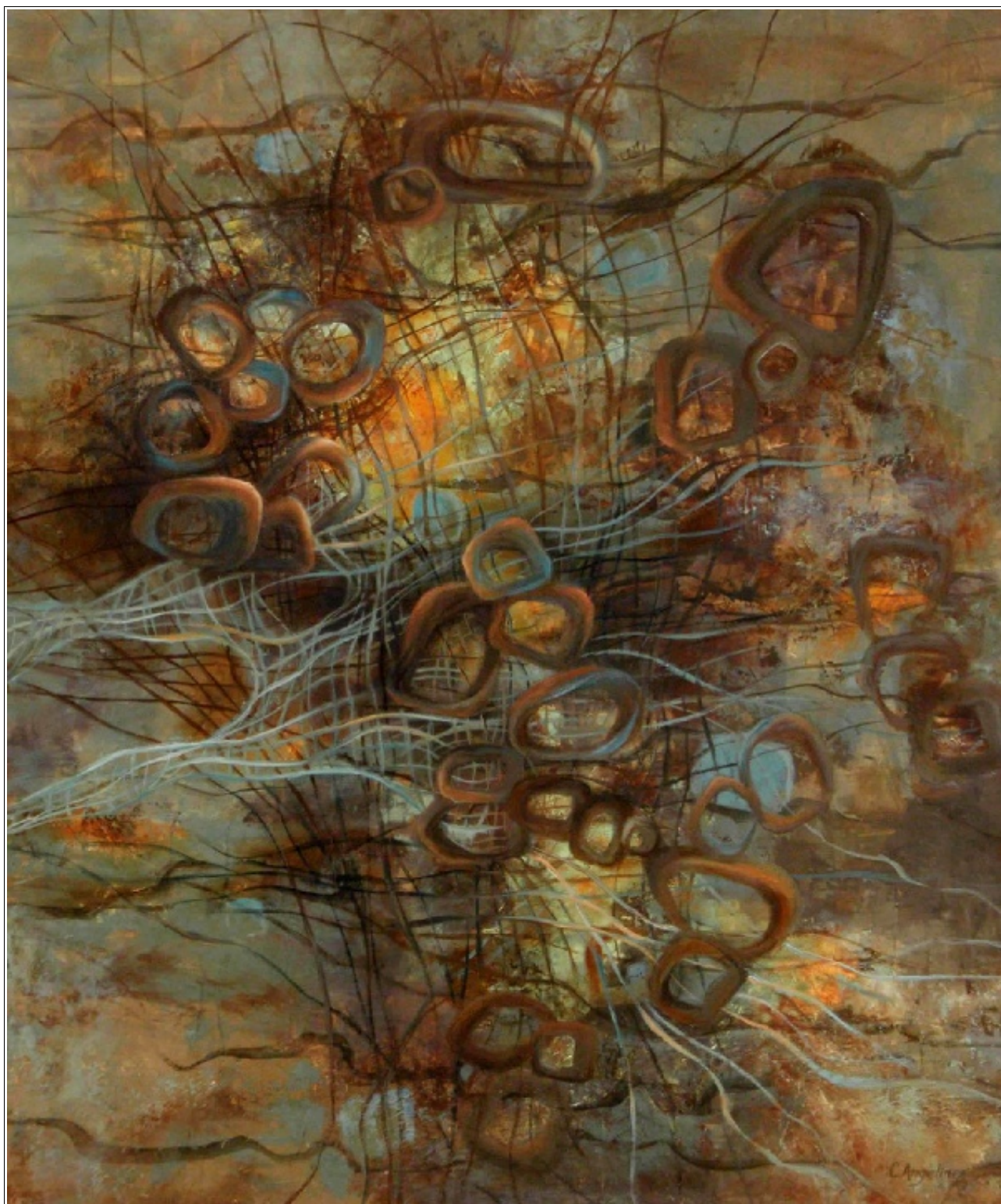
"3 Sisters"
By Monica Linville

Continuation --->

I let the paint do what it wanted to do, working with the canvas upright on an easel so that the paint would move without my pushing it.

I am not socially or politically motivated in my painting. I believe that my job as an artist is to give you a place of refuge; a place where your mind has room to move; a place where it's ok to have emotional responses. The key word here is *place* because in my mind by definition a *place* is somewhere you go to. With this being the case, it is then necessary for me to GIVE you some place to go and a reason to go there. This dictates my color selection, the way I use light and the way I reinforce movement.

I want my paintings to embrace you and I want our relationship as artist and viewer to be an intimate one. For this reason I use the intensity of warm, harmonious colors to pull you in to the piece and backlighting to encourage you to explore. Once the dynamics of the painting's movement are established in the underpainting process, every single decision I make from that point on becomes about honoring those dynamics. Without your knowing it, your eye is being led along my initial brushstrokes by using color, value and texture. I leave part of the underpainting exposed because I find the contrast of transparent layers against opaque to be exciting as well. By creating a path of "contrasts", whether they are warm/cool, light/dark, texture/smooth, transparent/opaque or complementary colors, your eye MOVES. Balancing these elements binds the painting together so that, like the dancers, the painting and the viewer are a single unit thrusting forward through space.



"Floating Winds"
By Carol A. McIntyre

Floating Winds

By Carol A. McIntyre

Oil

18" x 21"

Working Process

We artists can be as surprised by what inspires us as non-artists. This piece was inspired by a new paintbrush with an odd shape. I had just found a small feather-shaped brush with soft bristles in the art store. When I got back to the studio, I began playing around with the different shapes I could create with paint. I did this on a scrap piece of canvas. I kept making these soft, round amoeba-like shapes and decided that I had to start a painting.

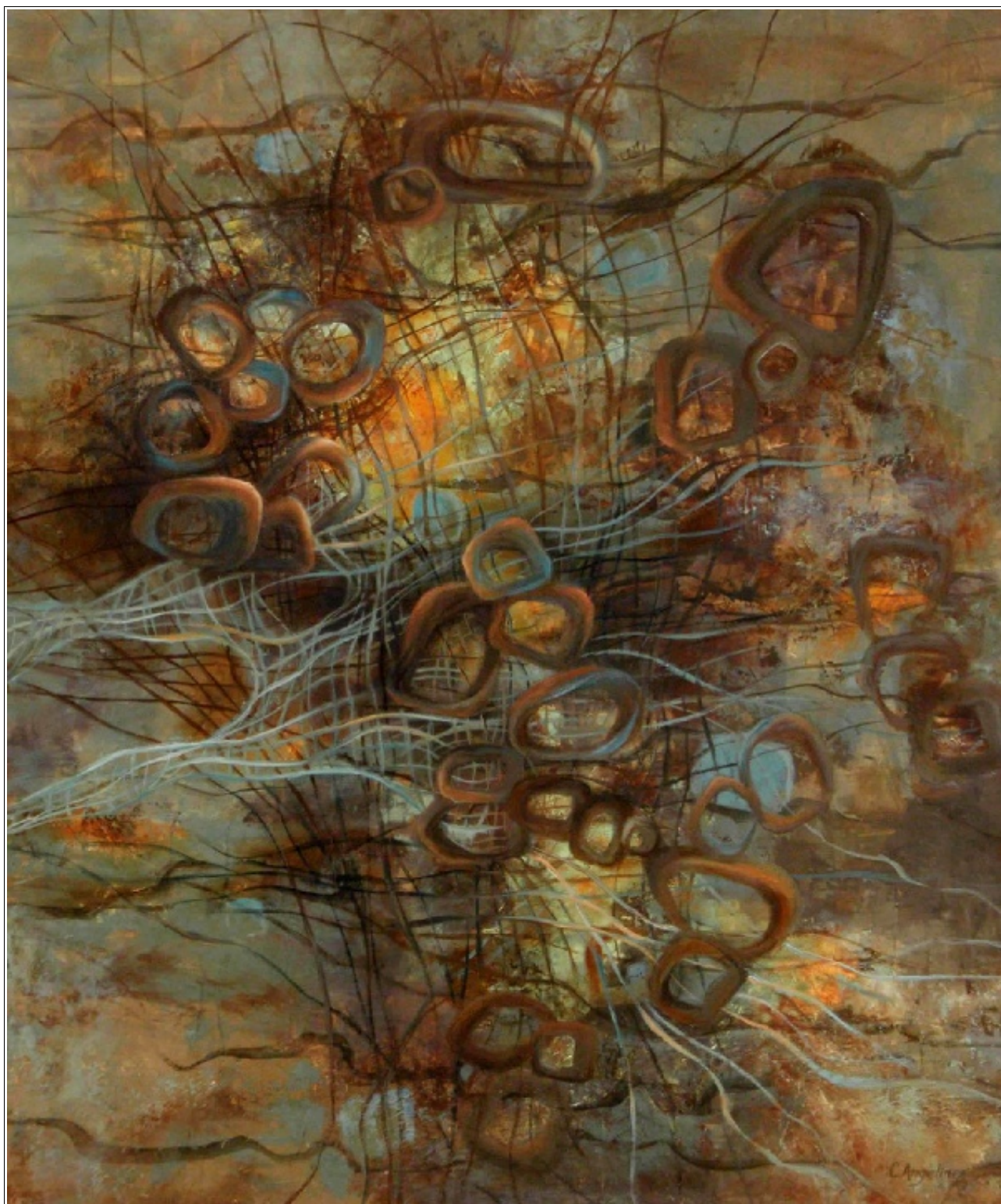
Using a Masonite board, I applied 3 layers of gesso with a large 8" palette knife, letting each layer dry before applying the next. My palette knife technique is very light; hence, the texture is subtle. My first layer of paint was rolled on with a brayer. I almost always start with the very light colors of white, yellow and orange. These light colors help to create the depth in the painting that I ultimately want.

My color palette, which I determine before I begin every painting, consisted of browns, oranges and turquoise. Staying within a certain color palette provides color harmony which is something I strive for in all of my work.

This painting began as a horizontal painting, but as I progressed I kept moving the board on my easel and decided that the design was working best as a vertical. The circular shapes were painted to create a sense of movement and rhythm. More attention and detail were given to the two bright areas of the painting. As I painted, I discovered that my new brush allowed me to paint the wavy lines. These lines were really fun and I had to make sure to stop before they took over the painting! I loved the feeling of netting that started to emerge.

For the finishing touches, I added lighter values of paint to give the amoeba-like shapes some dimension and to draw the eye of the viewer around the painting. I also used the color opposites of orange and blue to do the same.

Continued --->



"Floating Winds"
By Carol A. McIntyre

Continuation --->

The title for this painting was a challenge because people who visited my studio saw so many different things. I wanted the title to convey the *feeling* of the painting, so I decided on "Floating Winds." Some viewers say that it reminds them of a peacock, others see the sea. What comes to mind for you?



"Tango From the Inside-Out"
By Carol A. McIntyre

Tango From the Inside Out

By Carol A. McIntyre

Oil on wapped canvas

24" x 36"

Working Process

Because I do not like the mechanical texture of canvas, I prepare every painting surface with two to three layers of gesso. Gesso, a creamy substance much like sour cream, dries quickly and is often the material artists use to prepare their canvases or boards. I use a large 8" palette knife to apply the gesso to create an organic texture. Each layer must dry before the next is applied.

Before beginning piece I presented myself with a couple of artistic challenges: 1) the predominant colors would be from the red family; and 2) I wanted to combine organic shapes with geometric shapes.

All of my abstracts are created with the intent to communicate color harmony and intrigue. I also strive to create a sense of depth to draw the viewer into the work.

My first layer of paint included the yellows and lime greens, as well as the geometric lines/shapes you see around the edges of the painting – they look like boxes. You can notice that these reds are a combination of cool and warm reds. I do not use tape to make these straight lines. Instead I draw them lightly with a watercolor pencil using a plastic ruler and paint the lines free-hand with a flat brush. Fortunately I have a very steady hand.

Before I begin a painting, I determine my color palette. This allows me freedom within the limits I define. For this painting I chose the family of reds along with grays, whites and browns. The lime green is a color opposite of red and I knew I wanted to use it sparingly and to bring attention to certain areas.

With a palette knife, I next started applying varied light and dark grays, making certain that I preserved some areas of the light colors I had already painted. This is the stage of the painting where I spend time just looking at the shapes and colors to find areas I want to keep and accentuate.

Continued --->



"Tango From the Inside-Out"
By Carol A. McIntyre

Continuation --->

I knew I needed to add some dark reds and darker browns after the grays to bring in some contrast. Note: I never paint with black. With the palette knife edge, I started creating the curved lines and could begin to see vertebrae emerging.

Various shapes were then created and connected using brushes. I alternated between my palette knives and my brushes. The layers give depth to the painting, which is important to encourage the viewer to spend more time within the painting. Eventually, the figures become more evident and appear to be dancing.

The horizontal stripes and small boxes were added for balance in my design. They also contribute to the tension within the painting – between the smooth and textured areas, and the organic with the geometric shapes. Do you see dancing or do you see something else?



