



Community Outreach

The Oakland Veterans Go Abstract

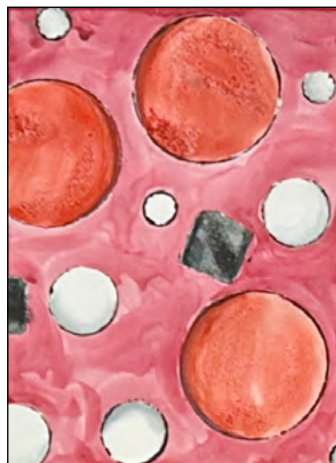
The Oakland veterans enjoyed the experience of painting abstractly under the guidance of CWA volunteer, Pat Mosuek. Abstract art, as defined by the Tate Museum in the UK, does not aim to accurately represent visual reality but instead uses shapes, colors, forms, and gestural marks to create its effect.

Pat suggested using hot-press watercolor paper for their work and brought one of her own paintings as inspiration. She also provided a variety of tools for the veterans to use, such as bottle caps, plastic caps, bubble wrap, old credit cards, watercolor pencils, and crayons. These items could be used to draw, stamp, or create marks on their abstract paintings.

To start their paintings, Pat recommended using watercolor washes and working from lighter to darker values, leaving areas of white for future highlights and bright colors. Some of the veterans already had a clear idea of what they wanted to paint and started right away.



During the class, individual questions arose, such as how to make a painting look more three-dimensional. Pat's answer was to add directional shading to the shapes to make them stand out. Another question was whether one could add a flower to their painting, to which Pat encouraged them to express themselves and let their intuition guide them.



The class concluded with everyone displaying their paintings on a whiteboard, showcasing a diverse range of works. Each person spoke about their painting, with some relating it to personal experiences, places they had been, or health issues they were dealing with. Others discussed how the shapes, colors, and marks created a cohesive whole. Overall, the group was enthusiastic about the possibility of painting abstractly again, perhaps next time on Yupo paper.

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