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Meet visual artist Jenny Kemp

Jenny Kemp, with work in three exhibits, talks about making art

By Amy Griffin

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Jenny Kemp's "Function Junction" Gouache on paper, 20x30 inches, 2013 (Courtesy the artist)



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Quivering concentric lines in rich hues abound in [Jenny Kemp's](#) paintings. With contrasting colors and organic forms, she creates worlds that are at once micro- and macrocosmic. Her abstract paintings and animations seem vaguely representational, recalling familiar but



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Q: Your work is included in the Airport Gallery show about nature, and it definitely looks inspired by organic forms — is that part of your intention?

A: Yes, I have an inherent interest in organic forms, and mostly what I like my work to reference is the body. My use of wavy, handmade lines references organic matter and forms and the idea that we are organic beings. So I do see the works that I'm making as sort of bodies or organisms in space that are fragile yet persevering — sort of like anything that's living. Like humans, I guess.

Q: Have you always been interested in these kinds of forms?

A: Yes, it's something I've always worked with. Long ago, in undergrad, I studied the human form a lot, but it sort of slowly progressed into abstraction. I've been exploring abstract forms in this organic nature for at least 10 years now and I'm finding the possibilities still pretty rich at this point. I think my work has changed within the realm of the organic quite a bit in the last several years — being in grad school and being encouraged to explore different ways of experimenting with how these interact spatially or the colors that I'm using, the materials, or the support that I'm using.

Q: What about your palette? It's very distinctive and specific to you.

A: I've been exploring how color operates in my work for a while and it's interesting because I feel like only now am I beginning to get close to learning what it is I'm doing with color. I have a really sensitive relationship to color in the world. I'll experience something coloristically that catches my attention in a strong way and I try to capture that in the work. Lately, I've been working a lot with color gradations, exploring and enjoying how I can really juice out as much as possible from a single hue. Just the way color relationships interact is giving me a lot of avenues to go down.

Q: How did the animations come about?

A: I only started working in animation toward the end of my first year in grad school. I'd hit a

unidentifiable forms.

The Troy artist has work on view in "Second Nature" at the [Albany Airport Gallery](#) and in "Modern Artists" opening next Saturday at [Carrie Haddad Gallery](#) in Hudson, and she'll be included in the upcoming faculty show at [Sage College's Opalka Gallery](#).

She earned her MFA from the University at Albany in 2012 and is an adjunct professor at both Sage and Siena colleges, as well as being co-owner with her husband, [Kevin Mullen](#), of [Rare Form Brewing Co.](#), opening next month in Troy. She has contributed her design skills to the company, including designing the custom labels for several beers.

In addition to painting, she has incorporated animation into her work, a move that made perfect sense and has had a positive impact on her painting. She recently sat down in her studio to talk about her art:



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wall with my painting, as most first year grad students in art do, and a faculty member encouraged me — because I have this graphic design background and I'm proficient in Photoshop — to explore animation. It just started out as away to step away from painting and get some more ideas but it ended up being this awesome area to discover, because it satisfied this simple curiosity of what would happen if these forms could move.

In painting, you're always trying to create the illusion of something, like the illusion of space, or the illusion of movement, and I thought it would be interesting to just do that in animation. The irony of that is that stop-motion animation is kind of an illusion, as well, because it's not until you bring it into the software that it actually moves.

It's really fed the paintings, in terms of inventiveness. I'm first a painter and during the process of painting, at various stages, I'll just capture little details with my camera, collect them on the computer and collage them into a new image that becomes kind of a starting point for an animation. This slow, incremental process kind of parallels the way I work in painting. I don't have a set plan. The paintings start with some overall compositional shape or a color, and then the decisions happen intuitively. After one decision is made, the next decision is built on that. My intention from the beginning was to create moving paintings, versus videos.

Amy Griffin is a freelance writer in Delmar.

If you go

"Second Nature"

When: Through March 9; Hours: 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily

Where: Albany International Airport Gallery, 3rd floor before security

Admission: free; Airport short term parking: free for first half hour, \$2 for second half hour, each additional half hour is \$1.00

Info: (518) 242-2222; <http://www.albanyairport.com>

"Modern Artists"

When: Friday through March 2; Hours: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, noon-to 5 p.m. Sunday

Where: Carrie Haddad Gallery, 622 Warren St., Hudson

Admission: free

Info: (518) 828-1915; <http://www.carriehaddadgallery.com>

"Perceptions: Art and Design Faculty Show"

When: Jan. 21 through March 2; Hours: 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday through Friday, noon-4 p.m. Sunday

Where: Opalka Gallery, The Sage Colleges, 140 New Scotland Ave., Albany

Admission: Free

Info: (518) 292-7745; <http://www.sage.edu/opalka>

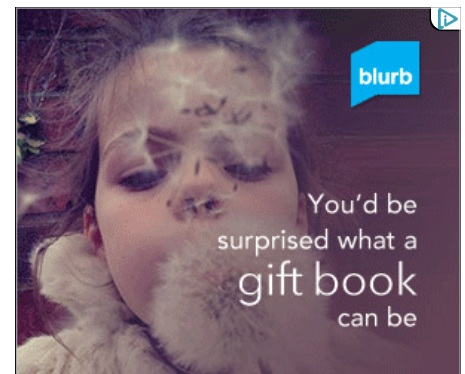


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