

Dani's Papers

Zen & The Art Of Women

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Joanne Handler's "Dazed and Confused."

The White Room Gallery presents “Zen & The Art of Women,” on view April 4 through April 21. The show’s opening reception, on Saturday, April 6, at 5 PM, features four international creatives: Nella Lush, Italian native living north of Boston, MA; Joanne Handler, who enjoys summers in Westhampton at a home that’s been in the family for over 40 years; Adele Venter traveling in from Calgary, Canada, but originating from Johannesburg, South Africa; and Oz Van Rosen, a worldly woman, living as far as Tel Aviv before she settled on Long Island, spending time in Southampton.

Describe your artwork and how it will be depicted in the upcoming exhibit.

Nella Lush: Art making is vital to my existence. Each piece contains my history, my connection to the universe. Creating textures, the adding and subtracting, the losing and finding, are all steps needed to reveal that history.

Joanne Handler: They incorporate bold, vibrant colors with a sense of whimsy and fun. I use an array of different tools in addition to brushes. Some are unconventional, others are everyday household objects, the use of which add an element of surprise and mystery.

Through my method of layering the varied marks they make, I weave together images that allow the viewer to discover something new each time they see them.

Adele Venter: The landscapes are rich in color and pattern, but are flat in design. The people remain three dimensional and form part of the landscape, but remain removed and slightly detached from the world they inhabit. Atmosphere and lighting are created in the studio generating the shadows that connect people with their environment.

Oz Van Rosen: I describe my work as “Abstract Techspressionism,” a new form of abstract photography characterized by generating intentional and erratic image errors. I destroy to create. I create abstract images by data bending and manipulating the underlying pixels. Glitching pushes the boundaries of photography into new visual possibilities. I found a way to turn light and pixels into pigment and paint.

A common thread in my work is the use of intense, deep saturated colors as a means of projecting emotional content and eliciting that same response from my audience. My art will be printed on various materials: cotton rag, textile, and face-mounted on acrylic.

Why is practicing mindfulness and finding a peaceful place so important to women today?

NL: History shows that women had to always work harder to achieve success and independence. It is still true today, but thankfully the gap in disparity is shrinking somewhat. We are still being judged and scrutinized. It is imperative for us to stand firm and confident with our convictions and beliefs.

Art making is my contribution to be that person. Through hard work, diligence, focus, and faith, everything is achievable.

JH: Women are still finding their voices against all the injustices they have had to endure, many just coming to light in the last few years. But in order to make those voices louder to effect change, we women must have the inner strength to do so. That takes confidence in oneself, to build that confidence and start believing in ourselves even more. Practicing mindfulness and finding a peaceful place affords us that opportunity.

AV: It is of value because it teaches us as women to trust our intuition and not our training when making important life decisions. To know that we can be who we decide to be and not how other define us.

OVR: It's a known fact that women multitask more than men and are better at it. Multi-tasking in this age of distraction leads to stress and fragmentation. As women, we need to fight our natural inclination to accomplish everything on our plate.

Practicing mindfulness centers us, alleviates anxiety, improves our mental and physical health, and lets us do less, but do it better. Saying "no" to doing it all and focusing on what is truly important is empowering. I say less noise and politics, and more art.

What does artistic Zen feel or look like to you?

NL: These pieces become part of that intimate journey of me and my soul. I am guided by intuition and the realization that my art matters. I become aware of that power when I see others connecting and reacting emotionally.

JH: Zen for me is being alone in my studio, immersed in a painting, unabashedly singing along to my favorite playlist. For me, the two art forms go hand in hand. My paintings are greatly influenced by music and the emotions that are evoked by a particular song. That is why all my works are titled after songs.

AV: I have often had to rely on my instinct in making decisions. Zen aims at enlightenment by direct intuition through meditation. As an artist, to me, meditation is the art of looking and observing.

OVR: I feel Zen when I'm in creation mode. It feels like a state of complete and pleasurable focus on the thing I love doing most — either the making of art, furiously and passionately, or the seeing, thinking, and dreaming of art. I close my eyes and I literally see colors shapes and textures come together.

In what ways do you practice Zen?

NL: Zen is a meditative state that is not necessarily practiced but becomes our way of being. It is awareness that who we are, what we do, and how we live our lives has consequences. Zen is kindness to nature and mankind, that kindness will produce immense dividends. It is that interior peace of knowing that we do all that we can possibly do to practice justice and fairness.

By being that person, I am then able to meditate and let my subconscious run free.

