

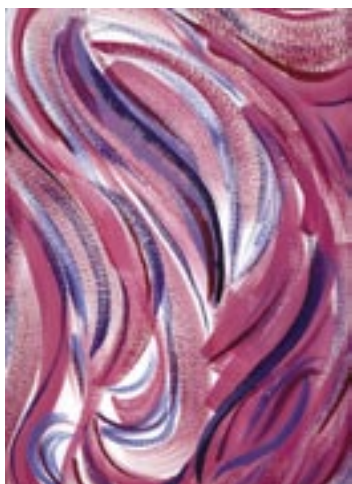


# There's a Song in my ART

Many artists like to paint to music, but have you ever tried *painting the music*?

BY JAIMIE CORDERO

A lot of painters would like to paint more freely, but aren't sure how to loosen up. I've found that painting music is an exercise that encourages painting expressively and stimulates creativity. I don't mean to just turn on the radio or put on your favorite CD while you're painting, but to actually paint what you hear. The idea is to interpret the mood of the music, the feeling of the rhythm and the emotions of the moment in terms of color, movement and patterns. Both beginning and experienced artists can produce expressive and original work by letting the music flow from their brushes. The purpose isn't to achieve a finished or perfect painting, but rather to communicate your emotions and ideas on paper, and in color. On the following pages, you'll find step-by-step instructions for this exercise and examples of painted artwork.