"Between the Lines"
By John McLaughlin

Between the Lines
By John McLaughlin
Mixed media
24" x 30" x 1.5"

Working Process

I begin my paintings with an ivory acrylic painted background on canvas. Then I add and subtracting paint and drawings in layers over a period of days and weeks, sometimes months. Using graphite pencil, crayon and oil paint stick, I create abstract marks and scribbles along with the more representational drawn forms of nature and animals. In this way I create a collage-type landscape in a combined expressionistic and traditional style. I continue this investigation into the possibilities of the accidental along with the more deliberate forms and lines, mimicking nature and the objects of the man-made world. The labors are personal, but also come from a place of acutely studied history of art, design and music.

Similar to a musical composition, I slowly created this painting by building on and modifying motifs applied in previous layers. I embraced improvisational gestures and incidents, allowing some of the previous marks to show in a palimpsest manner. Among this rich layering are fits and starts of lines, doodles and sketches. This action occurs in so many layers that some images are barely perceivable, giving insight to my thought process and my own searching for more clues. On the top layer are hazy spaces of the paintings hard-lined, organic shapes of color and line drawings that conjure a quirky aggregate of the ancient, scientific and industrial hieroglyphs. I strive to attain a steady, engrossing read that gradually reveals the history and resolve of the painted picture.

My work involves my subconscious. I may start with a particular idea of color and form but I let my meditative mind take over and guide me in my drawings and mark-making. Many times I don't recognize what I made, so it remains a constant discovery and intrigue for me.



"Johnny Got A Bam"
By John McLaughlin

Johnny Got A Bam
By John McLaughlin
Mixed media on Blick premium canvas
30" x 40" x 1.5"

Working Process

I begin my paintings with an ivory acrylic painted background on canvas. Then I add and subtracting paint and drawings in layers over a period of days and weeks, sometimes months. Using graphite pencil, crayon and oil paint stick, I create abstract marks and scribbles along with the more representational drawn forms of nature and animals. In this way I create a collage-type landscape in a combined expressionistic and traditional style. I continue this investigation into the possibilities of the accidental along with the more deliberate forms and lines, mimicking nature and the objects of the man-made world. The labors are personal, but also come from a place of acutely studied history of art, design and music.

Similar to a musical composition, I slowly created this painting by building on and modifying motifs applied in previous layers. I embraced improvisational gestures and incidents, allowing some of the previous marks to show in a palimpsest manner. Among this rich layering are fits and starts of lines, doodles and sketches. This action occurs in so many layers that some images are barely perceivable, giving insight to my thought process and my own searching for more clues. On the top layer are hazy spaces of the paintings hard-lined, organic shapes of color and line drawings that conjure a quirky aggregate of the ancient, scientific and industrial hieroglyphs. I strive to attain a steady, engrossing read that gradually reveals the history and resolve of the painted picture.

My work involves my subconscious. I may start with a particular idea of color and form but I let my meditative mind take over and guide me in my drawings and mark-making. Many times I don't recognize what I made, so it remains a constant discovery and intrigue for me.



"Celestial Goddess"
By Catherine Mein

Celestial Goddess

By Catherine Mein, ISAP
Mixed Media and Collage
27" x 21"

Working Process

I began this painting using black gesso, a brayer and heavy duty aluminum foil. Spreading the black gesso on the foil with the brayer, I waited a bit until the paint lost some of its sheen. I turned the foil over onto a piece of 140 lb. Arches cold press watercolor paper and gently laid the foil down where I wanted the paint to go, knowing I wanted to use a bridge design format. Using the back of a brush as a writing tool, I drew the shape of a figure on the foil, adding various expressive lines. I removed the foil and let the piece dry. Then, using Caran D'Ache Neocolor II water soluble crayons, I began to make marks within the figure using purple, blue, green, and white. I also added more black gesso directly to the watercolor paper and used a gold magic marker to help define the shape and bring out the bright colors of the crayons.

I then painted an assortment of white tissue papers with acrylic paint using a variety of colors, stamps, and brushed calligraphy marks. After they dried, these tissue papers were torn into desired shapes and then applied to the watercolor paper as collage, and glued with a mix of equal parts gloss medium, matte medium and water.

For the night sky, I initially painted black gesso on the front and then the back of the white tissue paper, allowing each side to dry. For the second layer of this paper, I stamped a square shape with gold paint. After it dried, I then splattered white titanium paint onto the surface with a brush. A fourth layer consisted of a star stamp brushed with copper paint and touched with pink in the center.

For the blue clouds, I used variations of cerulean blue and titanium white acrylic paint with the tissue paper. Other painted papers included a toned-down green and one with a touch of lavender. A zigzag white accent was added to a black painted paper. For a final touch, I stamped a "G" with white titanium paint.

Continued --->



"Celestial Goddess"
By Catherine Mein

Continuation --->

I used the crayons to create softer edges on some parts of the painting, creating a stitch pattern as something that might be found on a quilt, to symbolize the tapestry of life.

This painting is very near and dear to my heart. Painted at a time of challenges in life, it is a symbol of coming out of the rain, standing firm in stillness, and seeing the stars of divine love as we embrace with gratitude the life that we are given.



"Transformation in Time III"
By Catherine Mein

Transformation in Time III

By Catherine Mein, ISAP

Mixed Media and Collage

30" x 38"

Working Process

Transformation in Time III expresses the union of spirit and matter coming together and being transformed into something beautiful. There is an old world feel to the painting, accomplished by using golden orange and grey black tones. This creates an inner glow reflecting ancient wisdom. A more modern perspective is created by the half circle and grid system design undergirding the painting. Through the use of abstraction, not all is revealed and the element of mystery is enhanced. This painting brings the ancient and modern together as an expression of our spirituality.

I started with 300 lb. Arches cold press watercolor paper. Painted tissue papers were then created separately by applying paint in patterns, sometimes with the help of stamps, stencils, and calligraphy marks. To do this, I used Golden fluid acrylic paints that included black, grey, quinacridone nickel azo gold, yellow, copper, cerulean blue, and titanium white as well as Liquitex baltic blue. These papers were then torn or cut into desired shapes and collaged onto the paper, using a mixture of equal parts gloss medium, matte medium and water. Other papers were created by gluing newspapers to the art tissue paper and then painting over it.

In another section, a stained coffee filter was accented with Caran D'Ache Neocolor II water soluble crayons and applied. A few Oriental papers and old book pages were also added for effect. More details were then applied over areas of the piece to help bring this painting together as a cohesive whole.



"To Reveal What Lies Beneath"
By Julie Mignard

To Reveal What Lies Beneath

By Julie Elizabeth Mignard

Oil on canvas

48" x 66" x 3"

Working Process

My canvas was custom-made to my specifications by the Efron Gonzales Art Center in Ajijic, Jalisco, Mexico. They have been stretching my canvases since 2002. It is cotton canvas gessoed with white acrylic. I added two coats of gesso in a light green. I begin with a background texture. The canvas lies in a horizontal position across four milk crates on the studio floor. Using white liquid enamel exterior rustproof paint I sling out long strings in a random pattern while walking around the canvas. This must dry for several days until it is hard and shiny.

During warm dry weather I begin the main body of the painting. I use fast-drying liquid enamels in premixed colors. I select my colors, in this case every shade I have of blue and green, plus ivory, red-orange, and metallic gold, and open all the small cans. I stir them all up using plastic picnic spoons. I must be careful not to let the spoons rest too long in the paint or they dissolve. When all is ready, I ask my adult self to mentally go get in the swimming pool and I turn my artist child loose.

Beginning with the ivory, and progressing from lightest to the very dark blue and ending with the metallic gold, I sling, drip, pour and splash a total of about 2 liters of enamel paint onto the canvas. My main painting tool for this size canvas is a long-handled rubber squeegee of the size used by commercial window washers. Walking around the canvas, I pull the various colors together until the entire surface is covered and paint is running over the edges. On this painting, I felt that the upper right quadrant was becoming over mixed and muddy so I pressed the rubber blade firmly and dumped about half a liter of paint onto the floor revealing the underlying lines of the original pour. However, this still left a thin covering of the bland mixed color, so I poured a small amount of solvent directly onto the offending spot.

Continued --->



"To Reveal What Lies Beneath"
By Julie Mignard

Continuation --->

Much to my surprise, the solvent penetrated easily into the cotton canvas and wicked throughout the entire piece, lightening every place where the paint was thin, to very good effect. When I was satisfied that the composition was finished, I brought my adult self back to work, cleaned up the edges of the canvas to make a studio wrap finish and checked to see if everything else was satisfactory.

By the next day, the surface was firm and shiny, but there was a good deal of unhardened paint under the surface. This is when the best details of the painting are formed. As the underlying paint dries, the separate colors begin to appear in fine lines, circles, and swirls. Also, the earlier dried surface may wrinkle extensively as the puddles under them shrink. These aspects I control, first by tilting the canvas, and after a few days, placing it in a vertical position on an easel to allow gravity to finish the special effects I like so well. I turn it perhaps hourly, sometimes daily until it has completely hardened and is ready to hang.

By this time, it has acquired a name and I have chosen which way the painting is to hang, in this case horizontally, and have the wire placed on the back. I write the name of the painting, the date, and my full signature on the back of the stretcher where the canvas is still white along the top edge. I sign the front with my signature initials, and all is finished.



"Winter"
By Roberta Morgan

Winter

By Roberta Morgan

Oil on board

10" x 10"

Working Process

No advance planning goes into my paintings, ever. I have found that when I plan ahead, the resulting work comes out no better than what's in my head. I have also learned through vast experience that what's in my head is appallingly corny. My experience of reality is one of mystery, of meaningful things filling the universe and continuing in every direction past my ability to see. Such mystery is more than will ever fit in my brain, and so I paint in a way that echoes that, with layers covering other layers.

These paintings are built over a realistic still life. For the painting to be successful, that first layer must be strong enough to stand alone as a realistic image. So I set up a still life with 3 pine cones, 2 small ones from Maryland and West Virginia in front on a piece of fabric, with a large Florida pine cone in the back. To this I added a drop antler.

I spend weeks on the still life, careful with light and shadow, finding ways to keep the details visible, even though some are in the shade. A few days after finishing, I'm beginning to know what this painting is about, and sit with it while writing down relevant words. I reach for words that suggest rather than tell; in other words, I want poetry. If you use text in a painting, you need a strategy that will keep the text from taking over. I make the texts into bearers of mystery. Part of my strategy is rendering the text in Latin and Greek.

This is my favorite part of the painting. I use a swing arm desk lamp with a magnifying glass while I render the words with fine pointed brushes. I have templates for the letters, and draw rough outlines to follow. This isn't ordinary calligraphy. Standard calligraphic technique wouldn't work here, because the painted surface is bumpy, and it absorbs paint differently in some patches. So I get the text on by painting it.

Continued --->



"Winter"
By Roberta Morgan

Continuation --->

When the lettering is done, I let the painting rest for several days. Then comes the last stage of the painting which I find to be absolutely terrifying. I've been working on this piece for weeks, and now it's time to find a way to repeat the ideas in the painting abstractly, and to end up with a better painting when the process is complete. So I sat in front of the painting, thinking, "What in the world am I going to do now?" I thought of the animals in the woods that are hibernating, and painted a yellow square at the bottom of the painting. Then I thought that this was a terrible idea and began to mop it off with paper towels. In the process I got the texture of the paper towel imprinted in the paint. I liked that, kept it and waited for the paint to dry. Then I added another yellow rectangle.

During that time I decided that I liked the yellow square after all, but it wasn't strong enough, so I added another plane of color. Then I was on a roll, and put in white planes that float to the top, which to me represented the life that dies during the winter. I added a brown plane for all that has to tough it out, and pillars of blue, which are the forces of cold and darkness. Finally, I add two more words on the top, so the layers interact visually.

When I finish a painting I generally have been working on it for enough weeks or months that I hate it. However, I can see that this painting is one of my better efforts.



"Disconnected Correspondence"
By Patricia Oblack

Disconnected Correspondence

By Patricia Oblack

Acrylic Mixed Media

48" x 64" Diptych

Working Process

The base for the painting is constructed of hardboard, mounted on a cradle of MDF with the edge painted black.

Scratching the surface with coarse sandpaper prepares the boards for paint. Approximately eleven inches of the upper surface is dedicated to the off-white section, which is the first portion to be painted. Several whites and off-whites to pale yellows are applied to this section and woven one through the other. As this color temporarily sets, I add markings using pencil, dental tools, scribes & rulers, to create an abstract storyline of sorts. Postage stamps, metal strips, & wine caps are attached. While the paint is wet, various lines and other marks continue to be added as needed, often sprayed with a mist of water.

I begin to lay the foundation for the lower half with six shades of red to orange, using the same technique as above. Beginning just below the white area, ribbons of paint are applied, woven and blended with a palette knife. The size of the knife determines the pattern and texture of the surface. When the entire red area is complete, I apply black to the top of the painting, along the sides and into the red area as needed. I always work intuitively. There is no constructive planning; everything will find its own way onto the surface. As the painting evolves, strokes made with the knife are pulled downward into the red, and the white area becomes stained with a small portion of the red below.

In the red area deep purples are mixed in, to add additional weight to the lower half of the work and give depth to the saturation of color.

Additional black is applied where needed while other various markings are added to the upper portion of the painting. It is during this time that I mist the paint to help blend and soften the colors. After the surface is dry, an additional glaze is added to the red section.

