

CHALDA MALOFF: DIGITAL PAINTINGS

PROCESS

As a young graduate student in computer science in San Francisco in the early 70's, Chalda Maloff was lucky enough to receive a private demo of some of the earliest art software. The computer was a crude aesthetic instrument at that time, but she was intrigued by the possibilities.

Today, her state-of-the art studio bears scant resemblance to that of the demo. The artist's creative toolbox includes an electronic Wacom tablet with stylus, sophisticated software such as Corel Painter X3®, a Mac Pro computer®, and an Epson 9800 fine art printer®.

Maloff builds her images with freehand tablet drawing, combined with various digital effects and filters. Occasionally she incorporates a scan of one of her natural media drawings. She does not employ any type of photography in her pieces.

Each new series of works begins with a concept. Although progress can move in fits and starts over months or longer, the artist has particular mental processes for moving from abstract idea to line, color, and form.

Four features of the digital medium mesh with the artist's mindset and preferred way of working.

1. The ability to mix media, brushes, and surface textures, all done virtually, which yields stimulating and involving aesthetic effects not possible with any natural medium.
2. The zoom facility, which allows working in meticulous detail.
2. The ability to use layers and transparencies and delay committing them, which affords greater control in building tight, coherent compositions.
3. The "undo" feature, which enables her to flow with visual ideas, and evaluate multiple directions for a piece.

She prints in-house with pigment inks, which are brilliant and lightfast. Since colors on a screen appear different from colors of ink on paper, the transition from file to print is seldom straightforward. Several test prints are frequently needed, with fine-tuning of the file between printings, before the perfect image is produced.

For presentation, she face-mounts the print on a 3/8 inch thick sheet of museum-grade UV protected acrylic, with a custom designed hanging mechanism that allows it to be exhibited frameless.

Occasionally Maloff produces a single print and retires the file. Other times she produces a small edition of 3 to 12 works, varying the file somewhat between printings so that each final artwork will be unique.