



THE QUARTERLY



**Meet**  
**ERIN MCINTOSH**

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# ERIN MCINTOSH: INTERVIEW



You can find more of Erin's work at [Gregg Irby Gallery](#), [Weinberger Fine Art](#), and [Articles](#). You can also follow her IG: [@erinmcintosh](#) & visit her [website](#)

## 1. What's your background?

My family moved several times during childhood - Ohio, Texas, and Alabama - before settling in Georgia in the early 1990s.

The arts, including dance and music, have been a big part of my life and I've always loved being active. While I was engaged in visual art growing up, dance was my primary interest. I studied classical ballet through much of high school. I played various sports (softball, basketball, and cross country) and also enjoyed singing in chorus through my teen years. While I enjoyed all of these activities, by the time I went to college, I had decided to study painting and drawing, and with the encouragement of my mom, Art Education.

My main hobby is road cycling and I love being outdoors. I've ridden a bike off and on for much of the past fifteen years, but it's been the past five years that it's become central in my life. I love riding my bike, and it often now competes with studio time, riding over 100 miles each week.

## 2. What media do you prefer and how did you come to use it as your primary one?

My favorite painting media are acrylic and watercolor. My time is evenly split between the two. I became more familiar with acrylic painting in a college art class, after learning oil painting. I enjoy acrylic's versatility and the ways I can combine it with other materials. Watercolor I learned much later, first through experimentation and then in a more studied way, through teaching.

## 3. When did you first become interested in art?

Art has been a primary interest for as long as I can remember. My mother is an artist, inspiring me from an early age; she is a painter who now makes quilts. I've always loved to draw and this interest in art was supported and nurtured by my family.

## 4. What does your work aim to say?

My work is highly process-driven and my interests tend to be formal (visual) in nature. Ideas often don't drive my paintings, yet, meaning is constructed through the process of painting, unfolding through working with the material, color, and abstract form.

Movement characterizes my work, dynamic composition is common to each series. I am also driven by mixing and using color. I aim for my work to be uplifting. Sometimes I find abstract paintings to be metaphorical of human interactions and relationships. I like to think a painting can visually move someone in the way classical music can,

but, I generally find myself moved more by listening to music than to painting, so, it is something for which to strive.

## 5. How does your work comment on current social or political issues?

It generally doesn't, though, one series - "The Microbes" speaks to a subject that is common to us all, in various ways. If anything, my works aim to uplift and this particular series of work speaks to a subject that is connecting by referencing our interrelationship to things incredibly tiny yet with an enormous impact, both good and bad. It approaches the subject in an abstract and colorful way that emphasizes pattern, repetition, and beauty.

## 6. Who are your biggest influences?

Artists such as Joan Mitchell, Terry Winters, Richard Diebenkorn, Ernst Haeckel, Helen Lundeberg, Wolf Kahn, Neil Anderson, Monet, and Piero Della Francesca Other influences include delicate organic forms, geometric shapes; landscapes and watching the sky and changing light; architecture, fashion, and quilts. Microbiology

## 7. How have you developed your career?

My career started the first few years working part-time, art-related jobs (art supply store, community art center, public school art teacher). I left a full-time elementary school teaching job after one year, deciding it wasn't the right fit, and instead, pursued graduate school. While in the MFA program at UGA, I had the opportunity to teach a few college art classes, finding that I loved higher education. I pursued teaching at the college level, teaching part-time for five years before starting the full-time position at UNG, at age 35. This year I was promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure. All the while, I have pursued my studio practice and exhibiting my work. I have kept a balance between teaching and growing my career as an artist.

## 8. How do you seek out opportunities?

Read blogs and contemporary art publications, talk with peers, instructors, and other artists you meet - ask questions and seek out advice - be proactive. Learn about various arts organizations around the region and follow/participate in their programs.

Early on, I picked up a publication called New American Paintings and would scan artist resumes to learn about galleries, residency programs, and other professional activities/organizations artists were affiliated with. This was very helpful in learning where

to seek out opportunities and about what kinds of things other artists were doing.

## 9. How do you cultivate a collector base?

This evolves over time. For me, galleries have been very important in connecting my work with an audience. The first gallery I became affiliated with happened because of a website presence (in the early days of artist websites). One gallery I reached out to as a "cold call" with a carefully constructed portfolio packet, and the third gallery relationship developed after a "reconnection" with a former teaching colleague with whom I had worked with nearly a decade before. Beyond the galleries, building a collector base happens organically, as friendships do, you meet people through various activities and getting out and then put in the effort to maintain the relationship. Being organized in this pursuit is a necessity. Put a system in place and follow up with people who express interest in your work. You never know who saw your work ten years ago, who you might cross paths with, again.

## 10. How do you navigate the art world?

Reading books and art publications, listening to others, visiting museums, galleries, art fairs, participating, and attending gallery talks and art receptions. Visit art venues whenever you have an opportunity to visit a new place. Be sure to get involved in your local art center and/or a local gallery by attending their events.

## 11. Which current art world trends are you following?

I follow developments in abstraction and the continued connection between the sciences and the arts.

## 12. How do you speak to the ways art is important to society?

Creativity is central to our humanity. The various ways in which we communicate - verbally/ symbolically, visually, kinesthetically, aurally through music/sound- are each significant ways to acquire knowledge and create meaning from our experiences within the world. At the heart of artistic thinking are curiosity, open-mindedness, and working within ambiguity and uncertainty. Artists are taught to observe carefully and tune their attention to notice things that go beyond the surface "looking." Artists are keenly aware of the complex interrelationships between various disciplines and seeing a subject from multiple points of view. This kind of attention to observation, open-ended problem "finding" and solving is not only important to art but brings thoughtful inquiry to other industries and areas of study.



# HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Join us in celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month, which runs from September 15 to October 15. Hispanic Heritage Month is an annual celebration of the history and culture of the U.S. Latinx and Hispanic communities. This event commemorates how those communities contributed to our society.

**HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH ART EXHIBITION**

Presented By:  
Office of Multicultural Student Affairs  
&  
Department of Visual Arts

UNG students, faculty, and staff are invited to submit artwork to celebrate Hispanic heritage, Latinx culture, and the immigrant experience. This art exhibition intends to honor Hispanic and Latinx presence at UNG, as part of this year's Hispanic and Latinx Heritage Month.

**3 Awards**

Our Heritage Award, \$100  
Latinx Culture Award, \$100  
Immigrant Experience Award, \$100

Physical and Digital Artworks Are Welcome!

APPLY HERE!

Due: 9/24 12pm

Questions? Contact:  
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