

Barbara Tabachnick

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Website: www.csun.edu/~vcpsybxt/Art.html



“Experimental” is the essence of my art. For me, every work is an experiment — although as a research psychologist who limits the label “experiment” to precisely controlled, manipulated research, I hesitate to use the word; my art is anything but precisely controlled! For me, the beginning of every project is: What will happen if.....?



I approach my art in a variety of ways — sometimes working out my composition on the computer but often just winging it. In my mixed media art and “pours,” the closest I come to structure is to lay out everything I think I’m going to want for the project. Then, with everything close at hand, I just start pouring paint or laying down “stuff,” rearranging and making it up as I go along. My M.O. is fast and messy, partly because I can’t wait to see what it’s going to look like when I’m done.



The computer plays a large part in what I do, both as a scientist and as an artist. I manipulate photographs mercilessly to see what can come of them. Sometimes when in doubt as to whether a piece is finished, I photograph it and try out various elements before committing them to the work — or not. For subject matter, when there is any, I lean toward nature, particularly trees.

Basically, I make art for the fun of it. “Meaning” or “beauty” is a bonus, but for me it’s the process that counts — and it feels so good.



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Barbara Tabachnick's art training began at UCLA in the early 1960s, as a break from her pursuit of a major in psychology. She was ready to return to the grind after a few painting courses and, while working in various research jobs, finally received her Ph.D. in experimental psychology. She continued to paint while in graduate school and in the first few years of her full-time appointment in the Psychology Department at California State University, Northridge, where she taught perception, statistics and research design.

Designing and making belly dance costumes (and dancing, of course) supplanted painting while teaching and completing two advanced statis-

tics books. Since her retirement from teaching, she continues to be involved with consulting in research design and statistical applications as well as in writing and updating her books. A set of editions of the books was completed in 2000, at which time the urge to return to art became overwhelming.

A member of Collage Artists of America, Valley Artists Guild, and San Fernando Art Club, she has exhibited in a variety of juried shows in the San Fernando Valley, winning some prizes along the way. She also has been exhibited in juried shows in a variety of central and southern California venues. She has had a shared solo show at the Orlando Gallery in Tarzana and was twice invited to exhibit at the Ontario International Airport.



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