Continued --->



"Disconnected Correspondence"
By Patricia Oblack

Continuation --->

Once the board is completely dry, a varnish is applied to bring the reds back to their brightness from when the surface was wet.

Each of my paintings has a "voice" listed on the back, which often helps the viewer gain insight into the emotional content of the work. Sarah McLachlan was chosen for this piece. Her CD "Rarities, B-Sides & Other Stuff" is the inspiration. The name of the painting refers to the house of sorts that appeared in the upper right corner and a mysterious mailbox, defined by a postage stamp. Stretching across the top are more stamps, which I felt were letters that may or may not have ever been delivered. My paintings always finish themselves; I am just a facilitator in the process.



"One Small Year"
By Patricia Oblack

One Small Year

By Patricia Oblack

Acrylic Mixed Media

48" x 48"

Working Process

The process begins with a frame constructed of MDF, recessed 1" from the edge & glued to the back of a hardboard surface. This construction creates the illusion that the painting is floating on the wall.

After the surface has been scuffed with coarse sandpaper, I begin to apply small ribbons of paint distributed with paint sticks from 4 separate off-white colors. By using a palette knife, I scrape, smudge and weave the colors, while also taking advantage of the darkness of the board itself to create the beginning backdrop for other textural applications. Paint containing sand and ground stone along with modeling paste helps lay the groundwork for other layers of texture in smaller areas while various screens and grids are pressed into the paste, leaving their marks behind on the surface of the board.

Metal strips, screens, wine bottle caps and galvanized metal squares are also set into place using modeling paste while other red sections are simply painted on. I like to work quickly and keep the surface damp, so that I can continue to make various marks in the surface using pencils, dental tools, putty knives and several types of scribes that allow for cutting of circles, grids, map marks and other details as needed. Balance is always an important factor. Toward the end of the process a band of black and maroon red color was added at the very top to anchor the overall composition. Across the bottom there are 2 arcs drawn with pencil where the lyrics of the song were inscribed.

I listened to the CD "Whole New You" by Shawn Calvin while painting "One Small Year". The title of this painting was inspired by the song of the same name. In the year 2005 I went full force into fine art & abstraction. I set up a website, had my first showings, was accepted into galleries and began selling my work, all in one small year.

Continued --->



"One Small Year"
By Patricia Oblack

Continuation --->

Written on the face of this piece, which is my signature work, there are many notations of gallery representations, paintings sold, levels of emotions, new friends made through networking and so on, all journaled onto the surface, which continues to grow as the years pass.

Each of my paintings has a "voice", listed on the back, which may help give the viewer some indication as to how I arrived at the completed work. Abstract is a mysterious process and every artist approaches it differently. Everyone sees their own vision of the surface. In the end, it's all magic and I am but a facilitator in the process.



"Denim Sky"
By Dr. Craig Peck

Denim Sky

By Dr. Craig Peck

Mixed media

90 x 110 cm

Working Process

My fascination with texture and creating art using new and exciting techniques led me one day to experiment with fiberglass resin. Most of my art that contains texture relies on the texture being rough, which increases the realism of the art by increasing its perceived depth and tactility. I wanted to find a way of using texture that had a softer look and feel to it - more delicate and gentle in nature - and fiberglass resin was just the thing I was looking for!

I decided to create on hard board, given the nature of the resin. I wasn't too sure about the exact image or theme I wanted to convey until I actually started. After mixing the fiberglass and activator to the manufacturer's specifications in a disposable plastic container, I randomly drizzled the mixture over the hard board in about 5 cm diameter blobs. After enough of the board was covered, I lifted the board and allowed the resin to flow down the board in one direction. Then I tilted it in another direction, to allow for flow at about 90 degrees to the first one and so on. until geometric shapes were formed by the resin on the board. Depending on how you orient and turn the board, you will be left with areas included within the resin-demarcated lines that are not covered by the resin mixture. This was left for several hours until the resin hardened and was not tacky to the touch.

When you give this a try, decide on your color scheme. For best results, experiment with contrasting colors – even with colors that you think would not complement each other. Start with the color that you want on the resin lines and brush this over the surface of the entire piece – you can even apply the paint with a sponge and rub it over the surface (I used acrylic). This will dry pretty quickly; don't worry about being too tidy at this stage. Decide then on your contrasting colors (I used two different colors) and start painting the inner shapes contained within the resin-demarcated lines.

Continued --->



"Denim Sky"
By Dr. Craig Peck

Continuation --->

Depending on the effect you want to create, you can paint this as dark or light as you wish but decide on the intensity of the color by mixing the shade of paint you want from the start. Just as these areas start drying, take a sponge or clean rag and rub them gently to bring out the gentle grain on the hard board underneath, which creates a fine textured appearance contrasted by the smooth and almost shiny surface of the resin lines.

For me, the most pleasing effect was to use two similar colors of varying intensity (call this option A) and two contrasting colors, but also similar, just of varying intensities of color (call this option B). Use one of the colors from option A for the resin lines and the other color from option A for some of the spaces which are formed on the board by the random flow of the resin. Use the other two colors of option B to color the other spaces contained within the resin-demarcated lines. In this way, you get better homogeneity in the appearance or a better degree of unison in the theme you want, rather than have it look like a lot of random shapes that you have filled in with color. When you rub or wipe off excess paint, there will be a degree of smudging. This creates the unpredictability and uniqueness of the technique – it is up to you how much or how little you want to blend the colors. Allow to dry and then spray with a clear lacquer varnish to seal and trap in the colors. Just remember, there are no rules so allow your imagination to create what it wants, without applying an overly critical eye – and most importantly of all, have fun with it!



"Lavender Dreams"
By Dr. Craig Peck

Lavender Dreams

By Dr. Craig Peck

Mixed media

90 x 110 cm

Working Process

My fascination with texture and creating art using new and exciting techniques led me one day to experiment with fiberglass resin. Most of my art that contains texture relies on the texture being rough, which increases the realism of the art by increasing its perceived depth and tactility. I wanted to find a way of using texture that had a softer look and feel to it - more delicate and gentle in nature - and fiberglass resin was just the thing I was looking for!

I decided to create on hard board, given the nature of the resin. I wasn't too sure about the exact image or theme I wanted to convey until I actually started. After mixing the fiberglass and activator to the manufacturer's specifications in a disposable plastic container, I randomly drizzled the mixture over the hard board in about 5 cm diameter blobs. After enough of the board was covered, I lifted the board and allowed the resin to flow down the board in one direction. Then I tilted it in another direction, to allow for flow at about 90 degrees to the first one and so on. until geometric shapes were formed by the resin on the board. Depending on how you orient and turn the board, you will be left with areas included within the resin-demarcated lines that are not covered by the resin mixture. This was left for several hours until the resin hardened and was not tacky to the touch.

When you give this a try, decide on your color scheme. For best results, experiment with contrasting colors – even with colors that you think would not complement each other. Start with the color that you want on the resin lines and brush this over the surface of the entire piece – you can even apply the paint with a sponge and rub it over the surface (I used acrylic). This will dry pretty quickly; don't worry about being too tidy at this stage. Decide then on your contrasting colors (I used two different colors) and start painting the inner shapes contained within the resin-demarcated lines.

Continued --->

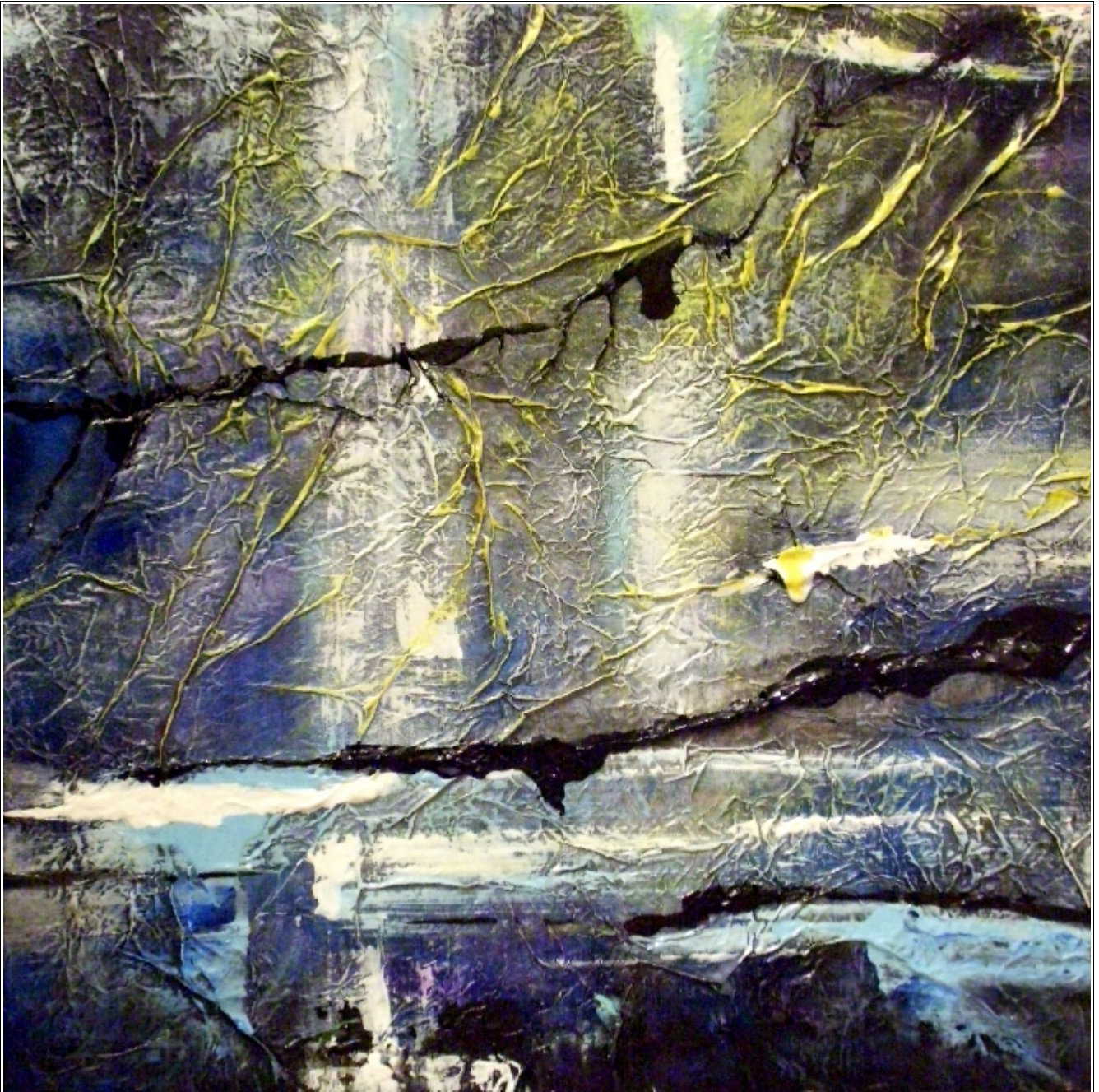


"Lavender Dreams"
By Dr. Craig Peck

Continuation --->

Depending on the effect you want to create, you can paint this as dark or light as you wish but decide on the intensity of the color by mixing the shade of paint you want from the start. Just as these areas start drying, take a sponge or clean rag and rub them gently to bring out the gentle grain on the hard board underneath, which creates a fine textured appearance contrasted by the smooth and almost shiny surface of the resin lines.

For me, the most pleasing effect was to use two similar colors of varying intensity (call this option A) and two contrasting colors, but also similar, just of varying intensities of color (call this option B). Use one of the colors from option A for the resin lines and the other color from option A for some of the spaces which are formed on the board by the random flow of the resin. Use the other two colors of option B to color the other spaces contained within the resin-demarcated lines. In this way, you get better homogeneity in the appearance or a better degree of unison in the theme you want, rather than have it look like a lot of random shapes that you have filled in with color. When you rub or wipe off excess paint, there will be a degree of smudging. This creates the unpredictability and uniqueness of the technique – it is up to you how much or how little you want to blend the colors. Allow to dry and then spray with a clear lacquer varnish to seal and trap in the colors. Just remember, there are no rules so allow your imagination to create what it wants, without applying an overly critical eye – and most importantly of all, have fun with it!



"Journey"
By Lee Pina

Journey

By Lee Pina

Acrylic

14" x 14" x 1 1/2"

Working Process

The painting process for me always begins with some sort of texture. After painting on plaster and sand, I wanted to see how acrylic paints and media would play on tissue paper. Using the gallerywrap canvas as a support, I began applying crumpled tissue with a light coat of water mixed with gesso.

With the tissue loosely applied, I sealed the edges with gesso. I then used a hair dryer on low speed to create contours and shapes in the tissue. The heat caused the tissue and gesso to harden creating raised edges and depressions to attract the paint. Once happy with the patterns, I allowed it to dry completely and applied gesso to any spaces left at the edges.

I lightly applied several thin layers of a watered down blue palette with 3/4" and smaller brushes to form a background. Building layers of depth, I added purple, grey and black acrylics to the foreground. Throughout this step, I bubbled and dried the canvas with the hair dryer on high speed. A layer of matte varnish was sprayed and left to dry.