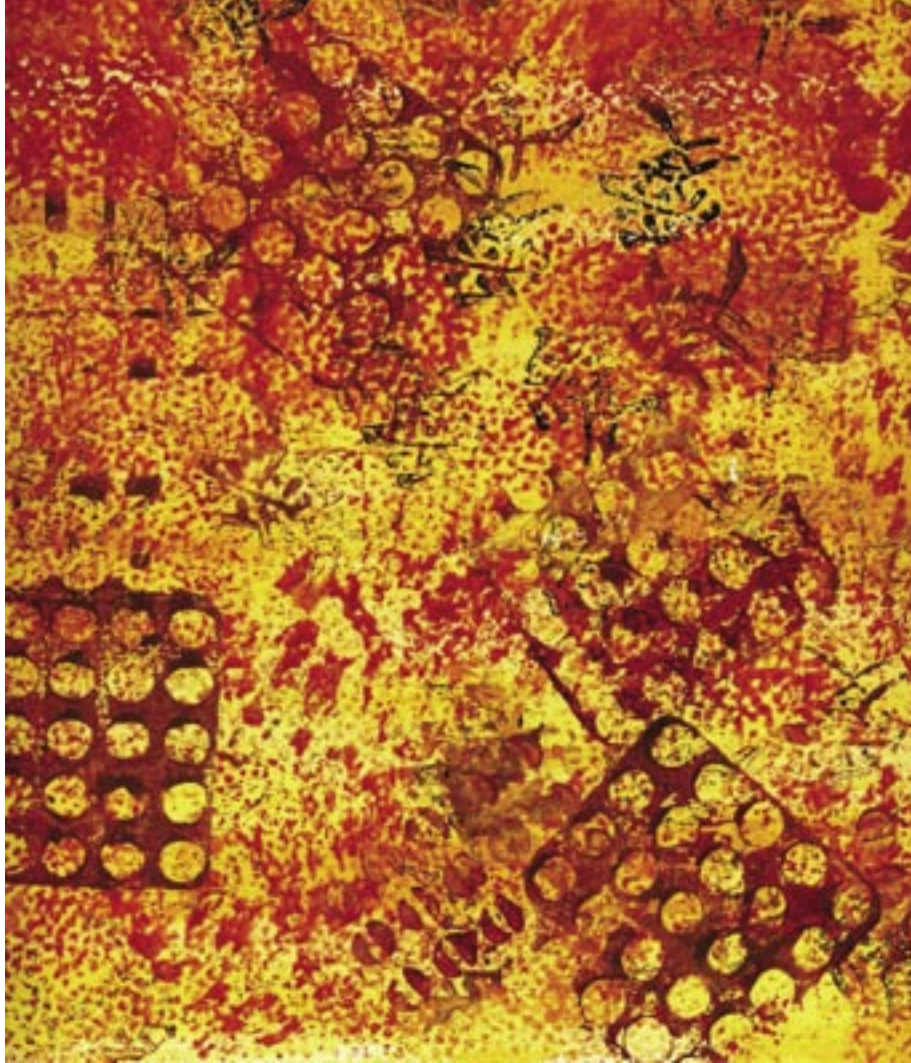


*Swirls of Pink and Purple* (watercolor, 15 x 11) by Yvonne Lim-Petersen was painted to "Lucy's" by Mindi Abair from the CD, *It Just Happens That Way*.

*Thelonius* (left; watercolor, 15 x 11) by Jaimie Cordero was painted to "Well You Needn't" by Thelonius Monk from the CD, *The Best of Thelonius Monk*.



*Shadows* (watercolor, 11 x 15) by Liliana Inguanti-Garcia was painted to "Bueno Funk" by Peter White from the CD, *Glow*.



*Vibrant Heat* (left; watercolor, 15 x 11) by Yvonne Lim-Petersen was painted to “Helelele” by Hennie Kekker from the CD, *The Jabula Rhythms of Southern Africa*.

*Jazz Beat* (opposite page; watercolor, 15 x 11) by Vivian Molinares was painted to “Well You Needn’t” by Thelonius Monk from the CD, *The Best of Thelonius Monk*.

*Sonata Serenity* (below; watercolor, 15 x 11) by Jaimie Cordero was painted to Mozart’s Piano Concerto #17 in G.



## try this!

**1** Select three to six very different pieces of instrumental music (recognizable vocals can be distracting and limit your imagination). Choose musical pieces that represent various genres, eras, tempos and moods, such as Middle Eastern belly dancing, classical piano, Spanish Flamenco guitar, Gregorian or Buddhist chants, or New Age music.

**2** Number each piece of watercolor paper to correspond with each piece of music.

**3** Set your timer for 20 minutes. By limiting yourself to 20 minutes per selection, you have enough time to cover the paper with paint, but not too much time to over think your work.

**4** Begin listening to the first piece. You’ll be replaying the song a few times depending on the length. For example, if your piece is four minutes in length, you’ll play it a total of five times. The first time you hear it, close your eyes for a moment. Imagine colors, shapes, strokes, intensity and rhythm. What does the music look like to you? Meditate on these ideas,

take a deep breath and—until the timer goes off—paint, stamp, splatter and dab.

Give yourself permission to make a mess. The more willing you are to make mess and the less you try to create a good painting, the better. Let loose and get a little crazy; you might just create art that’s stronger and more vibrant.

I also suggest that you paint standing up. Move your body with the music. Not only will you feel good, but you’ll get inspired. Paint quickly. If you paint slowly and carefully, not only will you not finish the exercise, you’ll defeat the purpose.

**5** Upon completion, write your impressions in a notebook. Include comments about your mood when you created the piece and how the tempo or style affected you.

**6** Take a short break—five to ten minutes—and then put on the next piece of music and continue the exercise on a fresh piece of watercolor paper. *§*

## supplies:

- A limited palette of transparent watercolor paints squeezed fresh from the tube (I recommend three primary or secondary colors plus one dark color)
- Large water container
- ¾-inch flat and a No. 12 round watercolor brushes
- Three to six pieces of watercolor paper (between 11-x15-inches and 15-x22-inches)
- Items to create texture such as salt, alcohol, water, toothbrushes or rubber stamps (optional)
- Paper towels
- Timer
- CD player
- Pen and notebook

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Artist **Jaimie Cordero** teaches watercolor classes and workshops at Pinecrest Gardens in the Miami, Florida area. You can see more of her artwork by visiting her Website at [www.aquarellestudiosandgalleries.com](http://www.aquarellestudiosandgalleries.com).



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