

## Art exhibit features colorful interpretations of Mozart's musical masterpieces

**ROME** — Artist Linda Bigness gave herself a challenge: Interpret the music of Mozart in color.

In a sense it took her 10 years to do it — since she was perfecting an abstract technique that began with creating paper collages.

The result is a decade's worth of abstractions on exhibit at the Rome Art & Community Center.

Titled "Painting Mozart," the exhibit reflects slow and positive changes as the artist progresses.



**Jonas Kover**

Only three paintings are from her latest Mozart series.

Bigness, who lives in Syracuse, instructs painting at the center in both the representational and abstract modes.

According to the notebook portfolio accompanying the exhibit, Bigness began daily writings ever since she was diagnosed with cancer three years ago.

After listening to violinist Isaac Stern perform Mozart, she felt that perhaps she might be able to describe how the music struck her soul.

"How I would like to float along the surface of my canvas in the same seductive way this music plays upon my being," she says.

**WHAT:** "Painting Mozart (Looking Back — Moving Forward, A Decade in Making Art)," abstractions by Linda Bigness.

**WHEN:** Through Nov. 3.

**WHERE:** Rome Art & Community Center, 308 W. Bloomfield St., Rome

**HOURS:** 9 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

**ADMISSION:** Free

"I feel carried away by the beauty, sadness and sheer joy of the music. Subtle nuances, the calm sweet colors, sudden perks of ecstasy. ... How beautiful. My heart swells and I want to cry and laugh at the same time."

Her Mozart works match her written description. They contain a compelling evanescence, with a feeling of chords or phrases seemingly evaporating into air.

"Fluting with Mozart," a forceful red-based painting with small rectangles and curvy patterns, is the most musical of the trio. In contrast, "Symphony I," an earlier work, does not appear musical at all.

The artist's initial works were small glass-framed collage paintings with cut-out or torn patterns pasted on paper and painted over.

Later oils, painted on medium or large canvases, have a similar collage effect created solely through paint itself. The paint-

ings are extremely colorful; hues seemingly dissipate into one another, giving a cloud-like, ephemeral, floating feeling.

Bigness' geometric patterns have an architectural base. "Perestroika," for instance, looks like a profile of a city, with buildings and a bridge seen in a fun house mirror. Another painting appears like a breezy aerial view of a village. A few works are more organic.

With abstract art it is sometimes the things that you think you see that makes a painting exciting and universal.

That quality permeates Bigness' works, although many items, such as partial faces, torsos and even skulls are intention-

ally placed, since they re-occur in various paintings.

The longer you look at a work, the more you will see.

Bigness' investigation into her art has resulted in an interesting book, "Paint It, Tear It, Create It! The Art of Collage," where she describes the process of abstraction in writings that are as poetic as her paintings. The book is available through the center.

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