Next, I added undiluted white pearlescent with a 1 inch flat goat hair brush. The roughness of the hairs makes it possible to create irregular vertical patterns. Once dried, I added yellow highlights to the raised tissue by holding a 1/4" flat brush parallel to the canvas.

This is probably a good place to stop but maybe not yet! I found a tube of black paint that was almost dried up. There were only gobs of paint left, so I squeezed it randomly to catch the tissue and allowed it to dry overnight. Several coats of clear gloss varnish were sprayed on until the entire surface is hardened. Now it's done!

This piece is very special to me as it represents the beginning of my journey as an artist. I love experimenting with anything that will bring a piece to life with its own voice, and texture is that voice. Everything else emerges from it.



"Pieces of Me"
By Lee Pina

Pieces of Me
By Lee Pina
Watercolor
10" x 10" x 3/4"

Working Process

After using tissue on a support, I wanted to explore using it as the primary support. Tissue is thin and tears easily when wet, so I used two layers of 20" x 20" tissue paper. After crumpling it to create grooves and edges, I spread it loosely to about 16" x 16" and placed it over a sheet of wax paper. The wax paper allowed me to move the piece while it dried without disturbing the wet media.

I applied concentrated watercolor directly from the 2 oz. containers onto the peaks in the tissue paper. The concentrated color is extremely vivid and seeps unpredictably into the crevices.

At this point I have options. I can apply different colors wet-on-wet, add water to diffuse and roll the color around the tissue or let it dry before adding more color. I choose to go with wet-on-wet without water. Moving the wax paper only, the colors blend unpredictably and saturate the surface.

Left to dry overnight, I can lift the tissue from the wax paper, careful not to make a tear. I chose a 10" x 10" primed canvas for a support and lightly covered it with Elmer's Spray Adhesive. The piece was lightly pressed onto and around the edges of the canvas so the textures remain slightly raised.

Excess tissue was cut from the back with a straight edge and Exacto knife to shape with the canvas frame. The last step was to apply several layers of high gloss varnish to the surface, sides and back with a flat brush.

This process is totally unpredictable which makes it exciting and truly a creation from within!



"Floating Ribbons #1 & #2"
By Susan Prinz

Floating Ribbons #1 & #2

By Susan Prinz

Acrylic

16" x 20"

Working Process

I began with two 16" x 20" stretched canvases because I was going to create a diptych painting which is two pictures that go together. Some artists have used the term in the title of their works describing two paintings intended to be hung together as a pair but can be sold separately, since each picture is complete on its own merit. I started these pictures in my Florida studio on a bright beautiful sunny October day. I wanted the pictures to be colorful and electrifying like I was feeling that day. So, I started pulling out shades of acrylic paint that I love.

When I paint a diptych painting I work on the two canvases at the same time while using the same colors. I start by putting color on my canvas using a 1" brush. I put down the lightest colors first on the canvas and graduate to the darker colors. This allows me to use the same brush without having to keep cleaning it. I place my canvases side by side so that when I apply my conception it ends up in a coordinated and thoughtful design. I keep mixing paint until the right shade of color appears. I apply paint and let it dry, and come back in areas and add new and different colors to make the picture "pop".

I knew I was going to have floating ribbons as part of my design because I was trying out a new paint brush that has spaces between the bristles. Using various sized paint brushes, I drew what I considered to be floating ribbons and let it dry. I then used a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch ridge paint brush and went over with a different color paint to make it look like ridges in the ribbons. I then made dashes with a fine paint brush and acrylic pens, and sealed the paintings with satin varnish.

I really like abstract art; I find it to be more creative for me then painting a picture of something I am copying. I find the paint has a will of its own and you need to learn how to go with it. Just keep making adjustments until you like the final results. I am always surprised because things keep changing up to the very end of the painting; there is nothing but your imagination to use as a reference. I just keep tweaking my work until it is finished in my own mind.



"Landscape of The Soul"
By Gayle Rappaport-Weiland

Landscape of The Soul

By Gayle Rappaport-Weiland

Watercolor/Mixed Media

27" x 27"

Working Process

The first and most important step of this painting was choosing the paper shape, a square. Taping the paper down to create an edge and a guide line for later matting is helpful. The paper I used is Arches 140 lb. rough paper . I love the textural component that this paper adds to my artwork.

Now I take my art masking fluid and save areas that I want to have highlights. Remember, it is important to soap your round brush before dipping into the fluid; this will save your brush. The light areas are saved. The masking fluid should dry until tacky to the touch.

Wetting my paper thoroughly with a 2" flat brush gives me a surface where my paint will move freely without hard edges. In watercolors I work light to dark, choosing fabulous earth tones that resonate with my inner exploration of organic abstracts. Working with my largest brush first and continuing with smaller brushes as the paper dries, I add deeper values of the same limited palette. At all times I am thinking about the unity of my work.

Next, when the paper is completely dry I rub off the art masking fluid with a rubber cement pick-up to reveal the whites I have carefully saved. I now add the light tones with a round brush to the saved whites which make those areas sparkle.

The fun technique is adding the textural delight. In this piece the leaves, rice papers, and mica gel add that element of surprise. The papers and leaves are all applied using a pH neutral glue with a stiff bristle brush. It is important to glue both sides of the paper. I work so the additional materials create both a rhythm and balance in the piece.

The final touches include adding the darkest values, crosshatching line work and stippling to create a unified abstract that communicates the "Landscape of The Soul ".



"Tech Talk"
By M.S. Reynolds

Tech Talk

By M.S. Reynolds

Acrylic

36" x 36"

Working Process

Working in a series is always fun for me. This painting is the first in a painting series on canvas, the subject being "Talk". "Talk" covers small talk, sweet talk, old talk, kid talk, tech talk, many kinds of communication humans have used through the years. (Examples: pony express, telegraph, tweet, You Tube, e-mail and paper cup/string etc). I am still working on this series.

Recently I have overpainted some art that I felt wasn't working. Much of my work, whether on canvas, paper or wood, involves layering paint, scraping back, lifting and adding more layers. This is fun and offers lots of good surprises. I always use a lot of line and mark elements in my work as well as texture and color.

In this piece, the original painting had a lot of orange, blue, navy, gray and brown hues. These paints were Utrecht heavy body Artists' Acrylics, which I always use in my canvas work. I overpainted with Titanium White and left lots of different-sized colored shapes showing. Also for interest and variety, I let a little subtle color show through on some of the white areas. I like to work fast and take advantage of being in the zone of the right brain.

While the paint was still wet, I rolled a carved wooden cylinder (found at a garage sale by one of my students and gifted to me) across the white paint to create texture in many of the white areas. Then I used a 1/4 inch "shaper" to cut into the white, creating lines connecting the various colored shapes. The shaper is a rubber brush used in sculpture and comes in different sizes and shapes, lots of fun to use. The last big blue mark on the right of the piece was a spontaneous addition, representing an exclamation mark saying I was happy with the work and that I was DONE!



"The Navajo"
By M.S. Reynolds

The Navajo
By M.S. Reynolds
Acrylic
30" x 22"

Working Process

I have many mental images and personal photographs of mountains and desert areas: I lived in Arizona for several years and traveled throughout New Mexico and Arizona in the 1980's and 1990's. The shapes and colors have stayed with me and are a constant presence in my subconscious. Many of my paintings reflect the love and interest I have for the West. This painting with a limited palette was chosen to portray the Navajos of northeastern Arizona approaching a butte/plateau on their reservation area that I visited.

I worked flat on a table for this process. The 300# Fabriano hot press paper needs newsprint tucked under all the way across at the bottom to catch the excess paint. I worked this in a vertical position.

The first step was to cover the paper with a mixture of gloss medium (70 %) and water (30%), and allow to dry thoroughly.

The paint was applied by squirting burnt sienna, burnt umber and phthalo blue mixed with some sepia to darken it, onto the top half of the paper. These hues were put into plastic bottles with squirt tips to put the paint on the paper in skinny lines that crossed and ran over each other. A lot of paint lines must be applied so that it is enough to cover the whole paper. While this was still fresh and wet, I pulled the paint down to the bottom of the paper with a large, 10" wide, squeegee, in a continuous motion. I continued this technique until the paper was covered with the pigment. (You cannot get all the paint lines at once unless you find a 22" squeegee!) I learned this idea in a workshop with Lana Grow and we did it on a one-quarter size sheet. I just took the process to the next level for a full sheet.

Continued --->



"The Navajo"
By M.S. Reynolds

Continuation --->

While the paint was wet, I sprayed some alcohol in a few places for texture, and then used brushes called "shapers" to scrape some of the paint back to the white of the paper. I mixed my own gouache with burnt sienna and titanium dioxide. This gouache was used to carve out the shape of the mountains/butte area to separate the approaching figures from the mountains, and adding some to the foreground to pull the figures out and tie in with the top gouache area.



"Charlie Mingus"
By Jane M. Robinson

Charlie Mingus

By Jane Robinson

Acrylic

36" x 36"

Working Process

This painting was inspired by one of the most important figures in twentieth century American music. Charles Mingus was a virtuoso bass player, accomplished pianist, bandleader and composer. In the 1950's and early 1960's, Mingus found himself at the forefront of the avant-garde jazz movement. The rhythm and syncopation in his music are the accentuation of a beat that normally would be weak according to the rhythmic division of the measure. By listening to Charlie Mingus the intuitive act of creating is predominate in this painting...bold, colorful, and syncopated rhythms.

My paintings are always somewhat large so I begin with a canvas measuring 36" x 36". First I begin with a coat of white gesso covering the entire canvas. I then apply a sculptural medium and place small granular nuggets in it for texture. This must be completely dry to begin the painting (which usually takes 24 hours).

I then turn on my jazz inspiration and for this painting it was Charlie Mingus. I use Golden Fluid Acrylics which have wonderfully deep pigments and pour with the consistency of heavy cream. I use Hake brushes which are high quality with hand-bound soft goat hair bristles which do not come out while painting. The brushes are good for washes and hold lots of fluid.

Once I select my color palette, I allow the intuitive process to take over. I almost never have a preconceived plan or design in mind when I paint. I immerse myself in the process not allowing my inner critic to speak during this time. Afterwards if I am not pleased with the outcome I leave it for a day or two and return for a fresh look. At that time I can decide if I want to make any changes. Often what I think is a mistake becomes a painting I am pleased with in the end. Once completed I pour an epoxy finish over the entire canvas giving the surface the appearance of glass.

When you view my work try to see it without any preconceived notion about art "should" be. Look at the color, the energy and the rhythm – Charlie Mingus.



"Smoke Over Grid"
By Kathy Blankley Roman

Smoke Over Grid

By Kathy Blankley Roman

Acrylic

12" x 12"

Working Process

This piece is one of my favorites. It was the first one where I was successful in creating see-through layers with large, simple areas of color running in and out of scribbled lines. It is built on a loose underlying grid - a process I frequently use when my paintings start to wander or become uninspired or unsatisfying.

I started with Kraft paper - I really love this surface for its color and the smooth working surface and it complements my preference for earth colors. I find that using a colored background tends to strengthen the painting and gives more depth to the color, allowing use of transparencies that remain within my limited palette. I tape it to a board with painter's tape to control warp while painting, creating a clean brown border of about 1/4" around the finished painting. This is usually covered up by a mat when the piece is framed, but I like the look of it.

I started by drawing in a loose grid with charcoal - using sweeping strokes running top to bottom, rounding at the edges and back again, and then the same thing going across, all without lifting the charcoal from the paper. This was done very quickly without much thought. I ended up with a suggestion of a 3 x 3 squarish grid, some lines running off the paper, some rounding off well short of the edge.

At this point, I started to lay in flat areas of raw sienna loosely within the grid - in the upper right, along part of the left side and in the lower right corner. Then I added the white. A few more scribbles with the charcoal, and then some yellow ochre at top left and center, where it overlaps into the white. The darkest areas are the result of the interaction between the charcoal and the raw sienna when the paint passes over and smears, in combination with the color of the paper. I love the deep rich color that happens with this combination. Regular opaque raw sienna doesn't have the same effect; it must be transparent.

Continued --->



"Smoke Over Grid"
By Kathy Blankley Roman

Continuation --->

The cool grays also happen with the interaction of the charcoal smearing with the thin white paint. The cooler brown in the center is the uncovered paper, as well as in barely visible areas at lower right edge and center left edge.

I usually paint with a relatively dry brush, well coated, with just enough water to allow it to flow. In the two white areas, you can see the thicker, drier application of the paint that has then been thinned and pulled out from the initial strokes. Also, on the center left edge you can see the color of the paper through a dry brush stroke.

This was one of those pieces that was so exciting to do - "aha" moments happening all over the place. The trick was to stop before going too far, something that is always a challenge to me.

Materials: Acrylic paints - transparent raw sienna, yellow ochre and titanium white; a square charcoal stick, broken to about an inch or so long; 1" white nylon flat brush (a cheapo from the craft store); 12" x 12" brown Kraft card stock (from the scrapbooking section of the craft store - archival and lightfast).



