

Guest artist Shawna Moore to hold encaustic sessions at Kimball Art Center

Workshops open to all levels of experience

By Scott Iwasaki, The Park Record

(Photos courtesy of Gallery MAR) The encaustic painting "Regalia," by Shawna Moore



Montana-based artist Shawna Moore began her artistic career studying architecture at the University of Oregon.

After five years of classes, she found architecture was too rigid a career and practice. So, she switched majors and went into art.

"Art was more free and a whole new challenge," Moore said during a phone interview from a gallery in Santa Fe, N.M. "I've always been fascinated how the way a brush, ink or paint and my hand interact to make something that's beyond myself."

Her love of painting steered her toward encaustic painting, which utilizes not only pigment, but also beeswax.

"What attracted me to encaustic painting was the mystery of it," Moore said. "I come from a painting background and after you've used acrylics, oils or water colors, and you find paintings made out of wax, it's a little difficult to wrap your brain around. It's a mystery."

Moore took a workshop and decoded the encaustic process that involves layering melted wax with an iron, a torch or heat gun, and adding color between the layers on a canvas.

"You get it too hot, you wreck it and if you don't get it hot enough, it doesn't work," she said. "You can fuse layers and layers of wax together, but what I like about it is between all these layers, the artist gets the opportunity to make marks and change colors. You get a slow gradual buildup of information as you work on a single painting. It's not only meditative, but it also gives you awareness of methods you can use during all aspects of your life. It's a very fascinating method and I have been doing it ever since."

Moore will share her love of encaustic painting during a three-day workshop that will be held at the Kimball Art Center from Sept. 30 to Oct. 1.

"We're going to do an artist talk and materials overview on the first day and then go full-on into studio work with the group on Saturday and Sunday," Moore said. "The workshop is open to everyone including people like myself who was curious about the material to people who have specific questions about the techniques."

Moore likes to teach people with different levels of experience.

"The great thing about the classes is if I have someone who has experience, the whole group can leap-frog forward and get to learn from those who already know the process," she said. "Also, the thing about the beginners is they can come in

without any preconceived notion about how the art is made. They usually have the most fun and wind up making the best paintings, because day one or two they can only do so much, so they just have fun and ask a lot of questions."

Encaustic paintings seem to be the flavor of the year in Park City, Moore said.

"There have been a couple of shows already at the Kimball and Spiro Arts has done a workshop," she said. "Gallery MAR, where I show my works, also displays works from other artists who practice this technique."

Moore said when she decided to become an artist for a living, she came up with a business model that allows her to teach and paint, and partner with and become more involved with community art centers in the towns where galleries show her works.

"There's an opportunity for people to see and learn about my artwork, and it's good promotion for the galleries, because galleries not only draw art collectors, but people who appreciate and make art," she said. "It also helps people who want to learn more about the art. If a student or painter came in and asked about my art at Gallery MAR, they would be able to direct them to the Kimball and there would be this nice exchange up and down Main Street.

"In my opinion, this makes economic and marketing sense, because an exchange like this is great for the gallery, the art center and me."

Shawna Moore will hold encaustic and pigment stick workshops at the Kimball Art Center, 638 Park Ave., Friday, Sept. 30, Saturday, Sept. 31 and Sunday, Oct. 1. Friday's session will begin at 6 p.m. and the Saturday and Sunday sessions will begin at 10 a.m. The cost is \$400, with a 10-percent discount for KAC members, and includes all materials. For more information, visit www.kimballartcenter.org or call (435) 649-8882.