“All endings are also beginnings, we just don’t know it at the time.” - Mitch Albom
Welcome!

I'm really excited about this premier issue of the Spirit of Experimental Art. The goal is to share my thoughts, memories and knowledge from over 60 years as a professional painter as well as to advance the field of experimental art.

Experimental artists are more free today to explore avenues never dreamt of before because of new materials. There are different kinds of media available, new inks, acrylics and glitters. The old masters used oil paint which is a difficult medium to experiment with. Most of the tools were brushes or palette knives. Today we use not only brushes, but spray bottles, wax drawing tools, pouring bottles, colored pens, pencils, wax paper, saran wrap, foils, plastic curtains, pressed leaves, bark of a tree and more. Often work can resemble the textures found in nature, by using these unorthodox supplies.

Leonardo once said: "learning never exhausts the mind".

As a lifelong learner I can relate to that. I think this typifies most experimental artists. Their constant desire is to learn and apply new techniques, to explore the possibilities and to take risks. To be aware of what is out there, for inspiration. A crack in the sidewalk can sometimes resemble a landscape, a cloud can look like a portrait, a coffee stain on the tablecloth may look like a sunset. It is being aware of these images that become your inspiration.

I'm so happy you can join me on this new journey of mine!
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Featured Image on Cover
Daisy - 36”x36”

Modeling Paste and Ink

Collection of Joyce Shera
"Painting is a thrilling act; it encompasses a battleground of many contradictions, all to be resolved without compromise."

(Anthony Eterovich)

As I “reflect” on my artistic journey, I must go back to the beginning where it all began. Growing up in Cleveland, Ohio I had the fortune to cross paths with Mr. Anthony Eterovich who was my first art teacher. His work and influence had a profound impact on me and my career as a professional artist. I sought his advice up until the day he died in April, 2011 at the age of 95.

For as long as I can remember, going back to my high school years, I have been an artist. My high school teacher, Anthony Eterovich, “pushed me into becoming one” and since I had no leadership at home (part time mother and no father) I didn’t resist and worked hard to please him. For those 4 years I made a portfolio and with it won a 4 year scholarship to the Cleveland Institute of Art (CIA). Mr. Eterovich kept an eye on me and made sure that I only dated young men that wore a tie, attended no football games or sports of any kind. He told me it was a waste of precious time. I really wanted to be a drum majorette and that didn’t set well with him. So I became an artist! He told me that I had to be one for the rest of my life. He was a wise man.

Background

Eterovich was born in Cleveland and began to sketch at age 3. He graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Art and from Case Western Reserve University, earning a master’s degree in art education. He also studied at Ohio University and the Art Students League of New York.

During World War II, he became an Army sergeant, serving stateside, teaching French, making maps and creating topographical visualizations of landing zones and occupied areas.

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His artistic skills were also used to draw over 30 portraits of peers, colonels, captains and a 3 Star general.

Eterovich taught for more than 50 years at the CIA and in the Cleveland Public Schools for almost 40 years. He met his wife, the former Alice Troyan, at Lincoln High School in the fall of 1947 and they married in 1950. He chaired the art department at Rhodes High School from 1962 to 1978. He dedicated his life to teaching adults and children at the Cleveland Institute as well as chair its Regional Scholastic Art Competition.

Recently

He was honored at the Cleveland Institute of Art when a classroom was named in his honor. A scholarship for drawing has also been established in his name. At the dedication ceremony in November, 2014 were, from left, his wife Alice, daughter Karen, granddaughter Alice and son-in-law John.

Life is but a series of choices both good and bad that define who we are as artists. Some of us have chosen art as a profession while many are just looking for a release from the pressures of a 9 - 5 job. My challenge to you is stop and reflect on your artistic journey. How did it begin? Who inspired you to paint or draw?

In this first newsletter, I have chosen to reflect on a memory from many years ago. A moment in time where my pursuit of art began and my life was never the same.

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My Reflections

Anthony Eterovich Gallery

Three Figures

The Violinist (1959)

Head Study

Two Women

Oriental Fantasy (1970)
I first met Carolyn WarmSun in 2009 when she came to my studio. A quiet, reflective person, she absorbed the environment like a sponge. When I see something she has painted, I feel as though I have been there before. Carolyn captures the wind and the rain and the grass as it is growing. What a rare artist she is. I am so glad to know her and to share her work with all of you.

