

CAT TESLA

artist statement

My work includes both ethereal landscapes and abstract designs. The subjects I choose to paint are organic, either originating from Mother Nature, or inspired by her. I love building layers using painting and drawing, scraping back, then adding more, pooling juicy paint, and pouring glossy translucent glazes over the surface. My artwork provides the viewer with a bold graphic element from a distance, but up close they're rewarded with rich organic details and texture.



College was a toss-up between art and science. I began with the latter and obtained a Master's Degree in Human Genetics. For 20 years I worked at Emory University seeing patients in genetic clinics. Averaging 500 patients a year, I had a range of experiences: telling someone the child they were carrying had anencephaly (lack of skull formation at the back of the head) and would not live, telling someone they inherited the BRCA1 gene mutation and had a very high risk of breast and other cancers, or telling someone their 4 year-old child who was not developing properly because they had an inherited neurodegenerative disease – eventually got to me. Certainly there was a lot of good news to parlay as well.

Because of the stress, I turned to yoga, hiking, and mindful meditation. I studied art in the evenings after genetics clinic – obtaining a degree in graphic design, followed by studies/residencies with Nicholas Wilton and Steve Aimone. I was inspired to put nature to canvas – the shapes, colors, and feelings. I went part-time in genetics, and then traded genetic counseling for a full-time art career.

The "Chrysalis Series" is an abstraction of nature employing acrylic, inks, graphite, wax crayon, oil pastel, & oil glazes. My process is inspired by the work and teachings of Franz Kline's concept of automatism. He essentially believed in first 'pouring out', then editing. I begin with an automatic drawing in graphite and wax crayon, then translucent layers are applied, followed by more mark making (drawing) & more paint layers. Various mediums are utilized to build the surface. The resulting smaller paintings are windows looking outward, while the larger paintings are abstract nature-scapes you can walk right into.

In our minds we know what a hike looks like, or a garden, a meadow, or a waterfall. *But what do they feel like?* That's what I try to convey in my painting. 2019 is my 22nd year as an international artist.

Everyone has gifts from the Creator. I believe it is the duty of each to share our gifts with the planet. My paintings are a brave look inward – revealing what lies beneath both literally and spiritually. Yogi's call it the "divine flame" – the spark that motivates you in life. In Buddha's words, "Look within, thou art the Buddha", while Jesus taught us that "The kingdom of heaven is within you". For me, painting is the most life affirming thing to do.

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Born: 1963, St. Louis, Missouri

Education:

Associate's Degree in Graphic Design, The Creative Circus (formerly the Southeastern Center for the Arts), Atlanta, GA, 1994

M.S. in Genetic Counseling, University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health, 1988

B.S. in Biology, University of Missouri-Columbia, 1986

Residencies & Additional Studies:

- 2017 & 2018 International Artist-in-Residency Award, Chateau Orquevaux, Champagne-Ardenne, France
- 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018 Individual Studies & 2 Master Residencies with Steve Aimone, Artist, Writer, and Author of "Expressive Drawing", Atlantic Center for the Arts, New Smyrna Beach, FL
- 2015, 2016 Studies with Nicholas Wilton, Artist & Teacher, Art2Life Program, Sausalito, CA

Selected Exhibitions:

