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'An artist's dream'

A Moorestown man's works will be exhibited at a Philadelphia gallery.

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MOORESTOWN — Artist Joe McAleer has done portraits and other traditional paintings, but the former art teacher's passion is abstracts.

"The process of painting (abstracts) is more interesting because you don't know where you're going and the end is always a surprise," McAleer said.

McAleer's latest works are being featured in a solo exhibition at the Bridgette Mayer Gallery in Philadelphia. The "OpticDiamonds" exhibition will showcase 12 paintings and photographic montages.

"Having my work being featured at the Bridgette Mayer Gallery is an artist's dream," McAleer said. "It gives you a forum for the artwork to be seen by so many more people."

Mayer said the series descends from a strong and often under-rec-

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"OpticDiamonds," a solo exhibition featuring 12 abstract paintings and photographic montages by Moorestown artist Joe McAleer, is at the Bridgette Mayer Gallery in Philadelphia.



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Exhibit

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ognized tradition of op artists, such as Bridget Riley, Victor Vasarely and Philadelphian Edna Andrade.

"His work has progressed into obsessively and precisely constructed optic abstractions that challenge the viewers' traditional perception of the two-dimensional picture plane," Mayer said.

McAleer said his paintings and montages create sort of an optical illusion.

"If you look at it long enough, it will jump," he said of his work. "The shapes come forward and then they recede as the eye pre-views it longer."

The exhibition is McAleer's second. In 2007 the Locks Gallery in Philadelphia featured several of his pieces. His work also has been fea-

tured in a number of other venues in Philadelphia and Burlington and Camden counties, including the Perkins Center for the Arts in Moorestown.

McAleer has been painting for more than 45 years. He began his career as an art teacher at Riverside High School and retired in 2006. In addition to teaching art, he coached basketball and tennis.

In 1994, McAleer was honored for his teaching by the state's Governor's Teacher Recognition Program.

Today, he said his main focus is on his "OpticDiamonds" exhibition, which is free and will be on view until May 20. The gallery is at 709 Walnut St. An opening reception will be held Friday from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

Normal gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, call 215-413-8893.