

Katherine Jones Artist Statement

I'm an emotional, expressive person. People inspire and energize me. When I am painting I am thinking about my relationships and how much joy they add to my life. My goal is to create a painting that exudes positive energy. I want my paintings to take the viewer away from the negativity of the world emotionally, if only for a short time.

My painting process is two-fold. It is first about color. I love color. I like mixing two or more colors to create a new color. It amazes me how many different blues or yellows I can create. The second part of my process is creating energy and an emotional response in the viewer. I am constantly looking for new ways of using color and strong contrast to express energy and emotion to connect with the viewer. Everyone has a personal, emotional response to specific colors. I think color taps into the viewers' emotions and makes them more aware of their feelings. When people talk about my painting, they talk about the sense of positive energy how it makes them feel.

All of my work is about color and contrast. The main decision I make before I start a painting is my first color. The painting evolves from that point. I paint with oil paint using large brushes and lots of paint. I also use scrapers, palette knives and my hands as tools. I draw into my wet paint with charcoal. My favorite piece of advice while in grad school was from a well-known mid-western abstract expressionist, Burton Dickerson. He said, "If you want to be a painter, you have to paint like you can afford it." My brushwork is energetic and the colors are bold. The transparency of layers of oil paint creates a shade of a color you cannot mix. I love to experiment with color mixing and my studio has a number of color charts hanging on the walls.

I was fortunate to be able to study with strong, opinionated professors while in grad school. They never told me what to do or how to do something. They painted. They all had a drive to create even though they were teaching. The artists from history who inspire me are the ones who worked with color, contrast and expression - JMW Turner, Bonnard, Nolde, Caravaggio, and the American Abstract Expressionists.

The Helmholtz theory of color perception, the basis of Impressionism, had a huge impact on my art. I love the idea of putting complementary colors next to each other to create energy in the eye of the viewer. When complementary colors are used the color receptors vibrate within the eye creating an energetic reaction. If you look at a bright light for a while and then close your eyes, you see an amazing after-image of complementary colors.

The boldness of the color and application is what people identify as my work. My work is very personal yet relates to others who share the same emotions. My feelings are not unique to me. I'm not the only woman, friend, parent, teacher. I think my paintings speak of a universal experience.

A painting is finished when it speaks to me in my voice; when it shows the energy through the brush strokes and color contrast and reminds me of the emotions I was feeling while painting. Sometimes it takes a while for a painting to be totally finished. Many times I think a painting is done and put it in the rack. After a while I look at it and realize it still needs work.

I want people to know that they can just respond to an abstract painting emotionally. They don't have to know what it's about, just how it makes them feel. I want to paint something that catches a viewer's attention and makes them smile - something that makes them curious and want to take a closer look.