JH: Zen is a state of being open to anything. And traveling is another perfect way for me to achieve that. Journeying through a foreign land, camera in hand and detouring off the beaten

track with no preconceived ideas of what I might find at the other end. Just thinking about it gives me a sense of calm.

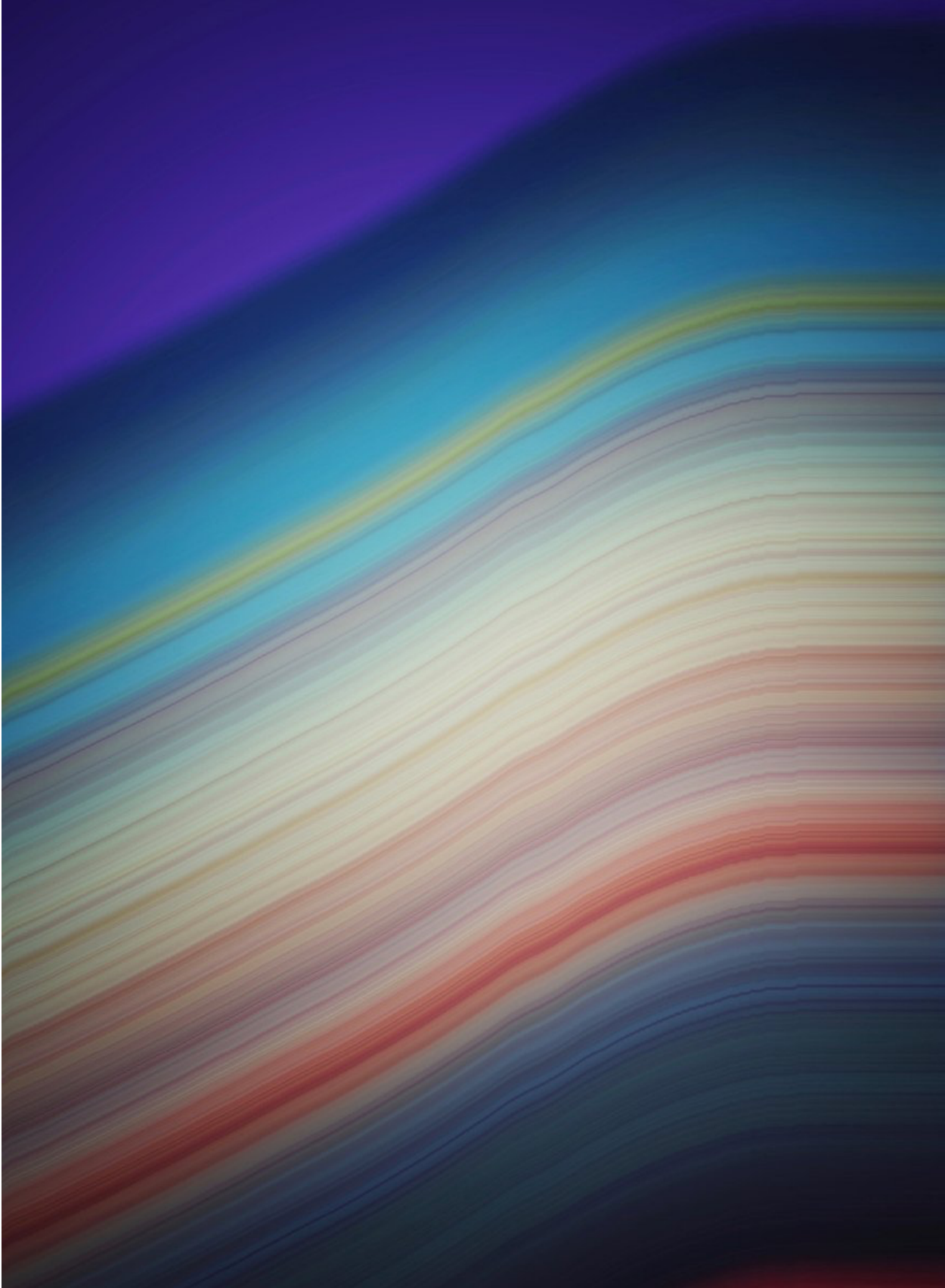
AV: By being a Dharma Bum and practicing truth, beauty, freedom, and love.

OVR: Nature is my Zen. I come out here for the trees, deer, chipmunks, and ocean. I find the city environmentally stressful and being surrounded by green is pure Zen. My giant Bernese Mountain dog Anton is my Zen partner who helps me stay in the moment.

The White Room Gallery is located at 2415 Main Street in Bridgehampton.

Visit www.thewhiteroom.com/gallery.

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Independent/Nella Lush



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