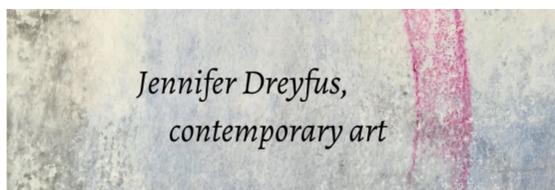


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July 2022

Welcome to my long belated newsletter. The past six months have been filled with many other activities, including moving and shoulder surgery. I don't recommend moving while in a sling. I am pleased to report my recovery is well underway and I'm excited to be back. With the move completed, I have set-up my new studio and enjoy painting in the wonderful light from the two skylights.

As always, I enjoy hearing from each of you and welcome your thoughts on what you would like to see in future newsletters. Please follow me on social media through the links at the bottom of the newsletter.

Jennifer

**Answering questions**

This particular newsletter will focus on answering inquiries from a reader on my creative process, asking

- how do I organize myself to get ready to paint?
- do I have a set schedule?
- do I wander in and out of creating throughout the day or week?
- do I have warm up routines or inspirations?

These questions started me thinking about what sort of painter I am. That is a long and complicated rabbit hole to go down but suffice it to say that this shifts and develops over time. Yet, I generally rely on a combination of additive and subtractive techniques which form the core of how I approach creating. Additive techniques are generally what you think of when you think of painting - that is paint is added to paper, lines or shading are drawn etc.. Art is created by adding items until the artist is satisfied with the resulting work. Subtractive techniques are exactly the opposite - paint is taken away to reveal what is underneath - tools or solvents are used to scratch into surfaces etc..

When I'm working with oil paints, I typically have several pieces going at once. Oil takes time to dry between applications so that the next layer or color doesn't smear. I often spend many weeks building up a surface adding texture in between the layers. Once a richly textured surface is created, I reverse my approach and use mostly subtractive techniques with a bit of additive when needed.

**I work on the piece, seeking a composition that is balanced - a piece that captures a moment of stillness.** If nothing is working and I can't resolve the piece, I will resort to my additive techniques and paint over the whole piece and start the subtractive process again.

My biggest challenge in creating is finding a block of time to focus. I'd like to have a set schedule but life hasn't afforded me that opportunity. I do seek three hour periods of time when I can solely create. When starting that work, I'm usually drawn toward one of three creative vehicles - working with water soluble mediums (acrylic paint, charcoal, etc...); working with oil paint; or working on prints (either wax based encaustic prints or prints requiring a printing press). I find that, due to the set-up and clean-up times required by my chosen medium, it doesn't afford itself to wandering in and out of my creative process.

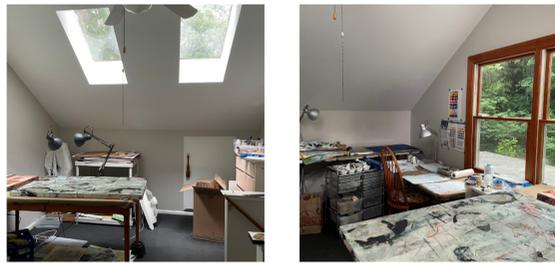
When I start working, I typically pick up where I left off working in the same medium used in the previous session. I continue building (additive) until its time to work on subtraction or a piece needs to dry enough for continued work. If I'm stuck, I have over 40 exercises that can help me towards creativity, drawn from art classes, readings and podcasts. Below I offer two of my favorites that work for me.

1. For anytime or any stage that I'm just stuck - I use my non-dominant hand to paint or draw. My lines are looser, my colors are bolder and bigger. Try it as a warmup exercise.
2. When beginning to work and I don't know where to go - I take a large sheet of paper and use painters tape to mark off a two-by-two grid (tape a large square or rectangle and then add a vertical and a horizontal line intersecting in the middle). Now I paint as if its one piece, going over the tape, outside the tape and just generally disregarding the existence of the tape. Keep painting until you are satisfied with the work. You will have 4 related pieces when the tape is removed.

The final question was whether I had inspirations. This is a question that I struggle with as I generally don't set out to draw something specific. I do have items in my mind which inspire me but I am not trying to recreate them. For example, I am drawn to rock formations and examining the lines and spaces within these formations, as well as the color variations. When I am painting, I am not trying to create a picture of a rock but more looking at the texture and color patterns contained in each, drawing inspiration from that visual picture. **I explore the edge where random occurrences create beauty and where dramatic markmaking in the underpainting forms a foundation for resolution and balance.** More on stillness in the Moment of Zen section below.

I'd like to hear if you have further questions.

**My new studio**



[check out my website](#)

**Exhibits**

Shown at Capitol Hill Arts League exhibit *Twists and Turns*.



wait for it  
14x18  
encaustic monotype

Shown at Gallerium Arts, Canada exhibit *Migration*



flesh abiding  
16x20  
oil, wax, graphite

[check out my website](#)

**Moment of Zen - On Stillness**

"Only in stillness does the imperceivable become discernible."

-Bryant McGill.

"There is nothing as certain as silence, stillness, and solitude to introduce you to the secrets of yourself."

-Guy Finley

"Art to me is an anecdote of the spirit, and the only means of making concrete the purpose of its varied quickness and stillness."

-Mark Rothko



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