

# 'Firework Drawings' is amazing, magical exhibit

Artist creates explosive images in unusual ways.

By Felicia Feaster

For the AJC

Artists have made work out of an incredible array of materials, from photographer Vik Muniz's portraits made from chocolate to Dan Flavin's fluorescent light tube sculptures to conceptual art pioneer Marcel Duchamp's famous transformation of a urinal into a work of art.

In that same tradition of crafting art from unexpected, inventive materials is New York-based artist Rosemarie Fiore. Fiore has made a career using unusual materials to create artworks, as when she employs pinball machines and fairground rides combined with paint to create her drawings.

Atlantans can see another novel way to employ a device beyond a paintbrush or pen to create an artwork in a series of large drawing-collages created by Fiore using fireworks. Fiore's "Firework Drawings" are on view through Dec. 6 at Gallery 1600 on the main floor of the [Savannah College of Art and Design Atlanta](#).

The curator of "Firework Drawings," Melissa Messina, has smartly included a video of the artist at work in the gallery so that visitors will have an appreciation for the bizarre, fascinating way Fiore

creates her drawings. The creation is as much a part of the work as the end result. Working outdoors on the ground, and wearing a gas mask, Fiore lights small firecrackers that have been placed directly onto paper backdrops. At other times, she takes colorful smoke bombs, traps them under tin cans or ties them onto long poles, and draws onto the paper with their bright, gem-colored smoke. The streaks and lines on her drawings are literally drawn with the gold, cobalt blue, mauve or hot pink plumes of firework smoke. It's pretty amazing, even magical stuff, turning something so ephemeral into something so tactile and vividly colored.

The fireworks leave various forms of residue, or what artists like to call "mark making," on the paper surface: small clusters of gray streaks where the fireworks burned the paper; an iridescent dust and those brightly colored streaks.

Fiore proves that fireworks, in the right hands, are remarkably diverse in the effects they can produce.

In addition Fiore uses collaged layers of paper: round pancake stacks in various sizes, torn bits of paper, long strips – all marked by firecrackers –

to add to her kinetic, motion-crazed ambiance.

Fiore's drawings tend to primarily privilege two recurring forms, the circle and an elongated Pop-sicle-stick shape. In tandem, the effect of these joined shapes is like comets sending out trails of vapor, galaxies floating in space or cogs joined by pulleys in some elaborate mechanical system.

The works not only utilize fireworks, but seem to capture the experience of fireworks. Fiore's "Firework Drawings" have some of the propulsive energy of those tiny, frantic bombs. These large works on paper like "Fireworks Drawing #13" combine collage and fireworks patterns and tend to push out from the paper surface. Even in two-dimensions they suggest movement outward and a compelling, exciting explosion of energy.

## ART REVIEW "Firework Drawings"

Through Dec. 6. 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mondays-Fridays. Free. Savannah College of Art and Design Atlanta, 1600 Peachtree Street. 404.815.2931, [www.scad.edu](http://www.scad.edu)

**Bottom line:** Incredible color and pattern result from these drawings created using fireworks.





Bright, gemlike hues and a sense of explosive energy characterize Rosemarie Fiore's "Firework Drawings" at SCAD-Atlanta's Gallery 1600.



The colored smoke, burn marks and other marks made by fireworks on paper define the unusual drawings.

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