



Priscilla A. Phifer

Prior to becoming a painter, Priscilla was creating, selling and teaching decoupage at various venues including the Grosse Pointe War Memorial, Brace-Lederle School and the Fountains of Franklin in Southfield.

A graduate of Wayne State University, Priscilla became a self-taught abstract expressionist with the help of classes at the Birmingham Community House and the Birmingham-Bloomfield Art Center.

Her work have been displayed at numerous places including the Dell Pryor Gallery, Charles Wright Museum, N’Namdi Center for Contemporary Art, Fayetteville (NC) State University, Ellington White Contemporary Gallery and the Detroit Artists Market.

Artist Statement

Seven years into my late life, accidental career, I still love to paint with a passion, describing myself as an intuitive abstract expressionist who paints primarily without a brush. I scrape, splash, drip and drag using high quality paints and materials. Thinking I could not draw or do figurative paintings, I chose abstraction, which affords more freedom and flexibility than other traditional paint genres. However, I later discovered that I can also paint realistically from photos and I can use a brush! At this point, however, I prefer abstraction. Relying mostly on gravity and manipulation of the surface, I use household and hardware-store items to mix and blend vibrant hues. Borderline colorblind, this bodes well for this artist.

My work shows influences of internationally acclaimed artists such as Charles Burwell, Sam Gilliam, Mark Rothko, Jackson Pollock and other artists of the 1940s and 50s for their color-field and vibrant action painting. I am also influenced by textiles, something that occurred to me only recently when unpacking boxes of my fabric collection and when reflecting on fabrics and yarns my creative mother used to sew, reupholster, knit and crochet.

I considered myself a professional painter in May 2015, when most of 30 paintings sold at my first solo pop-up exhibition at the Julian C. Madison Building in Detroit. I was 70 years old! Two more solos—one at MASH Detroit on the far east side of Detroit in 2016 and one at the Torch of Wisdom Foundation in Southfield in 2018—yielded similar results. My passion continues.



Carol Izant

Carol Izant is a contemporary visual artist who explores the world of mark making across a wide variety of mixed media materials and processes. Inspired by pattern and color, her gestural “language” is one that can be interpreted as narrative as well as signifier or her unique fingerprint.

Carol holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Wayne State University. A Southfield resident of many years, Carol is affiliated with Lawrence Street Gallery in Ferndale. Over the last few years her work has been accepted into numerous exhibitions including the Gilda Snowden Exhibit at the Detroit Scarab Club, Hatchback 16 at the Hatch Gallery in Hamtramck, Lapeer Arts Association Spring Invitational, Summer Invitational at the Ellen Kayrod Gallery in Detroit and a solo exhibit, “Song of Herself” at the Lawrence Street Gallery.

She received an Honorable Mention Award for the exhibition hosted by Studio 1219 in Port Huron, “Water: A Great Lakes Experience.”

Artist Statement

Life is a journey ... in fact the journey itself is perhaps the destination. In the same way, the Way of Art is a journey and the crumbs we leave behind along the way are the work itself.. How does one find meaning in an abstract work of art where there is a vacuum of specifically identifiable images (figure, landscape and still life)?

I can offer a hint toward the narrative content of my work in the gesture itself. If you look closely, you will see asemic writing techniques that are often incorporated into the work. Asemic writing uses an open, non-semantic way of writing that invites the viewer to decide for themselves what is being said. Over the course of my artistic practice, I have come to realize that my work is not so much an expression of the Self but the creation of the Self. To have the confidence to delve into the unknown and risk failure is to know what it means to get out of my own way and let the Spirit work through me. And with my every act, my hand leaves its mark and I reach back to the beginning.