

Press Release: Greenbelt Artist in Residence Kathy Karlson Featured in Upcoming Art Exhibit June 6 – July 29. Artist’s Reception: Saturday, June 11, 2-4pm.
OASIS Art Gallery, 7125 Democracy Blvd, Bethesda, MD
Gallery phone: 301-469-6800, press 1, X211

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Inside the elegant, white walls of the Greenbelt Community Center, the Artist in Residence Program studios are bursting with color, energy and ideas. This is nowhere more true than in the studio of painter Kathy Karlson. Ten of Karlson’s large recent works will be featured this summer in an exhibition at the OASIS Art Gallery in Bethesda, Maryland.

In selecting Karlson’s work, the Visual Arts Committee at OASIS noted the "luminous layers of color and light that seem to glow from within and weave in and out in lively movement throughout the canvas." Members saw the works as "abstract but also related to landscape and water." Without making specific references to place or even to discrete natural forms, Karlson’s work calls forth the viewer’s own visceral memories of taking pleasure in the natural world – the light of summer, the rhythms of waving wild grasses, the texture of loose earth, the spaciousness of an open vista.

Some of Karlson’s paintings move further into an expression of pure energy, foregoing allusions to its interplay with matter. In our present cultural context, her compositions dominated by bold, lateral striations are evocative of the bundles of human voices and thoughts surging perpetually at the speed of light through fiberoptic cables. Some of the compositions convey simultaneous impressions of tranquility and hyperspeed, like an astronaut floating gently in orbit while circling the earth at 17,000 miles per hour.

Karlson writes, “In my work, I am open to the great pleasures and beauty of life, to what Emily Dickinson calls *Jamaicas of Remembrance*, to the mysteries of science, and also to life’s sorrows... I try for a capable heart and hand and am influenced by my life as a woman, by the singing world, by children and grandchildren.” Fans of the work of diverse modern and contemporary masters such as Claude Monet, Mark Rothko, Grace Hartigan and Gerhard Richter will all find much to like in Karlson’s work although her own artistic voice is quite distinct.

This exhibit will be on view from June 6 through July 29, with an artist's reception on Saturday, June 11 from 2-4pm. In addition to Karlson's work, the show includes paintings by Louis von Rago – a local “fine folk artist” distinguished in his broad adaptability to projects ranging from painted furniture to outdoor murals.

The OASIS Art Gallery is a part of the Washington Metropolitan area center of the OASIS Institute, a national non-profit organization promoting lifelong learning, active lifestyles and community involvement. The center is located inside the Macy's Home Store at the Westfield Montgomery Mall at 7125 Democracy Boulevard in Bethesda, Maryland. The Gallery entrance is accessible via Garage A. Hours are Monday through Friday, 10:00am – 5:00pm.

Viewers can also meet Karlson and see her work at quarterly Artist in Residence Program studio open houses at the Greenbelt Community Center. The next open house will take place on Sunday, June 5, 1-4pm. The Center is located at 15 Crescent Road. For more information, call 301-397-2208.

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Photo Credit: Kathy Karlson