

BRIDGETTE MAYER GALLERY



Arden Bandler Browning conquers virtual reality, Luve More LC + Thinkers Makers Society, and opportunity

By Roberta Fallon, October 19, 2022

Three notable events rounded up for your consideration! A short Q&A and video by Roberta talking with Arden Bandler Browning about her show and virtual reality piece at Bridgette Mayer Gallery; plus a great-sounding event at Thinkers Makers Society collaborating with Luve More LC to present Jeff Rivers' art; and Scribe Video's Young Mediamakers Fund is open for applications to college students and student-age filmmakers -- applications due Oct. 31.



Still from *Pathfinding* Virtual Reality experience.

Arden Bandler Browning talks virtual reality and painting

I stopped in at [Bridgette Mayer Gallery](#) last week to check out the paintings by [Arden Bandler Browning](#). [the show is up til this Saturday, Oct. 22.] I'm a fan of her abstracted landscape works with their shakingly joyful, celebratory ambiance and rich color palette, so to my surprise, Arden was in the gallery. We had a chat about her virtual reality piece created in conjunction with her paintings and that let you "step inside" the paintings in "real" virtual space. Happily for me and others who decline the VR headset, the painter has made a video of the VR environment – an astounding piece of video in itself – which captures the Alice in Wonderland wow of her paintings by breaking them apart and re-assembling them mark by mark. Even

BRIDGETTE MAYER GALLERY

without the headset, the video gave a pretty good sense of walking in and amongst the marks and colors. I asked Arden about working in VR and working in paint, and here is some of what she said:

ARTBLOG: Tell me about how you make the virtual reality

ARDEN BENDLER BROWNING: Ok, so I use photographs of the paintings, which I then import into the virtual space and I use the image as a background from which to draw into the space using 3D virtual painting marks. *Arden points out a painting that appears in the background of the VR, and on top of that are the virtual marks that she's drawn in the virtual space.* You can walk through them (with the headset on). So, the painting is always started looking generally at photos or video of an actual space, but it then gets compressed or flattened to become a painting (2D). The virtual reality is allowing me to turn the paintings back into an experiential space again. And when you have the headset on you can walk through all the marks and then you are part of the painting.

In this particular piece I've included some animation. There are five different scenes that use five different paintings in the show. Each one starts out as a flattened image of itself that grows upward from the floor. It's almost like a pop-up book where it just grows around you. And it will gradually float back down again and you can trigger another scene, based on another painting.

ARTBLOG: The colors [in the video] are digital colors, right, rather than real world colors. How do you like working in the digital space – just for the color alone? You're a very big colorist.

ARDEN: When I started working with the VR I realized it's hard for me because I'm a painter, I'm not a programmer, I'm really not a digital artist. I tried to figure out ways that I could combine the two to allow different things to happen in this space, like the movement and the scale that I could never do unless I was painting an entire room and having different materials. I actually will color match according to all the different nuances in the painting. And that's really what's allowed me then to have this seamless way of having the different marks, like they're growing out of the painting.

I feel like if I were just staring with a digital palette and not looking at the images of the paintings I don't feel that my color choices would be nearly as complex, because with paint I'm just seeing what happens, and the colors develop from the transparencies of the different colors on top of each other. You can't really do that with digital marks. There isn't that transparency. You can't have a color gradually blend into another. You can do amazing things like with volume, shadows that can show you how the form is existing in 3-dimensional space. But, yeah, they're different ways to work. And I like that difference, too! It's interesting to let them play off of each other.

Full article: <https://www.theartblog.org/2022/10/arden-bendler-browning-conquers-virtual-reality-luve-more-lc-thinkers-makers-society-and-opportunity/>