

10 YEARS Dia:Beacon



The Drawing Galaxy

by Meredith Rosier

I have always loved drawings. Abstract drawings, especially. Consider that abstract drawings are analogous to prospecting for surprises. What could be more irresistible? As one who draws abstract forms, I like the directness and intrigue that beckons the moment hand and tool touch the surface. It is certainly an intrepid traipsing through the vault of formal abstract language.

Aside from exemplifying what is possible, drawing is fun. From the delight of the doodle to the mighty power of line to densities of pigment, the endeavor of drawing is a response to compositional contingencies in fluidity and flexibility. That one can court the interchangeability of form and void with the optical characteristics of material is a challenging negotiation. Take marks for starters. From delicate, velvety wisps to raspy mottled and modulated striations to precise mathematical linearity, marks catalogue an evolving dimensionality in the rendering of space. Whether visually separating one discrete form from another or layering on heaps of pattern, a drawing can be repurposed and reformed to introduce divergent scale shifts. Careful looking animates new stories of saturation and legibility. A single object, minute or large amidst emptiness and fullness is but one eccentric recurring theme of drawing. I am all for exploration. No risk, no fun.

Drawing for me is a sort of kerfuffle and one in which the physicality of

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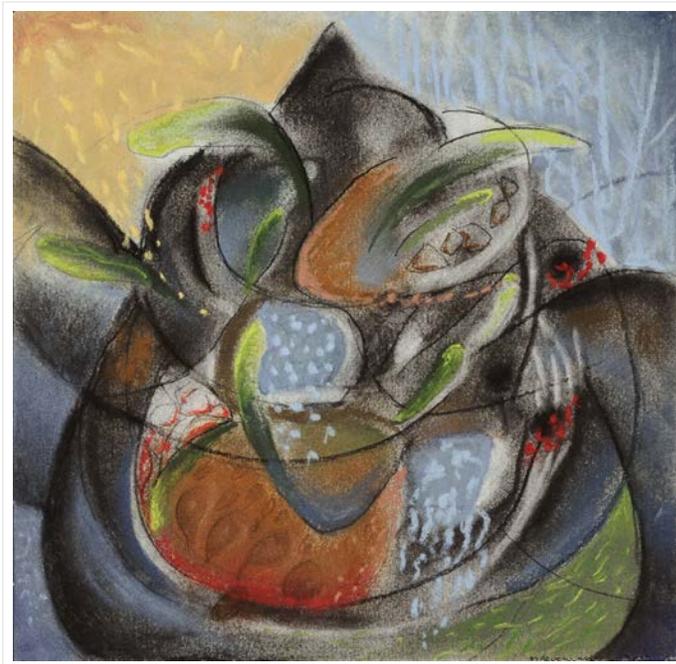
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excavation begins at the threshold of thinking and drawing blind. Then follows looking, then choosing what shapes to re-arrange in order to create tension or how to lose it. Here it is, a reaching in, to that strange, electric encounter between hand and object. There are no rules or regulations. This is the alchemy of interrelation that has yet to be articulated.



— Blue — Judith Jamison



— Raven Series — Maeve Maurer

When I venture in, my exploration is always new. Par for the course, there is endeavor and conflict. A dealing with the straight fact of line, the construction of composition and all these actions that disassemble, reassemble, noodle, wrangle, retool, it takes moxie. When you have moxie you need the tools to match.

Here I must make note of my loyal commentators; pencils, fingers, stump, erasers, dirt, pastel. The materials list, without finish. With kind thanks to the paper which I often scrub in the sink, only to be bathed in pigment

again, wash, sand, score, tear and draw. It is an unceremonious chamber of uncertainties that blank piece of paper to which I headlong add logic and error. However, I do find that logic and error make vibrant partners.



— Arrid — Helen Kaufman



— Unexpected Journey — Harriet Livathinos

Whether it is a willfully minimal haiku or complex knot of pattern, each drawing is a foreign land. I trawl for strategy amidst the great vacant estate of the paper. I wander over a granular pastel garden advancing and retreating color molecules. Over and over, I multiply the lines and by turn of an eraser, sublimate them. Or, evaporate them. Every scratch forward becomes a new clearing and a new constraint. All hands on deck, the surface can look like powdered embroidery, permanently busy.