"The Other Side"
By Kathy Blankley Roman

The Other Side

By Kathy Blankley Roman

Acrylic

8 1/2" x 11"

Working Process

This piece started out as a collage using a digital print of a Von Gogh painting – I don't remember which one, but it was probably one of the brightly colored landscapes that I love for the colors. The print has been cut and ripped into roughly vertical strips. I usually start by affixing these strips in staggered columns across the page, using matte medium as the adhesive. Then I started to paint using similar colors from the painting, pulling them out from the collage strips, quickly and without much thought or plan, often visually eliminating the edges of the paper. Next, I drew in some scribbles and marks with charcoal and then went back over some of these marks with paint. I added some white to brighten it up, as most of the area had become dark and muddy. It didn't help much. This particular piece was going nowhere fast. I added a few more charcoal marks and at this point, decided to use my rice and tracing papers to try to "save" the painting.

I wanted to preserve the areas that I liked - the brighter colors at the top and the red at the bottom and some of the darks for contrast, a mixture of burnt umber and ultramarine. I started by laying in the torn hyacinth paper in patches, overlapping across the center of the page. Using this technique, it is important to maintain at least three distinct values in the underpainting - light medium, dark - otherwise the layers and depth will be lost in the overlays. Using the matte medium as adhesive, I brushed some on the underside of the paper and/or on the painting where I planned to place it. I then used the brush to work it in, brushing and pushing the medium out from under the paper. This is rough on brushes, which is why I only use inexpensive brushes - they take a real beating. The paper becomes almost invisible when snugly adhered, except in the areas where there are air bubbles left because of incomplete adhesion (some areas missed getting the medium on the underside, which creates the air bubbles). It also becomes even thinner, through working hard with the brush on the wet paper - this actually removes some layers of the paper, sometimes tearing it and leaving little "skumbles".

Continued --->



"The Other Side"
By Kathy Blankley Roman

Continuation --->

I added some of the tracing paper on top in the area just right of center - it is white and relatively smooth and, though nearly transparent when applied, gives a cooler gray tone to the warm tones of the hyacinth paper, beneath and above. One place where you can see the effect of the white paper is the long, sort of triangular shape pointing down from the top right corner. Another is the gray area just right of center. The same effect of air bubbles gives these areas a more opaque white tone. At this point I took a break to stand back to see what was happening, making sure that some of the charcoal marks are showing and checking for balance in the overall composition.

I decided to add some more of the hyacinth paper down the sides and running off the edges. What looks like striations in those areas is the impression left by the brush on the transparent paper as I smoothed it out, leaving long, thin air bubbles that didn't get adhered. Because the paper is so thin, the charcoal marks are easily visible underneath. Another larger piece was placed just under the color at the top right. You can see the outline of the piece that is adhered tightly in the center but not on the edges and there is a big rip in the paper, allowing a hole that reveals the paint underneath. Using the hyacinth paper to run off the edges helped to pull the different sections together and added both motion and depth. At this point I decided to stop, as I was satisfied that it held together with a nice energy and depth. The original collage from which I got my colors had now become totally obliterated.

Materials: Acrylic paint - cadmium red light, titanium white, cadmium yellow medium, burnt umber, ultramarine blue; square charcoal stick broken to about one inch long; white tracing paper (it comes on a roll and is called "sketching paper"); acrylic matte medium; hyacinth paper (a "rice" type of paper that is a pale tea color and is very thin, almost transparent); 1" flat white nylon brush - a cheap one from the craft store; Canson Infinity 300# Arches Aquarelle Rag textured paper (Inkjet Fine Art and Photo Paper). Note: I purchased the paper for printing high quality reproductions on my printer, but it was too thick to go through. I use it now for my paintings that incorporate collage. It's stiffness is an excellent base for this kind of work.



"Golden Glory"
By Chris Romine

Golden Glory

By Chris Romine

Mixed Media

30" x 40"

Working Process

As an experimental mixed media artist, I use a lot of texture, techniques, and color. I started with a 30" x 40" stretched canvas. I use many layers before a painting is completed. This piece began with a design created with pre-mixed cement that can be purchased at the hardware store. Golden's lava gel is similar, but I like the consistency of the cement. The application of cement was done with a Mason's trowel and smoothed to the level of texture I wanted. While the cement was wet I created designs with a notched plastic "thrifty trowel" also available at the hardware store.

At this point, I added collage papers to the upper middle to define and enhance my design. I used Nova heavy gel (209) to attach my collage papers. After the cement dried, acrylic paint was applied. Liquitex gold was painted first around the cement. Next I briefly sprayed gold Krylon webbing in the upper right and left corners for additional interesting texture. The paint was applied with a 2" Bright Artist Loft synthetic white brush. I then buffed the application of each color with a 2" Hake brush which I have shortened and shaved to help blend and spread the paint. The acrylic colors I used were all Golden products: cobalt teal, transparent red iron oxide (my favorite), and quinacridone burnt orange. The chinese lettered stamp image in the lower middle and right corner was done by applying black acrylic to the stamp and then printing it.

The final application was to brush gold leaf adhesive on the cement design. After it dried to a tacky consistency, I applied the gold leaf. Both the gold leaf and adhesive were purchased online from Easy Leaf Products. The gold leaf will tarnish if not protected with a sealer. In this piece, I used Golden's micaceous iron oxide to tone down the brightness of the gold which also added a seal to it. The final coat I used to seal the entire piece was Nova gloss medium (206).



"Happy Man, II"
By Eric Harley Schweitzer

Happy Man, II

By Eric Harley Schweitzer

Enamel house paint

54" x 54"

Working Process

"Painting in the moment allows me to capture what I feel at the moment. It is a way of living frivolously, vicariously and eternally, within only the rules I see fit."

I began this painting as I usually begin all new works- without any idea of what it will or should become. I rest my assertions on chance and have found that in art, beauty and harmony often come most easily through happenstance. Therefore, I am heavily reliant on my instincts and an action-style painting technique that allows me to spontaneously project my immediate conscious and subconscious mind, via free-flowing gestural black lines onto canvas. Using house paint allows me the flexibility to get these lines down on canvas rapidly and without having to stop to reload the brush. Depending on the size of the canvas, in a matter of a few hours the fate of the work is sealed (that is unless it is completely "white-washed" and started all over again) and I now have what I use as my forward template. At times, while applying these black lines I even kept my eyes closed.

Working loosely at first and then tightening up any happy accidental nuances that emerged on their own, I continued manipulating these lines until they reached a point of becoming mildly recognizable significant forms deserving further attention. These forms were created while constantly turning the canvas. Doing so invites new forms and realizations, as well as challenges that keep the painting from becoming stagnant. At this point, I began to turn my attention to carefully sorting out themes and compositional structure. Opening up new forms and further ignoring forms that have less potency or relevance towards the harmony of the work is what matters most at this stage.

Overworking a canvas is extremely easy and what I concern myself most with while dividing a space (in this case maintaining these divisions in a balanced and efficient manner) is ensuring a peaceful work.

Continued --->



"Happy Man, II"
By Eric Harley Schweitzer

Continuation --->

At this point color is applied, which I use as a means of creating depth and perspective along with further balancing forms and affixing their positions in space. Layering paint is how I achieve a wonderful way of creating complex intermediary colors and texture, often through wet-on-wet application. House paint dries very quickly and in a matter of several minutes I can reclaim a lost form or enhance another. Atmospheric yellow is a dominant color in this work. This wonderful blend of hi-tonal hues and its translucency afforded the blue underpainting to carry through and further create an apparent 1:1 balance of yellow to blue hue throughout the composition. I used a warm pink hue for the dominant abstract arm/thumb/head form, red line matrices and other artifacts to imply motion, and included several blue/white abstract forms in the negative space. This in turn gave the work that balanced perception of all three primary colors, one of the main tenets of my work.

This painting represents one year of work from start to finish. With an extreme explosive and impulsive beginning through progressive layering and relayering to a planned construction and eventual dénouement, the result is in keeping with my unbridled abstract figurative goal in mind. Less is best, gravity undetermined, line absolved, and in the end, unity. It is my deepest joy to be able to share this reflection of my mind and permanently declare what I feel it means to be human and alive today.



"Militarized/Demilitarized"
By Alan Soffer

Militarized/Demilitarized

By Alan Soffer

Encaustic and collage on board

32" x 32"

Working Process

My process for creating this painting was in keeping with my overall approach as an abstract expressionist painter. I believe that deep in my subconscious lurk all the really important fragments of my being. Through some miracle of alchemy, telepathy, or psychic transmission I manage to tap into it. I have used the term channeling to express my path to the "zone."

I know this is starting to sound a little too spiritual, but so be it. I wouldn't want anyone reading this to suddenly think that by following the Soffer formula a work of art will be born. It could happen, but don't count on it. One has to hone this skill of reaching down fearlessly, facing failure, digging in, overpainting, scraping, adding another layer of paint, glazing over, rethinking the original premise, if there is one, and having faith that there is light at the end of the tunnel. Yes, even Matisse had at least 30 layers of paint in every painting. So the hope is that it won't look overworked, even if it is. If you want perfection the first time around, buy the "painting by numbers" system.

But for those who want to know the step by step, here it is. When working large in the encaustic medium, hot wax to the uninitiated, I generally do a simple underpainting with watercolor or tempera. This gives me a sort of guidepost to begin the painting. I am not expecting the final painting to look anything like this underpainting, which would be the case in a representational painting. Here I used a combination of tempera and collaged photographs from a Korean newspaper. I love Asian calligraphy. If you were able to see this painting up close you will see that I have expanded on the calligraphy with a version of my own.

As the work progresses, I become more and more an instrument rather than the controlling force. So I can't say why I chose the color scheme, other than it simply was demanded by the work itself.

Continued --->

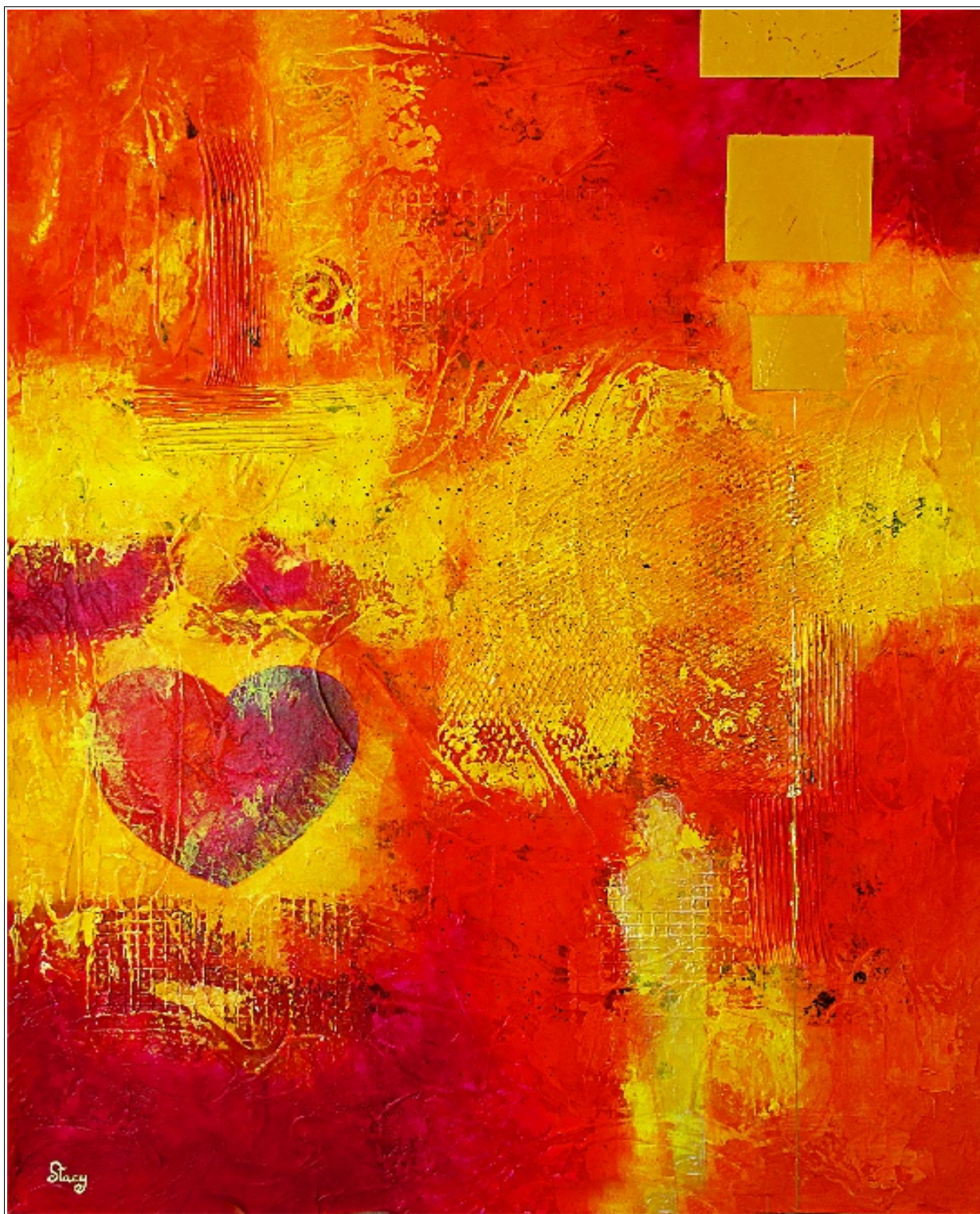


"Militarized/Demilitarized"
By Alan Soffer

Continuation --->

Now as I see some clear construction of space, I start to work more from my consciousness. I am making decisions about value, color, texture and composition. Somehow there needed to be a few lines in the foreground to create a feeling of depth and contrast. Frequently it will take days to discover the mark that is needed to fulfill the demand of this new entity. I can't really remember how long this took, but I do remember that I worked on this painting a long time.

