

Exclusive Interview with artist Gwen Cates 'Cosmic Monologues' solo art exhibit in Los Angeles

Opening
on



November 9 and lasting for one-month, international artist [Gwen Cates \(http://www.gwencatesart.net\)](http://www.gwencatesart.net) will present a solo exhibit. “Cosmic Monologues” takes us on a journey between absence and consciousness. One day while looking at Stephen Hawking’s material on black holes, the artist recalls having an astonishing idea and began pulling her paints out at that moment. She realized that empty space is never truly vacant, nor can our lives ever truly be blank, or meaningless. At that moment, Gwen Cates at the age of 79 decided to reinvent herself as an artist.

You have been described as a contemporary colorist with experimental and playful abstract paintings in acrylic, often with collage elements. How did you get into this style of painting?



<http://lapostexaminer.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/unnamed-4.jpg>

Gwen Cates

I have explored many different media and styles of painting. While studying fine art at Virginia Commonwealth University, I began doing abstract paintings. Later, at Hollins University, I moved on to painting landscapes done on location. I still loved the free brushstrokes of abstract expressionism, and I worked with the idea of simplifying the work so that it was abstract yet recognizable. At a point, while painting and exhibiting in California, I began to feel the need to express the feelings from within myself. I began a series of paintings in acrylic that I called *Interior Monologues*, a series of abstract acrylic paintings, often with collage elements. Winged figures, abstract shapes, horses, a cheetah, and other images are cut out and layered with swatches of fabric and lichen from oak trees.

You have exhibited your paintings for over 17 years. Looking back throughout the years was there one event, exhibit that stood out to you the most and if so why?

Looking back over my lengthy resume, an exhibit that stands out is a solo exhibit of abstract paintings, *Interior Monologues*, at the C Gallery in Los Alamos, California, in 2011. This was a breakthrough exhibit for me because that was when I began to realize that I was in touch with the archetypal images that I had been seeking.

Speaking of Exhibits you are going to be showcasing your current series of paintings called Cosmic Monologues at the Granada in L.A. Talk to us about the event and what people can expect when they see your new series?

Recently, I began reading news releases about the discoveries astronomers had made using a network of telescopes, which are able to focus on objects much more distant than was previously possible. The concept of Black Holes was only a theory, but suddenly there were amazing photographs of the Event Horizons of Black Holes that made them visible. I wanted to create my own abstract interpretation of the phenomena that I had been hearing about. The act of painting helps me to see the world in a new way. I can say things with paint that I cannot otherwise imagine. At this point in my art career and my life, my goal is to express deep-seated archetypal images drawn from earlier landscapes,

figurative paintings, research, and dreams. I paint to transform these concepts through vibrant color and strong compositions to create powerful and imaginative paintings.

Why are Cosmic Monologues or more specifically black holes so important to you?



<http://lapostexaminer.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/unnamed-3.jpg>) A while back, I painted a small painting called, *Launch to Planet X*. Then I began to read about exoplanets, which are planets in distant galaxies that are believed capable of supporting life similar to life on earth. I did some large abstract collage pieces that explore the concept that life may have been launched to earth from another planet or conversely that life may have originated on this planet and may be launched to an exoplanet. Two of those paintings are in my exhibit. They led to my discovery and interest in Black Holes and the idea that they may indeed be engines of the universe.

Bonus Question:

When you finish another masterful work of art in the Whiskey Ridge Studio what is your favorite drink that helps you unwind to view what you created?

I sip a cup of black tea with milk as I sit in a chair and look at the painting that I just finished and signed. Then again, I might sip

some Challen Wine, made in California by my daughter Challen Cates.

DATE & TIME:

Saturday November 9th, 4-7 p.m.

Talk with the artist @ 4 p.m.

Wine will be served.

LOCATION:

Salon @ the Granada

672 S. Lafayette Park

Suite 40

Los Angeles CA 90057



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