

# ARTWACH

Commentaries and critiques on the visual and performing arts in the greater Canton, Ohio area

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## When Paint Dances



By Tom Wachunas

“Exactitude is not Truth.” - Henri Matisse

“I try to construct a picture in which shapes, spaces, colors, form a set of unique relationships, independent of any subject matter. At the same time I try to capture and translate the excitement and emotion aroused in me by the impact with the original idea.  
—Milton Avery

“A dance between the intense and the subtle, the strong and the fragile, and between control and spontaneity... I want to create paintings which are both familiar yet unknown and I hope the work attracts the viewer with beauty and simultaneously prompts curiosity.” - Katharine Dufault

EXHIBIT: BETWEEN EARTH AND SKY - new paintings by Katharine Dufault.

One efficacious way to see a Katharine Dufault painting, as suggested in her statement excerpted above, is as a dance. Think of painting as a performative act in time and, in that sense, a form of choreography.

Dufault constructs pas de deux, i.e., duets. She organizes partnerships wherein her deft manipulations of paint become engaging pairings of things opaque and translucent, solid and liquid, weighty and atmospheric, permanent and ephemeral.

Her landscapes aren't ostentatious illustrations brandishing trompe l'oeil illusions. The brushwork is never so forced or fussy, but rather quietly gestural, like poised arabesques, or balletic glissades gliding across, or floating in undulating pools of luscious color. These are elegant, reductive abstractions, yet nonetheless loaded with emotional and psychological affect. Memories of the past made eminently present.

A vigorous expressivity is also abundantly evident in Dufault's figurative works. Of her portraits, she writes: "The abstract faces appear to be calmly resting or deep in thought yet, there is a deliberate emotional ambiguity to the work: the serene expressions may conceal an inner world of strong emotions. I move swiftly, with almost calligraphic brush strokes, to capture the essence of my subjects. Wide brushes loaded with paint in my quest for simplification of form and smaller brushes for necessary detail. The process is part of the finished painting..."

Altogether, Dufault's painterly actions exude an immersive, poetic lyricism. Alluring dances indeed.

On view through November 30th, 2021, The Lemmon Visiting Artist Gallery, Fine Arts Building at Kent University at Stark / 6000 Frank Avenue NW, North Canton, OH / Gallery Hours Monday – Friday 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (not open Nov. 25, 26)  
<https://katharinedufault.com/>

Posted by [Tom Wachunas](#)