- July-September, 2019, Group Show, Chicago Art Source, Chicago, IL
- February-April 2019, Fresh Paint, Chicago Art Source, Chicago, IL
- July-August, 2017, Summer Salon, Chicago Art Source, Chicago, IL
- March 2017, Women's Group Show, Muse Gallery, Hilton Head, SC
- January 2017, Alchemy Group Show, Gallery43, Roswell, GA
- December 2016, Spectrum Miami/Art Basel, Steidel Fine Art Gallery
- July-September, 2016, Group Show, Chicago Art Source, Chicago, IL
- July-August, 2015, Abstract Art Show, Muse Gallery, Hilton Head, SC
- July-August, 2015, New Works: Summer Show, Chicago Art Source, Chicago, IL
- April 2014, ArtExpo NY, New York, NY
- March 2013, Featured Artist, T. Clifton Gallery, Memphis, TN
- August-October, 2012, Quinlan Arts Center, Solo Show, Gainesville, GA
- March 2012, Quinlan Arts Center, 34th Annual Gala & Art Auction, Gainesville, GA
- September 2011, Art & Jazz Featured Artist, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Fundraiser, Atlanta, GA
- August 2011, "The Artists of Tula", Gemena Gallery of Christ Church Presbyterian, Atlanta, GA
- May 2011, Marietta/Cobb Museum of Art 2011 Art & Design Showhouse, Marietta, GA
- April 2011, Art in Bloom Gala & Art Market, Johns Creek Arts Center, Johns Creek, GA
- March 2011, Quinlan Arts Center, 33rd Annual Gala & Art Auction, Gainesville, GA
- October 2010, Featured Artist, T. Clifton Art, Memphis, TN
- September 2010, ArtScapes Show, Invitational, Knoxville Museum of Art, Knoxville, TN
- July-August, 2010, Summer Group Show, Chicago Art Source, Chicago, IL
- April-June, 2010 Spring Show, Perlow-Stevens Gallery, Columbia, MO
- 6-09 Cat Tesla & Mary Burrows, Perry Nicole Fine Art, Memphis, TN
- 2009 Atlanta Symphony Decorators' Showhouse, Atlanta, GA
- 3-09 Featured Artist, ArtXtravaganza Show, Webb School, Knoxville, TN
- 1-09, ARTifacts group show, Perry Nicole Fine Art, Memphis, TN
- 2-08, ATLart[08], Featured Artist, Lagerquist Gallery, Atlanta, GA
- 5-07, Atlanta ARTHouse [07], Atlanta, GA
- 5-07, Group Show, Lagerquist Gallery, Atlanta, GA
- 4-06, "Cat Tesla: New Works", Solo Show, Canyon Road Contemporary Art, Santa Fe, NM
- 2-06 Featured Artist, Saks 5th Avenue Artist Market & Trinity Artist Market, Atlanta, GA
- 12-05 "Annual Pin-Up Show", Museum of Contemporary Art, group show, Atlanta, GA
- 11-05 to 1-06, "Two Visions/Two Palettes", Cat Tesla & Joel Barr, Urban ArtWorks, Alpharetta, GA
- 8-05 to 10-05, "Scapes", group show, Angled Art Gallery, Paducah, KY
- 7-04 "Outside of the Box", solo show, Eastern Short Art Center Gallery, Fairhope, AL
- 02/03/04/05 Ann Jacob Gallery, Atlanta, GA & Highlands, NC
- 97/98/99 Craftworx, Alpharetta, GA
- 99/00/01/02 "Genesis Show", Roswell Cultural Arts Ctr., Roswell, GA
- 98/99/00 Heaven Blue Rose Gallery, Roswell, GA
- 99/00/01 Matilda's Enchanted Cottage, Alpharetta, GA
- 98/99/00 Primitive Eye Gallery, Decatur, GA
- 01/02 Vermilion Gallery, Atlanta, GA
- 99 William W. Fincher, Jr. & Eunice L. Fincher Visual Arts Ctr., Waleska, GA

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Representation:

Art on Centre, Amelia Island, FL
Chicago Art Source, Chicago, IL
Milward Farrell Fine Art, Madison, WI
Prairiebrooke Arts, Overland Park, KS
Studio E Gallery, Palm Beach Gardens, FL
Wyecliff Gallery, London, UK

Collections:

Adventist Hinsdale Hospital, Hinsdale, IL
Alabama Power Company, Birmingham, AL
Alliance Hospital, Dallas, TX
The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, Washington, DC
Atlantic Trust, Atlanta, GA
Baptist Hospital Medical Towers, Jacksonville, FL
Baptist Medical Center, Carthage, MS
Briggs & Veselka Co., Houston, TX
Brightworth, Atlanta, GA
California Bank & Trust, Carlsbad, CA
Christine & Neil Dietsch, Tuscaloosa, AL
Cold Chain Technologies, Franklin, MA
Comanche County Medical Center, Comanche, TX
Comanche County Memorial Hospital, Lawton, OK
Condell Medical Center, Libertyville, IL
Deaconess Hospice House, Evansville, IN
Drinker, Biddle, and Reath, Washington, DC
FedEx Family House, Memphis, TN
Federal Reserve Bank, Jacksonville, FL Branch
Florida Hospital for Women, Orlando, FL
Foley & Mansfield, Attorneys at Law, St. Louis, MO
Fort Belvoir Community Hospital, Fort Belvoir, VA
Fort Riley Irwin Community Army Hospital, Fort Riley, KS
Georgian Bank, Atlanta, GA
Gordon Hospital, Calhoun, GA
Harris Methodist Hospital, Fort Worth, TX
Hill-Rom, Batesville, IN
Heritage Financial Services, Boston, MA
Houston Methodist Hospital, Houston, TX
Jersey Shore University Medical Center, Hope Tower, Neptune, NJ
John & Jean Lansing, Knoxville, TN
JTM MKE, Brookfield, WI
Kaiser Hospital, San Diego, CA
Kaiser Permanente Medical Office Building, Victorville, CA
Kaiser Permanente, Mission Viejo Medical Office Building, Mission Viejo, CA
Ken & Leslie Parent, Knoxville, TN
Kingwood Medical Center, Kingwood, TX
Kirkland Cancer Center, Jackson-Madison County General Hospital, Jackson, TN
Koons-Fuller, Family Law, TX
KRG Capital, Denver, CO
Long Island Jewish Hospital, New York, NY
Magee Women's Hospital, Pittsburgh, PA
Methodist Hospital, Arcadia, CA
Methodist West Houston Hospital, Houston, TX
Miami Valley Hospital, Dayton, OH
Mississippi Retina Associates, Ridgeland, MS
Norman Regional Hospital, Norman, Oklahoma
North Shore Long Island Jewish Hospital Forest Hills, Queens, NY
Northern Trust Bank, Chicago, IL
Northside Hospital Cherokee, Canton, GA
Northwest Community Hospital, Chicago, IL
Northwestern Medicine, Chicago, IL

