

The Arts

Working on impulse

Abstraction exhibit challenges preconceived notions of art

BY KEVIN COSTELLO

One cannot avoid enjoying the range and diversity of shapes and colors in abstract art. Yet it's strange how some still have hostility for the medium, which is approaching its 100th anniversary.

Historically, abstraction has always been viewed unsympathetically in the minds of the majority -- perhaps because the artists don't make art for an audience, but to reflect their time in some unique way. They hope at least a few people will respect their hard work and believe that the gratification of looking at pure color and line has sufficient emotional meaning in itself.

The 18 artists in "Impulse," opening Wednesday at Sarasota's Allyn Gallup Contemporary Art, are all abstractionists. An overview of contemporary abstraction, the show demonstrates the emotional spectrum in this huge area of expression.

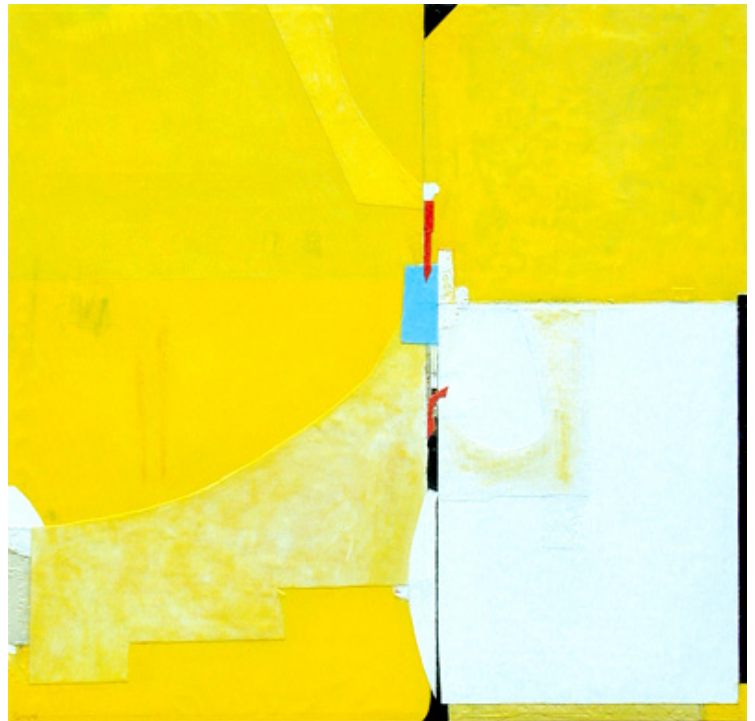
Juri Morioka luxuriates in soft-toned, biomorphic compositions of pale lavender, turquoise, red and cerulean blue atmospheric effects. Worlds of floating horizontal bands of transparent color vibrate against each other.

Morioka's "Your Rhythm" develops the internal "logic" of abstract space echoing the real world beyond it. The painting is a calm, Zenlike environment of light, translucent planes slowly oscillating toward and away from viewers.

In contrast, Carol Gove's "Morning Cast" is composed of four sections balanced by line in the service of color. Its upper left and right sections are lemon-yellow glazed over black. A black triangle at the top and a small cerulean blue vertical rectangle at its point of balance establish the vertical division of the painting. A glued swatch of shaped canvas painted pure lemon-yellow connects the division line to the top of the painting.

Nothing excessive in the process gives the finished work an understated presence. Gove has subsumed the linear strength of geometric abstraction to the romance of dramatic color and collage. The ascetic vertical white rectangle in the painting's lower-right corner anchors the artist's intentions.

"Impulse" leaves viewers with no doubt that non-representational painting and works on paper continue to generate new ideas.



Carol Gove, *Morning Cast*, 37 x 37, 2007