

UNFORESEEN

I had a body of work prepared to exhibit in 2020 for this very space. Like everything else, this changed when Covid 19 hit. The world seemed to stop, activities were put on hold indefinitely, and our globe learned to cope through masking and isolation, while some carried on as if nothing had happened at all.

My own world moved up and down. My studio became a place to video document what I did and how I did it. Hitting the button on my cell phone, I verbally challenged myself to explain what I was doing and why. I did this for myself, to record my “process.” On a whim I published it on YouTube. Much to my surprise, there was avid interest in these videos. They helped me reach from my isolated Montana studio to the far reaches of the world. The more I shared, the more people tuned in. This was completely unforeseen.

After attending an oil painting workshop in Mineral Point, Wisconsin as a student, I was asked to return as an instructor. Teaching there motivated me to hone my creative skills. Pandemic challenges and necessities further inspired my online teaching platform. I now have students from around the world, and created the Snail Mail Project to engage these global artists in my Pro membership group. I asked my students to send me color swatches through the postal service. Each envelope and its contents led to more than 150 collaborative works of art, many of which are on display in this show.

This exhibition reflects a life that seeks the outer reaches of mark making, inventive shapes, and color mixing. It has not yet found any boundaries, just open space. My art wishes not to be confined in any way. There are repetitions of processes I love, but the results lead me where they may. Each painting is a brick in my breathing wall - building a story in sync with life, one painting at a time.

The pandemic created great uncertainty as well as new opportunities. Art for me has become highly experimental and a way to explore cause and effect. The contrasts of chaos and order are constant, and they battle until one wins. Rampant black and white marks are tamed by a layer of solid pink in *Undercurrent*, whereas energetic looping gestures sporadically skip across four panels in *Continuity*. My visual language results from a spirit that does not rest or find quiet easily. It is often unsettled and seeks peace amidst calamities. Bits and pieces of the world fray and border on collapse. The birth of two beautiful grandchildren, our loving family, a ripening fig tree and chirping quail keep me balanced in a joyous place. The back and forth, chaos and calm, structure and surprise lead me to this place where life itself is Unforeseen.

—Pamela Caughey