Carolyn WarmSun has created an inner beauty in her paintings. She speaks directly to our emotions and what she feels deeply about becomes her subject.

**BIO**

I was born and raised in a small Indiana town with little art education. In college, I studied psychology and had a successful career in mental health and organization development consulting.

In 1991, I began carving alabaster, and soon reached that magical “in flow” place. Tendonitis hit, so I took up painting in 2006. I learned the basics, but missed the magic. In late 2009, I found Maxine Masterfield’s, *Painting the Spirit of Nature*. In February of 2010, I spent four days with her and came home transformed. She helped me find ways to paint how nature makes me feel. A year later, Katherine Chang Liu reinforced my journey, and lately Jeremy Morgan’s seminars give me insight into painting the nature of Spirit.

My work has been juried into local, national and international shows. It has been featured in the art journal *Stillpoint*, appears in *SF Peace & Hope*’s 2015 book of art and poetry, graces the cover of a book of poetry, and will be featured in *Journeys into Abstraction, Vol. 3*.

I am a Signature Member of Int’l Society of Acrylic Painters, a member of Int’l Society of Experimental Painters (ISEA), *SF Women Artists*, and various other organizations.”

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Artistic Statement

The Natural World has always been my source of comfort, stimulation, joy and beauty. As a child, it was the arena of sensory exploration—from climbing trees, to lying on the grass seeing images in clouds, to feeling the connection to earth through bare feet. I chose to study psychology and sociology in college, learning much about human consciousness as well as the complex social systems of our culture. I have also read geology and anthropology, furthering my fascination with the elegant and complex systems of the natural world.

My father always said there was some Cherokee in his genetic background. Being raised with this information and my father’s love of Native American lore, has also influenced my life and art—from the reading of Native American philosophy and spirituality, to the study of petroglyphs and rock art, to the choice of my last name.

Knowledge of psychology, the natural world, and Native American writings that reflect a deep connection between the two, has led me to explore Spirit and the relationship of nature and human consciousness in my work. It shows in the rich textures, multiple

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layers, robust colors, and elements of mystery and history. I started by painting what I saw as I learned the basics. With the help of great teachers, I now paint what I feel, or think about, or remember, or just what comes off my hands to the brush to the canvas. I experiment and learn constantly. It is a remarkable journey.

Carolyn’s textures are simply done as she captures the essence of nature. It is as though she is looking through a microscope while she paints and we can see the details of nature with her. Thank you Carolyn for sharing yourself with us and I wish you all the best as an artist and friend.

**Title:** Gathering of the Shamans  
**Dimension:** 28 x 22 x 1.5  
Fluid Acrylic on canvas. Strictly pouring of the paint, moving the canvas around to direct the flow. The Shaman rock carvings just appeared. I invited them to stay...

**Title:** Rain Night, City Street  
**Dimension:** 30 x 24 x 1.5  
Fluid Acrylic on canvas. Pouring, spritzing, running paint, moving the canvas to somewhat control the movement of the paint.

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Spotlight on Carolyn WarmSun

Title: Entrance
Dimension: 30 x 24 x 1.5
Fluid Acrylic on paper. Gesso over a not-great painting/collage of a Shaman. Layered color, spritzing with water and alcohol to reveal color.

Title: Pele
Dimension: 28 x 22 x 1.5
Fluid Acrylic and Elmer’s Glue on canvas. Under layer painted and allowed to dry. Then Elmer’s Glue applied with a brush, and while still wet, paint brushed into the glue. When the glue dried, it cracked, revealing the under layer. I made a “mistake” on it and brushed the glue too much in certain places—it was perfect because it gave some solid, un-cracked areas!

Contact Carolyn for more information:
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“Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.”

(Albert Einstein)

Before you enter your studio or workplace, begin the day by hugging a tree. Look for one that is inspiring, possibly with a beautiful form or fabulous texture. Your contact with this tree is part of all the creativity you will need to be inspired. Look closely at your surrounding environment. Look at the sky, earth, and life cycles of organic matter. These are the elements of our environment. Explore the infinite variations of patterns. Experience the landscape by feeling it as well as seeing it.