Militarized/Demilitarized is a very important painting in my oeuvre as it lead to the Solar series through its many offspring .



"Colores del Corazon"
By Pat Stacy

Colores del Corazon

By Pat Stacy

Acrylic on canvas

30" x 40" x 1.5"

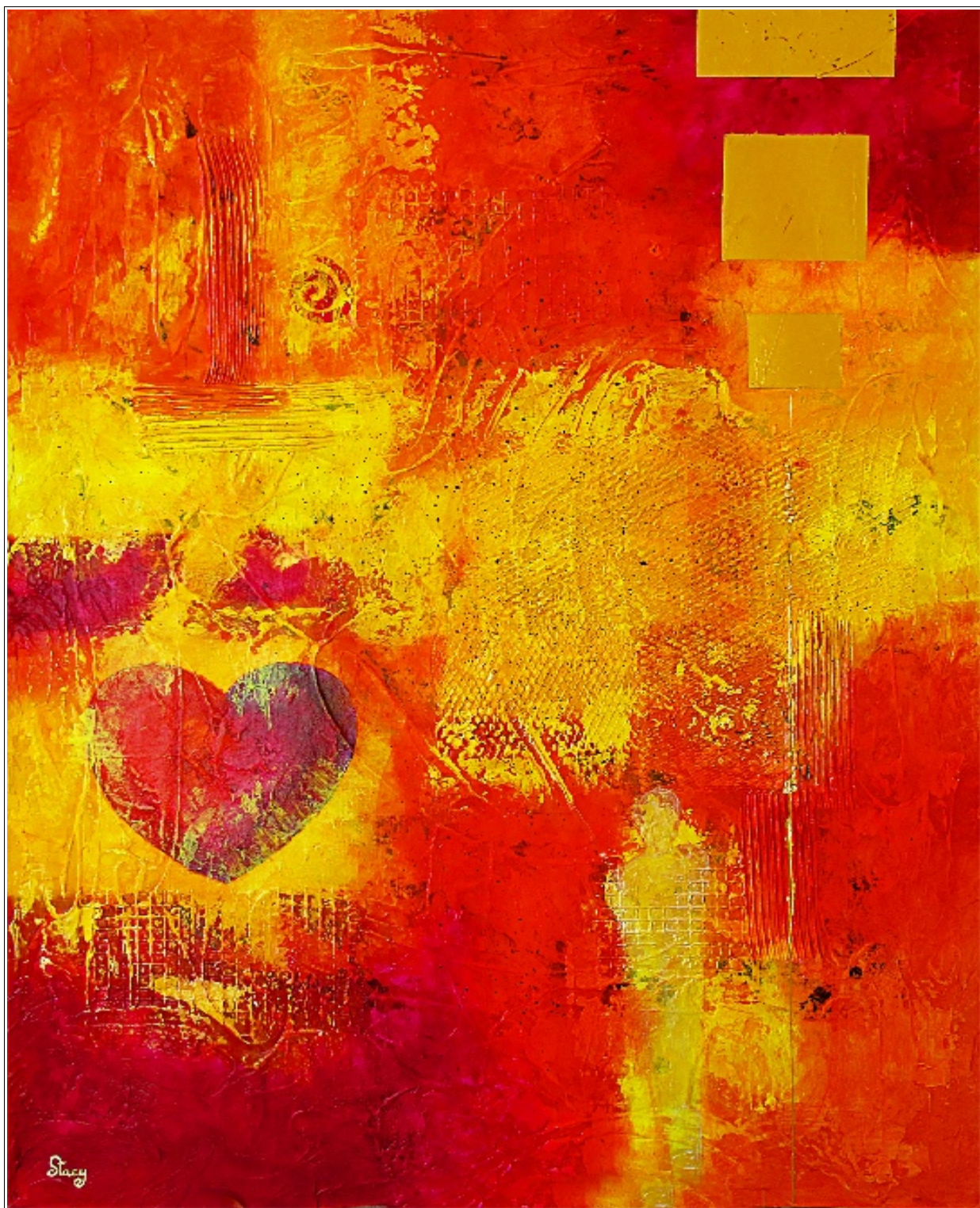
Working Process

"The tip of my brush is the tip of my soul" (Alexander Hamilton) and so it is for me. I call myself an intuitive artist—I begin with a loose idea and let the painting lead me. I never know exactly where it will take me. My process for working on canvas always begins with texture. I like to use Golden modeling paste underneath, using wire, screen, stamps, combs, or just about anything to play in the paste. I try to make a pleasing distribution around the canvas—but I really have no idea how the canvas will look. After letting it dry, I pick a color palette. Usually I like a limited palette accented by metallic and interference paints. I apply a base coat of diluted color over the whole canvas and then I use titanium white and a dark, going over the canvas with a palette knife to give more texture and depth.

I begin thinking about my process at this point. One way I often go is to divide my canvas into rectangles of various sizes. I begin to put the colors of my palette into these shapes. In this painting I used primarily transparent pyrrole orange, naphthol red light, hansa yellow medium and light, and quinacradone magenta fluid acrylics. I arrange the colors in a pleasing way to me, let them dry, and then the fun begins. Using a palette knife, I put heavy body titanium white over much of what I have done, let dry, and go over again with the fluids, smudging or obliterating boundary lines, altering the painting. Since fluid paint is more transparent, the lights and darks come through.

After it is dry, once again I go over the painting with the titanium white, and again I come back with my color, adjusting line and design. I do these layers because it adds depth to the painting and gives me time to get the real feel for the painting. I may do this another time or two, each time adjusting the lines of the rectangles, dry brushing one color into another, and making use of the texture in the background.

Continued --->



"Colores del Corazon"
By Pat Stacy

Continuation --->

In “Colores del Corazon”, I got to a certain point and said, “I think I want a heart in it—how will it look?” I painted a magenta heart on a piece of watercolor paper and stuck it on the painting to have a look. I liked it—I love hearts and use a lot of them. I drew the heart on the painting and painted it—and it looked like it had been stuck on, just like the paper one - not good. I blended yellow into the edges to soften it and push it back a little, and it worked.

I searched for ways to put the symbols that I love into the painting. You will see a spiral - for me, the journey to the center of being - on the upper left, pushed back with a little yellow. To the top right, you see my descending golden squares, not only given good contrast with some hard lines and reflection, but a symbol I use to denote the light of the Creator coming into the painting—an acknowledgement that our artistic work comes from a deep well inside that we did not form—and I say “thank you”. Last but not least, I put my Entity in with the light of the Creator touching the shoulder. It is a symbol I put somewhere in every painting, usually in interference paint. The Entity can be “in your face”, or it can be very elusive. In this case, it is seen but is not the focal point of the painting. Rather it simply leads you upward around the painting. When I have finished the painting, I try to finish the sides and rim of canvas at the back neatly and with quality, often continuing with the design and colors of the painting. Last but not least, I use Golden polymer UV varnish to even out the finish—I like the look of good polished shoe leather all over—not too shiny and not too dull.



"Bouncing Balls"
By Cecilia Swatton

Bouncing Balls

By Cecilia Swatton

Mixed media

16" x 20"

Working Process

I sprayed water randomly across a blank sheet of Arches 140 lb. watercolor paper, then sprinkled powdered charcoal over the surface. After the paper dried, I shook off the excess powder and sprayed the paper with fixative. With watercolor on a small flat brush, I painted in negative spaces to create rounded shapes that overlapped.

After the watercolors dried, I used watercolor pencils and crayons as well as acrylic paint to further define and highlight the spheres; with the same media, I further developed the background areas. The translucent quality of the original watercolor enabled me to leave some of the spheres translucent. Other spheres became opaque as I added highlights and details in pencil, crayon and acrylic paint.

Along the lower edge of the artwork, there is very little development of the spheres; I used watercolor washes here, as a way of making merely a visual suggestion. Along the left side, I left some spherical shapes in their original charcoal-on-paper condition. On the lower right side, there is no defining of shapes at all. I wanted to leave a suggestion of the image fading off into nothingness in this area.



"Orange Cruciform"
By Cecilia Swatton

Orange Cruciform

By Cecilia Swatton

Mixed media collage

20" x 16"

Working Process

Using acrylic paints, I covered Arches 140 lb. watercolor paper with a glaze of warm colors, orange-dominant. After that dried, I added a layer of cool greens and blues; quickly, while the top layer was still wet, I splashed the surface with rubbing alcohol. Once this was dry, I added more texture by using a variety of homemade stamps brayer-coated with semiopaque acrylic paints (mixable zinc-white blended with the same blues and greens previously used.) These stamps included thick, soft-foam puzzle pieces (from a children's toy store) which I had altered with rubber-stamp-cutting scissors. I used both sides of these altered puzzle pieces; one side created polka-dot patterns and the other produced smooth shapes.

I used the same stamps, with assorted acrylic paints, to alter translucent, medium-weight mulberry paper. When these papers dried, I cut them into various shapes which I added with acrylic gloss gel. I also added pieces of ultra-sheer white mulberry paper.

For acrylic paints and gels, Golden is my favorite brand. Golden colors produce the vibrant, rich, deep tones that most appeal to me. For the most part, I choose translucent paints, which enable me to overlap layers to yield the saturated fields of color I want.



"Parsing the Fullness"
By Lynne Taetzsch

Parsing the Fullness

By Lynne Taetzsch

Acrylic

30" x 30"

Working Process

First I stretched Jerry's Artarama unprimed 12 oz. cotton duck on 1.5" thick heavy-duty stretcher bars, stapling the canvas on the back. This would allow me to continue painting the image around the sides so that it could be hung without additional framing. I gave the canvas a coat of acrylic gesso before beginning to paint.

Next I mixed a medium gray acrylic paint using Liquitex soft body paints, adding a little water and gloss medium. I painted the whole canvas in this gray including all the sides. After it dried thoroughly, I taped 2" strips of masking tape (painter's masking tape works best) across the canvas, two strips vertically and four horizontally. Then I painted the spaces in between with mars black.

After the black paint dried thoroughly, I stripped off the masking tape, leaving a background grid of black and gray. My next step was to paint a rough design in the same medium gray and a darker gray.

Once the canvas was dry, I used Liquitex hard body paint in tubes, screwing a cap to the end that allowed me to "draw" lines as thin or thick as I wanted. I drew lines in medium gray and cadmium red medium, creating additional horizontal grid lines, which I then flattened (thickened) with a brush. I also drew leaf shapes and other designs across the canvas.

When the paint was completely dry, I filled in the petals using iridescent silver and the red mixed with gloss medium to make it translucent. After that, I toned down some of the red with gray. I kept the top layer of paint thin and translucent so that the underlayers would show through.

My goal in painting is always to keep the composition loose, using the gesture of making a brush stroke or a line to energize the image. I like to create chaos, and then find order in that chaos.

Continued --->



"Parsing the Fullness"
By Lynne Taetzsch

Continuation --->

My final step was to bring together background and foreground by drawing black lines around some of the petal shapes in a very loose way, creating a counterpoint to the images already there.



"Speckled Pears"
By Liz Walker

Speckled Pears
By Liz Walker
Acrylic Marbling
18" x 24"

Working Process

This canvas began as a cadmium orange/pyrrole red-toned acrylic underpainting, a seated figure that I had started and abandoned. A few months later, I decided to marble over it in acrylics, not quite knowing how it would turn out. I figured I had nothing to lose.

For those unfamiliar with acrylic marbling, it's best to take a class before trying it on your own. There are lots of supplies and tools (best purchased via mail order) that you have to familiarize yourself with before you get started.

I was fortunate to take a local class which got me hooked on the marbling technique. Marbling is best done outdoors in mild weather under a covered area so that the paints and marble bath aren't exposed to too much heat or humidity. Outdoors is best because each marbled paper or object needs to be rinsed with the garden hose and hung on the line to dry. It's like doing laundry—but much more fun!

I prepared the carrageenan (a thickening agent derived from seaweed) in my blender and poured it into a 19" x 27" x 3" plastic tray (the marble bath). I then selected the acrylic colors I wanted to use - Utrecht brand works best, thinned with water in a jar. To compliment the orange/red underpainting, I chose turquoise, white and red, and flicked these colors into the marble bath using plastic broom strands. As the droplets spread to form a stone pattern (achieved by adding a tiny amount of liquid ox gall to each color), I liked what I saw and decided to dip my canvas into the marble bath.. To my delight, the orange underglow of the canvas provided a beautiful backdrop for the red/white/aqua stone pattern that I marbled on top.

