



Karen Kurka Jensen
Shekinah



Brent Rowley
All Things Separate, Return



Karen Kurka Jensen
We all flow from One Fountain Soul

QUIET POWER

Recent work by Karen Kurka Jensen and Brent Rowley



Brent Rowley
This Insular Island Pageant

August 22 - September 30, 2022



Karen Kurka Jensen
Red Fox Running

Bisignano Art Gallery
Heritage Center University of Dubuque

Gallery Director Essay

Jonathan Jones, art critic from the British newspaper *The Guardian*, might be right. Why is abstraction suddenly the flavor of so many galleries in the US and Europe? He says that the revival of abstract art is what's needed as a response to the violence around us.

Didn't see that coming, did you?

Abstract art didn't actually disappear, though. Early and mid-20th century artists such as Kandinsky and Pollock have always had their followers. And yet there was definitely a time in the late 20th century and early 21st when figurative, not abstract, painting was making an impact. This was, I believe, in part due to the academy where art curricula tended to favor traditional imagery and craftsmanship.

These two artists (of two generations) clearly interpret abstraction in very different ways. And that is, of course, why we are delighted to show their work as the inaugural 2022-2023 academic year exhibit.

Surely the real reason for abstraction's return lies, in part, in politics and history. After 9/11 people rushed to predict a new seriousness, a new kind of reflection, in the arts - missing the point about art in the late 20th century.

Abstract painting in general and these works by Jensen and Rowley are not "escapist". But they do take for granted that reality is strange and opaque, that art can only say something about the modern world if it too is difficult. Perhaps poetry is a better response to these times than propaganda.

Abstract art is needed now because it is a vessel of humanity and sensitivity. It shields us from the lies, pandemics and violence of our age.

Alan Garfield
Director, Bisignano Art Gallery



Brent Rowley
Apollo and Daphne



Brent Rowley
The Flaying of Marsyas



Karen Kurka Jensen
World Alive!