While examining a close-up of cut and polished stone such as a polished geode, you can find various abstract compositions. Collect rocks, geodes, fossils, skeletons, leaves and fibers. Invent new textures and become more aware of familiar ones. Think of new ways to produce them. When you become aware, the images you see become a part of you. They are etched into your mind and as you paint they appear again, but this time on paper.

I find that if I surround myself with found objects, such as sliced agates or bits of rust, my mood is mellow and as I paint, the colors flow easier. But there are artists who prefer not to paint this way, but to paint the agitation they may feel. Each one of us paint for different reasons.

“Nature is full of fascinating textures, an assortment so diverse that our imaginations can scarcely encompass them all. From rocky cliffs sprayed with foam to Downey milkweed pods drying in the sun, from pine needles dusted with snow, the pebbles worn smooth in the bottom of a brook. Nature provides us with enough textures to satisfy any artist visual and tactile appetite.

Creative techniques are never through being developed any more than nature is ever through evolving.”

(Excerpt from my book In Harmony with Nature - Page 11)

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There is no right or wrong way. Find your goal and pursue it as I have done through the years. It is rewarding now to see what I have accomplished. The following photos are nature or manmade and they all have been inspirations for me.

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Utility Cover with Sidewalk Cracks
Clouds Through Bare Tree Branches

Much of my work was influenced by the processes of nature. When I walk on the beach, I see patterns that are familiar all around me, in the clouds, in the tree bark, on the mountain, in the canyons. Patterns made by nature. I ask myself, how can I transpose the same process that nature uses. This is a challenge, this becomes my goal.

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Broken Sidewalk
Rock Crystals

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Finding Inspiration

It was Mr. Eterovich who taught us to observe the world around us. Each morning when we entered his classroom, he would ask us a different question, like what color is the mailbox you passed this morning? These questions made me aware of where I was and where I was going. When I became more involved with being an artist, I also became more in tune with natural patterns around me. I gathered agates, stones, leaves, shells and whatever would inspire me to paint.

One day, while working in my studio, a student came in. She looked at my painting, then reached up and took down an agate from the shelf. She laid it on my painting and we were both amazed at how similar these images were.

By approaching painting in this manner, I have discovered solar painting, evaporation, crystal, frost, lace patterns, wax resists fibers, holograms. This is why my paintings are always such a surprise, I never know what the end result will be.
I first met Curtiss Waters while doing a demonstration for the Sarasota’s Art Center. I remember that he sat at the back of the room and as the demo progressed he moved to the front. He told me later that he wanted to learn to experiment with paints. His forte was computers. He knew all about them but nothing about experimenting. Could he study with me? I said "yes but only if you teach me how to use a computer."

At the studio he began to experiment with metal craft, an enamel paint by Dr. Martin’s. He poured it over his canvases and after they dried he added several layers of epoxy (the kind that is used for table and bar tops).

Imagination plays a role in any creative activity. The spontaneous imagery of Curtiss Waters are a delight to the eye. His subject is the paint itself. One of his latest techniques he calls STRING ART.

Painting on such a large scale can present challenges to an artist short on space and money. Curtiss solves this by using inexpensive supplies from a home improvement store such as Home Depot or Lowes.

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Supply List

- Canvas Drop Cloth (Home Depot) crafted from woven cotton and polyester. This drop cloth features finished hems and seams.
  - 6 x 9 is $10.98
  - 9 x 12 is $21.98
- Inexpensive white acrylic house paint (Home Depot)
- Golden Tar Gel

- Doc Martins Copper Plate Gold
- Craft Paint various colors

His studio can be the driveway in front of his house, where he stretches out a huge canvas from end to end.

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Or his garage when the work is on a smaller scale.

He starts by mixing inexpensive house or craft paint with *Golden* Tar Gel. His gold is a mix of *Doc Martin’s* Copper plate gold and *Golden* Tar Gel. Then from up on a ladder he pours his "string paint into a POLLACK gesture", swinging his arms around in loops.