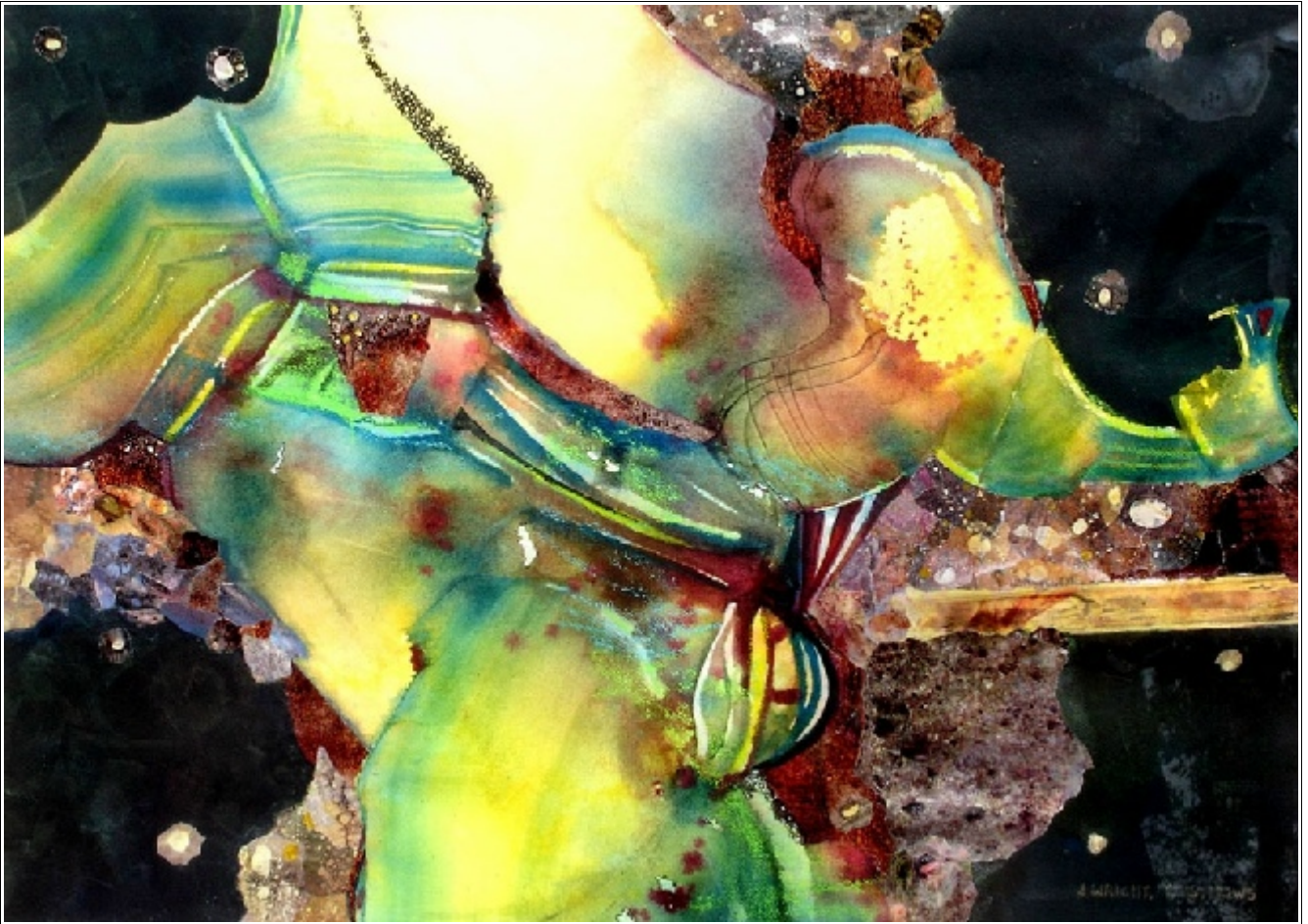
Continued --->



"Speckled Pears"
By Liz Walker

Continuation --->

After rinsing the canvas (necessary to remove all traces of carrageenan) and letting it dry, I evaluated it in my studio and used a Caran D'Ache crayon to develop subject matter on top. The roundness of the shapes reminded me of rocks, and then pears. I drew in the various sizes and shapes of pears, considering foreground and background and aiming for overlapping shapes. I then set about to negatively paint a mixture of violet and red around the pears to set each one off. I did some direct painting on the pears trying to further enhance the aqua and orange stone patterns.



"Dancing to Oblivion"
By Janet P. Wright

Dancing to Oblivion

By Janet P. Wright

Watercolor and Collage

22" x 30"

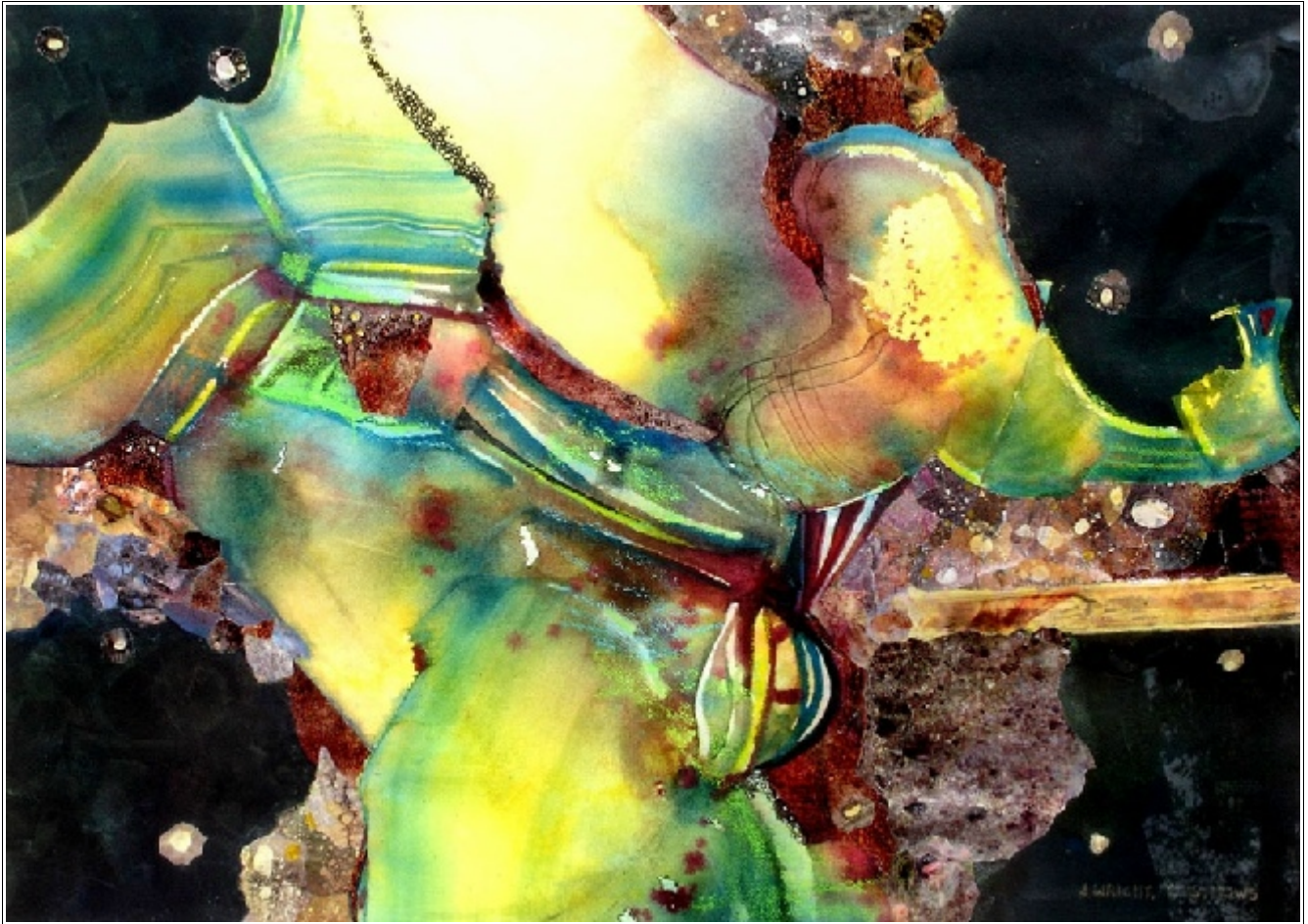
Working Process

In the fall of 2010, an artist friend shared the secret ingredient in many of her paintings and crafts: using a household cleaner, Citra-Solve. She dissolves the vegetable-based ink used in current National Geographic magazine articles (not the advertisements), and creates fascinating paper textures to use as collage. Several months later, I had a couple of unscheduled hours so following her instructions I produced my own exotic textured paper.

Several more weeks went by before I had a chance to try it out. I'd painted a watercolor abstract which really didn't go anywhere so I decided I might as well paint over it to experiment with this process. I'd done a little collage but rarely used it in my work, preferring watercolor on Arches paper without any other materials. I generally use a cruciform design and begin by choosing a point about six inches from the interior edges of two of the quadrants to begin developing some background shapes. I repeat those shapes, using large, medium and small repetitions until I've built a bridge to some point on each of the four borders. Then I ask myself, "Is the overall shape grounded?" If not, I continue to embellish the shapes until I feel the "skeleton" of the design is in balance. After that, the real fun begins: I start elaborating on what will become the center of interest. Sometimes an accidental mark becomes a motif and I repeat it in different sizes in various parts of the painting, repeating values and colors to increase the linkage among the disparate shapes.

So, for the first time, I began tearing small pieces of some of my interesting pages in colors that harmonized with the palette that I'd chosen for my painting, and placed them into the painted areas in such a way that they would become seamless accents and harmonize with the overall design. I found that it was important to work with small, torn, not cut, pieces, overlapping and gluing them down with diluted craft glue. I like to be very precise in the details of my paintings while keeping the big picture loose and free. I really enjoyed this process, working back and forth between gluing collage and adding more painted detail.

Continued --->



"Dancing to Oblivion"
By Janet P. Wright

Continuation --->

When I stepped back to examine the result, I felt the corners seemed weak and I remembered a lovely still life I'd seen in a magazine recently with a black background. "Why not", I thought. "This is just an experiment on top of an old painting anyway." After filling in large dark shapes in several places at the edges of the paper, I noticed that the result reminded me of a meteor spinning in space. I added some small shapes, collaged on top of the black, to unify the painting. I was thinking about the real borders of the painting as the edge of the interior design and the black shapes extending the boundary between the piece and the exterior mat and frame. Hence, my "Space Place" series was born.

Since then, I've done a dozen of these full sheet "space places" using the same process although working with an intentional underpainting rather than using an unresolved one. It's so much fun I have to discipline myself to shift back to other types of painting production. I've also produced a number of mini-paintings using this process which have sold very well.

There is a sort of "yin/yang" motion in this process: first paint, then collage, then paint, then collage, although the collage material never exceeds 20% of the total painting. Often it's much less. Sometimes I try to precisely reproduce the pattern from the paper with my brush so the viewer is unable to detect the shift from one medium to the other. This also works when I run out of a certain texture and have to "invent" enough to finish an area. I'll continue in space until something calls me elsewhere. Tomorrow the moon!



"Sailing to Byzantium"
By Janet P. Wright

Sailing to Byzantium

By Janet P. Wright

Watercolor and Collage

30" x 22"

Working Process

In the fall of 2010, an artist friend shared the secret ingredient in many of her paintings and crafts: using a household cleaner, Citra-Solve, she dissolves the vegetable-based ink used in current National Geographic magazine articles (not the advertisements), and creates fascinating paper textures to use as collage. Several months later, I had a couple of unscheduled hours so following her instructions I produced my own exotic textured paper.

Several more weeks went by before I had a chance to try it out. I'd painted a watercolor abstract which really didn't go anywhere so I decided I might as well paint over it to experiment with this process. I'd done a little collage but rarely used it in my work, preferring watercolor on Arches paper without any other materials. I generally use a cruciform design and begin by choosing a point about six inches from the interior edges of two of the quadrants to begin developing some background shapes. I repeat those shapes, using large, medium and small repetitions until I've built a bridge to some point on each of the four borders. Then I ask myself, "Is the overall shape grounded?" If not, I continue to embellish the shapes until I feel the "skeleton" of the design is in balance. After that, the real fun begins: I start elaborating on what will become the center of interest. Sometimes an accidental mark becomes a motif and I repeat it in different sizes in various parts of the painting, repeating values and colors to increase the linkage among the disparate shapes.

So, for the first time, I began tearing small pieces of some of my interesting pages in colors that harmonized with the palette that I'd chosen for my painting, and placed them into the painted areas in such a way that they would become seamless accents and harmonize with the overall design. I found that it was important to work with small, torn, not cut, pieces, overlapping and gluing them down with diluted craft glue. I like to be very precise in the details of my paintings while keeping the big picture loose and free. I really enjoyed this process, working back and forth between gluing collage and adding more painted detail.