My admiration of written and spoken language wandered into visual representation. I began employing a word to visualize an abstract image, and then, commenced to draw it with my eyes closed. Words are intriguing not just for their poetry but for the stories we have about them. They seem to acquire a person's individual history. This creates an emerging reflection, a leaky translation of form, line and movement. Marked differences as it were.



— Morning, Noon and Night — Llyn Towner



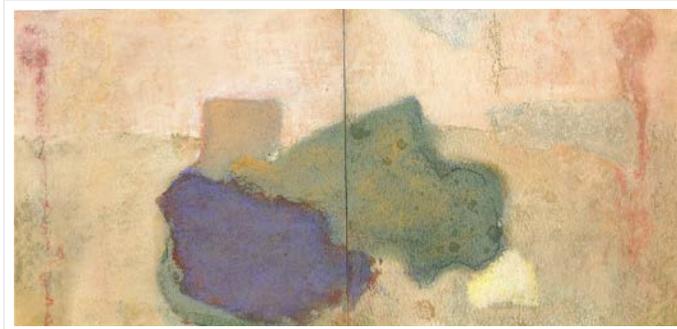
— Shadow Assault — Joan Oliver

My methodology trails the original Surrealist players. Enamored by their cue, I continue to play their restless game myself as well as teach my version of "Automatism" or Automatic Drawing. I deviate somewhat in that I employ a word or words to trigger a drawing. For example, the word swagger has a posture, stillness an atmosphere or pose. Kerfuffle converses with movement, as does wobble or clash. I can tell you, a word like garish certainly brings on gobs of diverse color. Words are embedded and lacquered with their own secret assignments.



— On the Move — Lois Linet

When I hold up a drawing, I am immediately conscious that memory, personal and societal, loom large. The drawings embody all the travail and yet are miraculously free. After all, as children, we see shapes and colors before speaking. As we mature, these drawn conversations can take strange turns between the formal interplay of point, line and plane. Here the simplicity of each mark stands up to the depth of possibility in space. The arrangement of a composition can veer from sedate to set alight with fierce clarity to fanciful whimsy to pell mell and back again, all with an uneasy lack of concern for resolution. Spectacle and spectator become fused together by unexpected conjunctions and disjunctions. It is difficult not to feel alive looking at something saturated with freedom. Everything is possible.



— Blue Green — Judy Gerrard

I designed and teach a course formally entitled Abstraction and Drawing: Interpretation and Form held on the graceful premises of The Woodstock School of Art, in Woodstock, New York. The moniker of the course has come to be known as “The Drawing Galaxy”.

Currently I teach three classes for adventurous exploratory artists, beginners and seasoned all. As well, a periodic workshop entitled Abstraction and Large Scale Drawing. Each week I give a Homework assignment. I prepare these for their word- to- image possibilities. Blind drawings can unspool like a strange mad scientist’s secret plan. I find that for many drawers, a drawn interpretation celebrates the thought of the word in the sincerity of the moment.

The most striking thing about the drawings from the assignments is the personal spontaneity of mark making. These are serious mark makers at work. In some assignments, which I call “word-to-image”, a word is presented alongside a drawn version of the word. The drawings serve as an autograph. While the difference between word and image are clearly visible, they share the same author.



— Refractions — John Kleinhaus



— Superstition — Diane Christi

Often I employ the diptych. As an instructor, I have observed that artists converse more liberally over a pair of equally sized papers as it allows for fluidity of movement towards approaching a complex composition. However, all manner of scale is utilized in my classes but the diptych is an integral element for study, wit and mischief.

I stand honored to observe, contemplate and comment upon the language of abstraction and drawing. My experience demonstrates that each individual artist, in a singular imaginative space, can wield an arsenal of tools and pigment to present compelling work reflecting their contemporary vision.

Long live The Drawing Galaxy!

Featured image: *Exploring the World* by Nanette Shapiro

Meredith Rosier is an artist, writer, and Instructor at *The Woodstock School of Art*

An Exhibition of *The Drawing Galaxy* will be held at **BSP LOUNGE**, 323 Wall St. Kingston, NY. through July 30.

Opening reception on July 6, 4-9PM Call 845 481 5158 for more details.