

ArtStory

Pursuing quality of life.

Maryann Gravino-Askew

Genre: Oil and Charcoal

Education:

Bachelor of Arts
University of Missouri
at Kansas City



Art, like life, is a process. Maryann Gravino-Askew knows this as well as anyone. “I have always been a high energy person with racing thoughts, multi-tasking, always ahead of myself,” said Maryann in an attempt to explain the process she has gone through with her art. “Then I got interested in meditation, and I saw things that I was too busy to see before.”

Maryann started out her career as a cosmetologist with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology. Today she works mostly in oil painting and charcoal. She describes the process of moving from cosmetology to fine art as a transition from 3-dimensional to 2-dimensional. “Cutting hair is like doing sculpture, so in a sense they are both the same.” Maryann went on to say, “When I made the transition from 3-D to 2-D it was very euphoric. I thought to myself, why haven’t I been doing this all my life? It is very addictive.”

Since making the switch to fine art, Maryann has studied with nationally known artists like Ned Mueller, Phil Starke, Robert Johnson, Michael Albrechtsen, and Robert Moore. “Art for me is a process, a life process to learn about myself and others,” said Maryann. “It’s about learning to trust my eyes, feelings and to learn patience and surrender to the canvas.”

Working in both oil and charcoal, Maryann describes charcoal as fun but oil as a battle. “I do life drawing which is charcoal gesture drawing,” said Maryann trying to compare the two. “It is fast -- you’re not supposed to think. Oil is a struggle no matter how good you get. There are so many things to get wrong. It is a process of correcting mistakes.”



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You can see Maryann’s art at the Alumni Center at the University of Kansas, the Topeka Public Library and at various shows and exhibits throughout the year. Today, Maryann seems more excited and passionate about her art than ever before, and it’s safe to assume that her best art is yet to come. “I got a late start in fine art, so my goal is to live to be 101. I have a lot of work to do.”

You can contact Maryann Gravino-Askew by emailing her at jaskew@kc.rr.com
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