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Amplify (Summer 2024)

Amy Evans

University of Mississippi

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Staff Creative Residencies Summer 2024 Self-Assessment

Amplify

Amy Evans, Graphic Web Designer in Marketing and Communications, created a series of large oil on canvas paintings.



My residency focused on restarting my painting practice. Having small children made it difficult to set up a studio and paint. Wet oil paint and toddlers are not a good mix but now that my girls are older, I can get back to it and this creative residency made that happen. I had been resigned to the fact that I don't have space in my house for a full-time studio but having this week to experiment made me figure out a few options for how I could make a studio work,

keep my painting practice going, and turn my residency into something sustained.

Inspiration for the paintings initially came from the wildflower gardens on campus. I took some photos with long exposures, capturing abstract images. I then cropped the images and used them as source material for the paintings. The final paintings are reminiscent of nature but non-representational. My goal was to create works that are atmospheric,

abstract, and colorful. I want the paintings to appeal to a wide audience so I can loan or donate them to buildings on campus that could use some art.

I used the \$500 stipend for painting supplies. The bulk of the stipend went to purchase 3, 30" x 48" canvases which totaled \$212.52. Money spent on gesso, paint, and brushes added up to \$203.37. Varnish, solvents, other chemicals, and plastic gloves cost \$76.36. Sales tax and shipping for all ran \$37.87.

This was a rewarding yet humbling experience. Returning to painting meant accepting the fact I am very out of practice and adjusting accordingly. In hindsight, I should have started working on my project earlier in the summer to get back up to speed as far as my painting skills go. I am rusty! Another challenge was getting my brain to shift gears. Even though I had a week off to work on just painting, it was difficult to get fully immersed. Also, my preferred process of painting thin layers of paint that dry between applications wasn't really an option. For my residency paintings, I had to use some creative problem solving and get flexible with how I paint. There was a lot more slapping of paint on the canvas and hoping it would work. I'm going to call that spontaneity.

One of the best aspects of the residency was setting up a studio again but this time having experience of exactly what I needed in terms of supplies and organization. A return to studio practice was fun and familiar, it took me right back to working on my graduate thesis.

Future benefits of the residency will be the shot in the arm that a purely creative pursuit gives. Even though it was a week, I spent much of the summer figuring things out, planning, and getting prepared. I know this residency week will (and has already) positively affected the work I do at Marketing & Communications—recharging my creative problem-solving abilities and patience.

Studio shot of mid-residency.



Final shot of 3 paintings from week of creative work.

