



## LINDA RYAN ARTIST STATEMENT

The art that most resounds within me has movement, energy, and connects me with that movement – *like it is alive on the wall*. This is my goal for my own art.

*Is that resin?* No, it just looks like it! I use and love Liquitex Pouring Medium. It's way cool. It doesn't dry as hard as resin but is as luminous and beautiful and far less toxic to create with. Yummy stuff.

Pigments react differently in it—some recede to the bottom; some mingle with the others freely; some rise to the top and resist social discourse with others. You have to coax the wallflowers to step onto the dance floor, sometimes.

*How do you do it?* First, I carefully mix pigments with the medium in various amounts in order to create lights and darks and the hues I want. Transparent pigments are my favorites, as well as interference paint and metallic, as the medium creates a spectacularly luminous light bounce with these. I refer back to classic use of watercolor with this medium: You have to know where you want most of your lights early on, and reserve their space.

I often pour paint onto my gessoed board, and turn and tilt them so that gravity starts to mix and mingle the

pigment. Sometimes I continue with that – and often I let it dry and add another layer. And another. And so on. Sometimes I start out with a bit of an underpainting, and I'm not adverse to stepping into a first or second layer and lightly painting a glaze over an area to push it back, or "scumble" with a bit of high-flow fluid paints to create sea life and goopy magic.

There is an edge you walk when your painting is almost done. One more pour could leave me with months of work. I know it's done when, after it's dried, I can stare at it for hours on end and feel satisfied, knowing that anything else would just be ruinous fuss and bother.

*Where do they come from?* The energy of a piece is highly important to me. I usually start with more of a feeling I want to evoke rather than a concrete image. I do often start out with a hazy vision, sometimes from haunting dreams, and sometimes as sort of an afterglow of a group of pieces I've already done – a roadmap of what I am to follow next.

Whether I start with a vision or not, it quickly morphs and changes. I believe my work "lives" because I learned to stop corralling it or to trying to make the art conform to the exact idea I had when I began it. I prefer to let it flow organically, following the accidents or spontaneously tossing some drips here or there. This allows surprising turns and for me allows the spirit of art to enter the studio.

This is an exultant, fascinating process that allows me my interest in experimentation and discovery, my need for movement, feeling, and the sense of energy, that sense of play and following where the medium goes ... in short, perfect for the trajectory I am on.

*The Abstract Flow Series:* The flow paintings give me a chance to explore freely and create powerful movement without the need to create imagery. Sometimes, when I've gone for a time without doing a strictly energy-based flow painting (a non-objective, energy-based abstract) I can't do another piece until I do one. These free me up, let me explore without the necessity for an objective piece. They satisfy something deep.

*The New Underwater Ocean Series:* As a Californian since Kindergarten, I've spent a lot of time in the ocean, here and in the warm tropics, and memories of snorkeling are my favorite go-to meditation. Creating and staring at the pieces in this series brings it all back, feeling the warmth of the waters off the Nepali Coast or the silken waters of the Virgin Islands around me, gliding through the Caribbean as a school of bottlefish swim past ... or those bright yellow tigerfish ... sigh.

*Where is this Going?* While I can't see either the strictly abstract flow pieces or the underwater pieces going away anytime soon, I aim to learn to control this medium to explore other pathways – sunsets, combining my abstract figuratives that I spent so many years on, and continuing with the underwater series.

- Linda Ryan