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A large painting that he made in this fashion, sold recently at his gallery in Palm Springs California.

Money can be an issue for many artists who want to try and experiment using a new technique without spending a fortune for supplies. When I was young and majored in painting, I couldn't afford paints or canvas, so I had to use whatever I could find such as hardware, brushes, rags and sponges. I found it difficult to paint details which led me on the path to experimental painting. I encourage anyone who doesn't have deep pockets to look for alternatives such as what nature provides or non-traditional sources for supplies. The key is to not let these obstacles hold you back from creating and experimenting.

Contact Curtiss for more information:
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I welcome Patti Sevensma, President of the International Society of Experimental Artists (ISEA) as our first contributing author to the newsletter. I first met Patti several years ago at an ISEA Exhibit. She is a wonderful painter, as well as a photographer. She has been experimenting by combining both mediums as you see in her work below.

When I asked her to be our International Society of Experimental Artists (ISEA) President, she accepted with whole hearted enthusiasm. Her cheerfulness and dynamic energy has made The International Society of Experimental Artists flourish today.

Who better then to talk about experimental art, ISEA as an organization and its place in the art world?

Here are Patti’s thoughts on defining experimental art:

“This is a question that we have been discussing ever since I joined. The International Society of Experimental Artists (ISEA) 12 years ago. It became such a complex question that about 4 or 5 years ago we started asking our artists when they entered their pieces in our annual exhibition to make a statement about why they felt their pieces were experimental. Now we post those statements and images on our Facebook page weekly with a lot of discussion following each post. We found that experimental art is defined differently by each artist. It is their attempt to tweak, twist and manipulate their own media in different ways. They step outside the box and dare to try something they have never done before just to see what happens. The process brings joy and life-blood to an experimental artist. Our ISEA members embrace this concept. They are always excited to share their ideas, techniques and tricks of the trade. These artists never tire of learning, growing, and experimenting. It is what they live for.”

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Patti believes the Mission of ISEA has best been stated by its founder Maxine Masterfield did in 1999. "The International Society of Experimental Artists has given us the opportunity to explore our creative powers. It is a society where members can come together and share ideas, where each of us can grow and change. As experimental artists, we must be willing to take risks. We should trust that what we have to express in our work is our life experience, as well as our own vision. It is this that makes our society so special."
Contributors Corner

Patti adds,

“I love what we have accomplished as an international art organization. We have had two exchange exhibits with our friends in Wales in the past 10 years. In February of this year we started a Members Only Virtual Exhibition on our website. Any member could enter a piece and have it displayed. Each of the artists explained why their piece was experimental. If you click on the pieces you can read their explanations. This is not only a visual feast but also an educational experience. When we started posting new images from the last exhibition on our Facebook page we saw 600 new visits in the first month. Each image also included an explanation of why the artist thought their piece was experimental.”

Patti says,

“My own vision for the ISEA family, which I am very passionate about, is to grow in members and experiences. Our exhibitions and symposiums are a great place for these experiences to begin. Based on my 12 years of attending and my 9\textsuperscript{th} year on the ISEA board I have shared inspirations, learned different approaches, and enjoyed the company of like minded folks. This has all been an important part of my growth as a working professional artist. The artists that attend these events and participate in our exhibits are the energy we need to move ISEA forward, give ISEA a voice, and continue in the spirit upon which ISEA was founded.”

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Contributors Corner

Twinkling Lights
Photography on Metal

Landscape #5
Photography on Metal

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Thank you Patti for contributing your time and thoughts for this article. I encourage others to "step outside the box and dare to try something they have never done before" as Patti says. The spirit of the work is an essential quality in self-discovery as part of our journey into experimental art. So go ahead and plunge into the radically new and innovative unknown, taking risks with new techniques, forms, media and materials.

Contact Patti for more information:

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*All Artwork by Patti Sevensma, ISEA-NF, NCS
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The purpose of this newsletter is to educate, inspire and motivate. Feel free to share the newsletter with other artists, friends and colleagues.

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I would love to hear your thoughts and suggestions about my newsletter. If you have any specific topics you would like included in future issues please let me know.

Drop me a note, my eMail address is below!

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