

Gallery News

From the Art Brain Collective

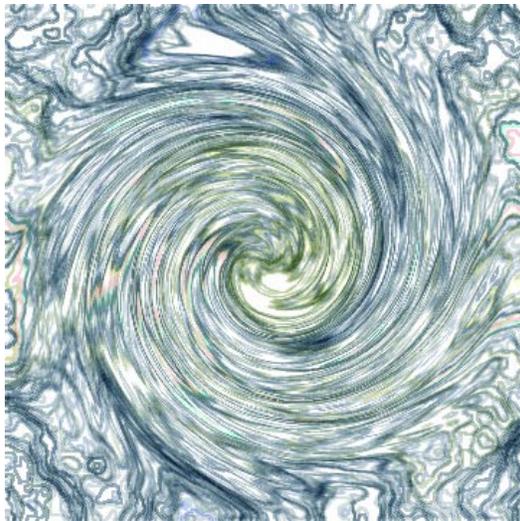
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Interview with an Artist *Featured Artist: Wanda Livingston*

Catching up with the artist in her studio space in Northeast Portland, we asked her about her inspiration in creating “Patterns of Force,” her latest series of digital images on display at the Hydra Gallery through the end of May.

Visual Inspiration Newsletter: Most of your images are patterns. What is the message behind the repeating shapes?

Wanda Livingston: I take my inspiration first of all from nature, where repetition and symmetry are apparent in every natural form. I started with leaves, which reveal endless repeated patterns and lines in infinite detail. I moved on to waves, which are repetitive through the fourth dimension: time.



“Fascism” by Wanda Livingston

VIN: Yet the images themselves have titles that are not representative. For example, the work titled “Fascism.” It’s a picture of a whirlpool. What does this work symbolize to you?

WL: Well, I try to leave the interpretation up to the individual viewer. But in this case, I view fascism as a black hole, a vortex, from which there is no escape. I think it’s something that might be seen as beautiful from above... from a great distance. But from within, I’m sure it must be a nightmare. In fact, my next work is a depiction of a whirlpool from within. Very difficult to get the perspective. Not so beautiful to the eye.

VIN: You’ve been called a “pleasing” painter, one that shies away from difficult topics. How do you respond to this?

WL: I don’t care what other people think. I also don’t care if someone buys my work because it matches their sofa. People who think my art is easy to look at aren’t really delving beyond the surface. They don’t engage themselves in the art. It’s easy to look at something and say, “That’s pretty. I like it.” But it’s much harder to say, “That’s pretty. I like it. Why do I like it? Is it a true reaction? A purely emotional response? And looking longer, they may feel vertigo, an unpleasant reaction. What does it mean? How should they respond? I’d like people to look at my work from a number of levels. If they don’t, that’s their problem, not mine.

VIN: What's your favorite work in this series?

WL: Usually I don't have a favorite, it's funny you should ask. This time I'm really attached to the work titled "Opression." I guess it's because I created it from the skirt of a close friend.

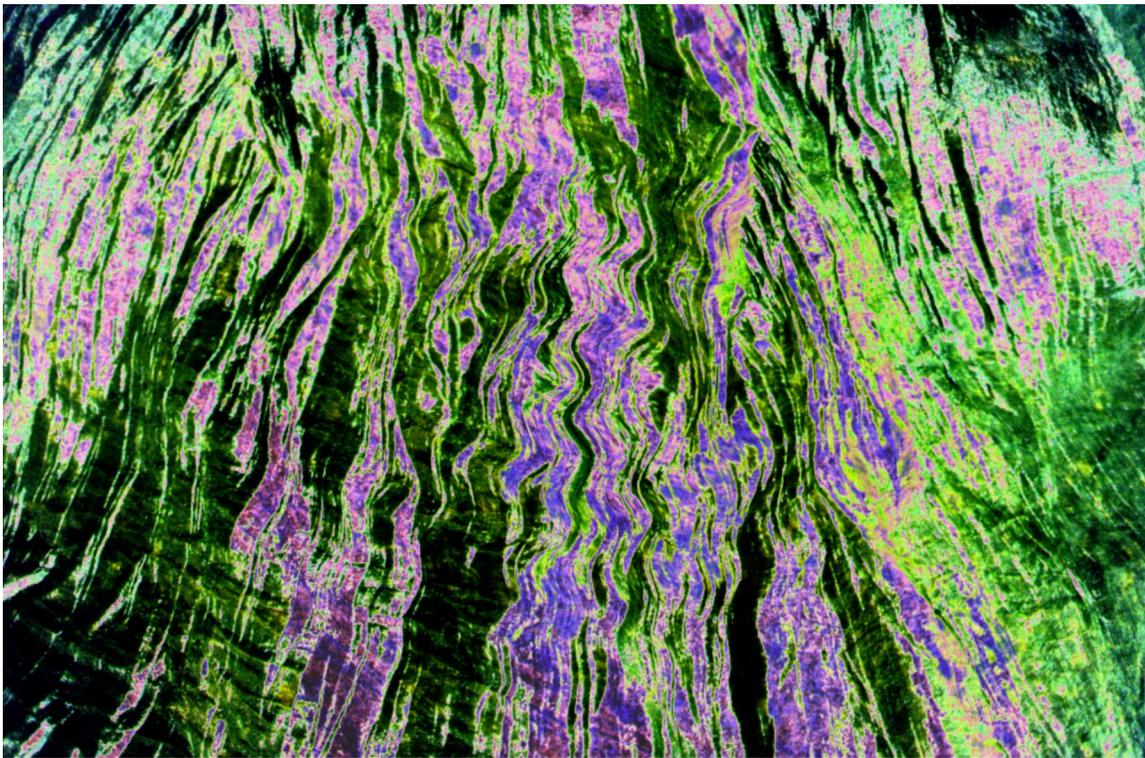
VIN: Did you start with a photo of the skirt?

WL: No, in fact I scanned the actual skirt

with a color scanner, and then manipulated the image digitally. I output the image on fabric, and then used watercolor to bring out the highlights. It was a fun piece to do, it was much easier than some of the others. I guess that's also why I like it so much!

VIN: Thanks for taking the time to speak to us, Wanda, and good luck with your show.

WL: Thank you!



"Opression" by Wanda Livingston

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*Next Issue: The Art of Currency, including
an interview with Amanda Lee and Juno Paull
and their upcoming exhibit: "Give Me Cash!"*