Continued --->



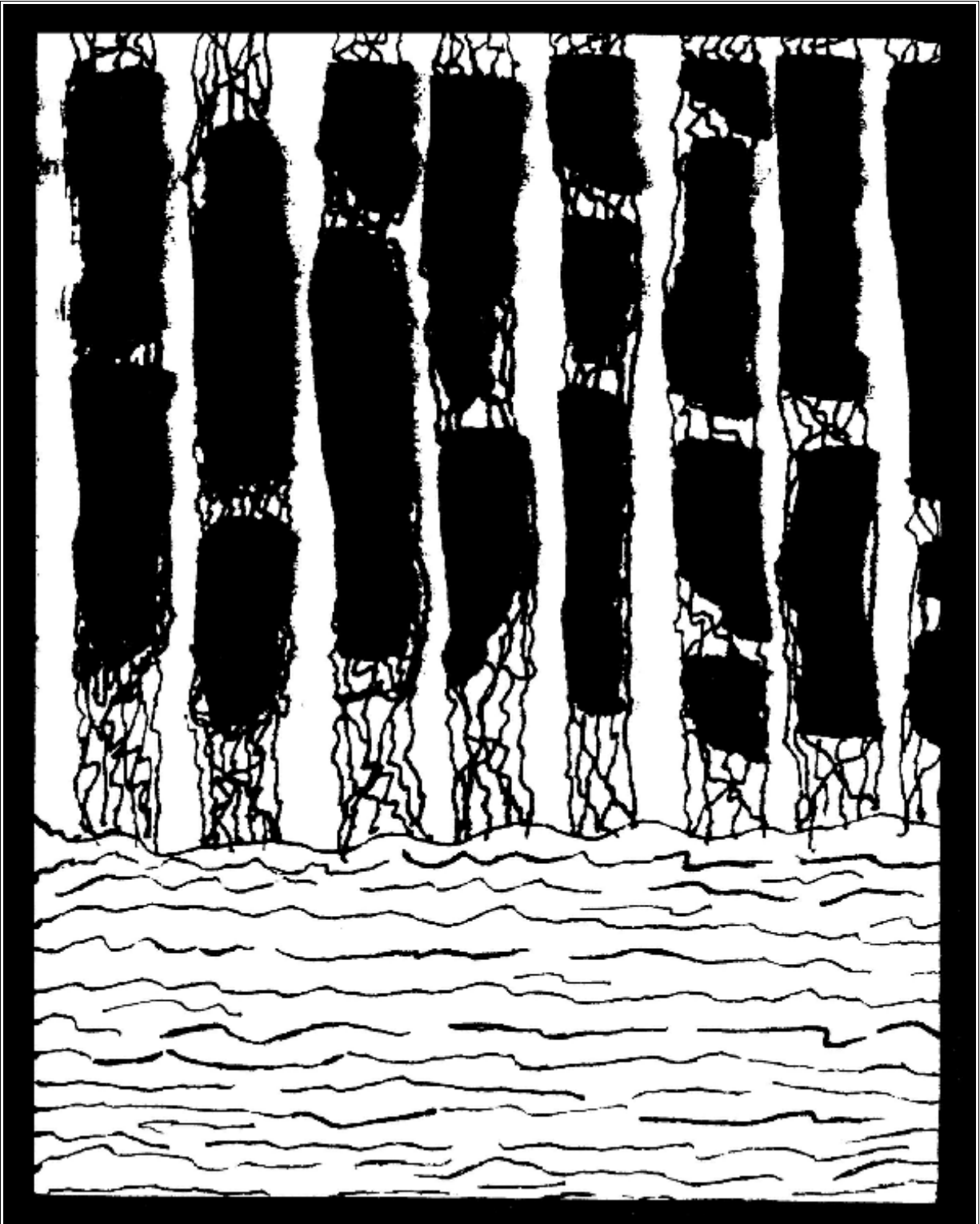
"Sailing to Byzantium"
By Janet P. Wright

Continuation --->

When I stepped back to examine the result, I felt the corners seemed weak and I remembered a lovely still life I'd seen in a magazine recently with a black background. "Why not", I thought. "This is just an experiment on top of an old painting anyway." After filling in large dark shapes in several places at the edges of the paper, I noticed that the result reminded me of a meteor spinning in space. I added some small shapes, collaged on top of the black, to unify the painting. I was thinking about the real borders of the painting as the edge of the interior design and the black shapes extending the boundary between the piece and the exterior mat and frame. Hence, my "Space Place" series was born.

Since then, I've done a dozen of these full sheet "space places" using the same process although working with an intentional underpainting rather than using an unresolved one. It's so much fun I have to discipline myself to shift back to other types of painting production. I've also produced a number of mini-paintings using this process which have sold very well.

There is a sort of "yin/yang" motion in this process: first paint, then collage, then paint, then collage, although the collage material never exceeds 20% of the total painting. Often it's much less. Sometimes I try to precisely reproduce the pattern from the paper with my brush so the viewer is unable to detect the shift from one medium to the other. This also works when I run out of a certain texture and have to "invent" enough to finish an area. I'll continue in space until something calls me elsewhere. Tomorrow the moon!



"Evidence of Change"
By Ed Zey

Evidence of Change

By Ed Zey

Black Ink on Paper

8.5" x 11"

Working Process

My artistic concepts come from a number of sources – my studies of art and artists' work and technique; my past experiences including 37 years as a research scientist; and my interest in philosophy and technology. I focus on seeing things in new ways.

Evidence of Change started as a concept in 1997 and was reduced to a drawing in Journal Book No. 7, p.12, Jan 2, 1999. My journal entries were and still are used as a first step in my abstract art creation. This entry (on 3.5 x 5 in., 60 lb paper) is a convenient method for documenting, reviewing and comparing new and adjacent ideas.

My journal process involves placement of basic structural lines consistent with the abstract image in my mind, followed by finer lines to further the concept. At this point, a first attempt is made to supply a title for the drawing. I move as quickly as possible, balancing the image and title, and let the art work just flow. Feeling is more of a guide than understanding.

The next step in the process involves scaling up the drawing to the desired paper size. This scale-up usually involves the use of transfer coordinates which allows me to see and add new elements of creativity to the work. At this time I also take a fresh look at the title along with additional meanings analysis.

I am currently completing a large body of work in final form. *Evidence of Change* is one such work. My art has been an exciting adventure with new ideas and drawings continuously emerging.

Artist Directory

Lynne Baur, MnWS
15 Hope Circle
Hudson, WI 54016
651-216-1872
lynne@dragonflyspiritstudio.com
www.dragonflyspiritstudio.com

Lisa B. Boardwine, BWS
P.O. Box 648
Grundy, Virginia 24614
276-935-6163
boardwinelkb@yahoo.com
www.facebook.com/lisabboardwineartist

Mickey Bond
Sante Fe, NM 87505
mickeybond505@aol.com
www.mickeybond.com

Todd Breitling
1307 Stanford Rd
Wilmington, DE 19803
tbreitling@verizon.net
www.toddbreitling.com

Carol Carter
3156 Shenandoah Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63104
carol@carol-carter.com
www.carol-carter.com

Elizabeth Chapman
3625 W. Farm Road 88
Springfield, MO 65803
417-833-6321
elizabethchapman@artlover.com
www.melizabethchapman.artspan.com

Susanne (Sue) Darius
5314 Teskey Road
Chilliwack, BC
604-824-9069
sdarius@shaw.ca
www.suedarius.com

Sue Donaldson
713-501-1439
sue@suedonaldson.com
www.suedonaldson.com

Autry Dye, FWS, TWS, WSA
Gulf Breeze, Florida
autrydye@bellsouth.net
www.autrydye.com

Judith Gilmer, ISAP
212 Integra Shores Drive/unit210
Daytona Beach, Fl 32141
judith@gilmer.com
www.judygilmer.com

Sue Hamilton
2504 Pegasus Lane
Reston, Virginia 20191
schamilton@aol.com
suehamiltonart.com

Kathryn Hart, NWS, NAWA
7255 Kiowa Rd.
Larkspur, CO 80118
303-681-9757
kathryndhart@aol.com
www.kathryndhart.com

Cathe Hendrick
Jackson, Michigan
cuiSSHendrick@aol.com
www.cathehendrick.com

Carlynn Hershberger
1735 NE Jacksonville Rd, suite 3
Ocala, FL 34470
352-362-8313
hershbergerhuff@hotmail.com
www.hershbergerhuff.blogspot.com

Bob Kevin
12002 Gladiolus Pt S.
Floral City, FL 34436
bobkevinartist@gmail.com
www.bobkevin.com

Witha Lacuesta
1784 Independence Ave.
Viera, FL 32940
321-259-3635
ralmail@earthlink.net
www.lacuesta-art.com

David Leblanc
Action Abstraction Studio
122 Western Ave. Studio 331
Lowell, MA 01851
978-804-1009
actionabstraction@gmail.com
www.actionabstractionstudio.com

Monica Linville
PO Box 1737
Luquillo, Puerto Rico 00773
787-436-3153
monica@monicalinville.com
www.monicalinville.com

Carol A. McIntyre, TWSA
PO Box 88073
Colorado Springs, CO 80908
719-510-0006
carol@mcintyrefineart.com
PaintingHarmony.com

John McLaughlin
600 South Ridge Road
Canton Michigan 48188
734-834-1774
drawinghermit@yahoo.com
www.drawinghermit.com

Catherine Mein
2712 Spigel Drive
Virginia Beach, VA 23454
(757) 481-3605
cmein@cox.net
www.catherinemein.com

Roberta Morgan

Dr Craig Peck (CWP)
46 Mountainside Boulevard
Gordon's Bay
Cape Town, South Africa, 7140
+27 (0) 21 856 0743
doccwp@gmail.com
www.wix.com/peckasso/dr_cp

Susan Prinz
12452 S. Gladiolus Pt.
Floral City, FL 34436
susanprinz@gmail.com
www.susanprinz.com

Sue Reynolds
webstee@susanreynolds.com
www.susanreynolds.com

Julie Elizabeth Mignard
Jalisco, Mexico
juliemignard@yahoo.com
www.julieelizabethmignard.com

Patricia Oblack
1444 Bald Eagle Rd.
Glencoe, MO 63038
636-227-8326
patty@patriciaoblack.com
patriciaoblack.com
abstractthinker.tumblr.com

Lee Pina
625 King Philip St.
Raynham, MA 02767
Lee@LeePina.com
LeePina.com

Gayle Rappaport-Weiland
Rocklin, California 95765
gayle@grappaport.com
www.grappaport.com
www.facebook.com/grappaportfineart

Jane Robinson
5600 Horton Rd.
Jackson, MI 44201
517-914-5853
janemrobinson@comcast.net
www.janerobinsonabstractart.com
www.artepictureun.blogspot.com

Kathy Blankley Roman
3108 N. Drake Ave.
Chicago, IL 60618
K.B.RomanArt@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/KBRomanArt

Chris Romine
1207 Raymond St.
Bellingham, WA 98229
rominestudios@comcast.net

Eric Harley Schweitzer
4242 E. West Hwy. #1005
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
Studio address:
6925 Willow Street, N.W. #207B
Washington, DC 20012-2000
www.schweitzersart.com
240-353-4606

Alan Soffer
2 Blackthorn Rd
Wallingford, PA 19086
allthreads@comcast.net
www.alansofferart.com

Pat Stacy
patstacy@gmail.com

Cecilia Swatton
Greater New York City Area
www.ceciliawatton.blogspot.com

Lynne Taetzsch
3 Snyder Hgts.
Ithaca, NY 14850
607-273-1364
lynne@artbylt.com
www.artbylt.com

Liz Walker, NWS
10992 NW Appellate Way
Portland OR 97229
(503) 643-9236
lizartist@comcast.net
www.lizwalkerart.com

Janet P. "Jan" Wright, TWS, MOWS
PO Box 482, Claremont, CA
91711
909-625-4128
jan@genger.com
janwrightfineart.com

Ed Zey
PO Box 1504
Fredericksburg, TX 78624
830-990-1417
edzeyart@yahoo.com
www.edzeyart.com

Resources

[Dick Blick Art Materials](#)

Started in 1911, Dick Blick Art Materials is one of the largest suppliers in the nation. They are the premier art supplies source for professional artists, students and teachers. You will receive the best pricing, selection, and service available.

[Daniel Smith Art Materials](#)

Daniel Smith, Finest Quality Artists' Materials has been a trusted manufacturer and seller of art supplies since 1977. Daniel Smith is committed to offering outstanding quality art supplies, products, value and savings to the artist community. They offer artists over 12,000 sku's of watercolor, acrylic and oil paints, sticks, brushes, pastels, charcoal, inks and printmaking supplies.

[Cheap Joe's Art Stuff](#)

Joe Miller is an artist and pharmacist. He started selling art supplies in his drugstore in Boone, North Carolina. Cheap Joe's Art Stuff has grown to be one of the largest art materials suppliers in the country.

[Mister Art](#)

Mister Art offers a huge selection of discount art supplies and craft supplies. Their products are perfect for everyone: educators, students, fine artists, commercial artists, hobbyists and crafters, homemakers, kids, galleries, and more.

[Create For Less](#)

Create For Less has over 60,000 brand name craft, sewing, quilting, scrapbooking, candlemaking supplies and more. This is a good source for papers to use in collaging.

[Jerry's Artarama](#)

Jerry's Artarama is your online art supply store for amazing, oil painting supplies, picture framing, art crafts at discount prices! Their huge inventory of discount art supplies online and materials up to 70% Off from the top names in the industry.