

MARY JAMES
Artist Statement

“I paint non-objective abstract paintings that are manifestations of the compositions in my mind which are inspired by the memories of my life experiences.”

Wide open spaces and alluring skies viewed as a child in South Dakota inspired the dawn of my creativity. My imagination soared while drawing in the dirt with a tree branch, viewing the organic-shaped ripples in the water from throwing rocks into a river, and watching the rhythmic movement of leaves in the trees. The vast expanse of the wheat fields and prairie grasses mesmerized me as they danced in the breeze. Those childhood experiences have become lasting impressions that inform the sense of space and movement found in my art today.

Formal studies and a career in architecture and interior design provided a foundational understanding of structure, form, color harmony, and more. Although this career path was interrupted by a health issue, painting became an important part of the healing process—therapy for my body and then for my soul.

Intellectually and stylistically, my art has been influenced by the artist Willem DeKooning and other abstract expressionists. As a non-objective abstractionist, trusting and following my inward creative compass and intuitive sensibilities is essential. With complete trust in those instincts, I follow each new mark and brushstroke, allowing them to take me in new directions. Informed by the architectural and interior design fields, color palette and shapes are important elements in my work, juxtaposed against value shifts and nuanced, energetic paint strokes. Structure and composition prevail, but energy and action drive the painting. In the final stage, there is a push-pull dance where each painting is edited, removing essential areas that divulge the essence of the painting. I seek to reveal something about myself as I translate the messages emanating from within me. Slowly, this soul-filled mystery emerges and transforms the painted surface.

The freedom of painting nonobjective abstractions excites me. There are no restrictions which allows for an expressive, non-verbal conversation on a deeper level. Unrestricted by documenting the real world, I am free to express how I feel with an intuitive deep dive that runs through my soul.