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Collections (continued):

Nueterra Healthcare, Kansas City, MO
Oklahoma Heart Hospital, Oklahoma City, OK
Parkview Regional Medical Center, Fort Wayne, Indiana
Parkview Hospital Randallia, Fort Wayne, Indiana
Peter F. Reinecke, St. Louis, MO
Pioneer Square Courtyard by Marriott, Seattle, WA
Primary Care Medical Specialists, Des Plaines, IL
ProHealthcare Medical Clinic, Mukwonago, WI
Riverside Doctor's Hospital Williamsburg, VA
RSUI, Atlanta, GA
Saint David's North Austin Medical Center, Austin, TX
Saint John's Mercy Hospital, St. Louis, MO
Saint Elizabeth's Hospital, Belleville, IL
San Jacinto Methodist Hospital, Baytown, TX
Schulz Eye & Surgery Center, Savannah, GA
Scripps Del Mar, Plastic Surgery & Reconstruction, San Diego, CA
Scripps Clinic, Dermatology Suite, San Diego, CA
Sedgwick LLP, Newark, NJ
Sharp Rees Stealy, San Diego, CA
Shirley Ryan AbilityLab, Chicago, IL
Skip & Nancy Elsas, Coconut Grove, FL
State Street Corporation, Boston, MA
Cheryl & Joseph Risko, Heathrow, FL
Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital, Dallas, TX
Texas Health Resources Emergency Department, Fort Worth, TX
The BVA Group, Houston, TX
The Daniel Group, Kennesaw, GA
The Settings Development Companies, Atlanta, GA
University of Texas, Tyler, TX
Lee & Jeanne Walls, Birmingham, AL
Washington Hospital Center, Heart & Vascular Institute, Washington, DC
Waukesha Memorial Hospital, Waukesha, WI
The Westin Hotel, Savannah, GA
Willowbrook Methodist Hospital, Houston, TX
Wellstar Medical, Vinings, GA

Movies:

-2015, "Scream" TV series, Next Film, Inc., "Whisper" image, set dressing
-2014 Fathers & Daughters, F& D Productions, Inc., starring Aaron Paul, Russell Crowe, & Amanda Seyfried.
"Horizons I & II", "New Day", set dressing for an office in the film.

Press:

[-Florida Décor, June 2019, Palm Beach Edition, page 23, http://florida-decor.com/images/June2019%20issuePALMBEACH.pdf](http://florida-decor.com/images/June2019%20issuePALMBEACH.pdf)

-As seen in House & Garden Magazine, Art Edit, June, July, August 2019



-ATGhousing.com, featured artist: **<https://www.atghousing.com/featured-artist-august-2018>**

-VoyageATL, July 2018: **<http://voyageatl.com/interview/check-cat-teslas-artwork/>**

-Atlanta Midtown Lifestyles Magazine, September 2017, "Serenity", page 34:

http://issuu.com/lifestylepubs/docs/midtown_2017_9_print?e=10131829/5222807

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Press (continued):

-Muse Gallery director offers 'blend of artistic experience' for visitors: review of abstract art show, Muse Gallery Hilton Head, July 2015

http://www.islandpacket.com/2015/07/16/3839918_muse-gallery-director-offers-blend.html?rh=1

-CodaMagazine Feature: Transformative Walls, June 2015, <https://flipboard.com/@codaworx/codamagazine%3A-transformative-walls-it6a307oz>

-Memphis Magazine, March 2013

-NPR Station WKNO Memphis, Interview with Cat Tesla, March 22, 2013

-Examiner.com, Arts & Galleries Examiner, February 2013, <http://www.examiner.com/article/atlanta-abstract-artist-shares-talent-with-area-art-lovers-at-artfest-fort-myers>

-Nashville Arts Magazine, July & October 2012

-San Diego Magazine, April 2012

-Simply Buckhead Magazine, November/December 2011

-Genetics in Medicine, August 2011, Cover, "Morning Mist"

-Simply Buckhead, July/August 2011 Issue, page 29

(pictured on left is Cat Tesla's "In the Distance", 48"x48" mixed media on canvas landscape)

-Columbia Daily Tribune, Columbia, Missouri, Sunday edition, April 11, 2010

-Columbia Business Times, April 30, 2010: The Art of Nature

-Kansas City REVIEW: The Art of Nature, April 15, 2010

-American Art Collector, October 2009, "Evolution"

-Genetics in Medicine, April 2009, Cover, "Arrival I"

-StudioVisit Magazine, April 2009, "Outside of the Box"

-American Art Collector, October 2008, "Outside of the Box "

-The Emory Report, February 11, 2008

-Southern Living Magazine, Georgia Living Section, February 2008

-American Art Collector, October 2007, "Elements"

-Art Business News, August 2007, "Fluid in Motion", pp. 31-33.

-Genetics In Medicine, September 2005, Cover, "Family Tree"

-The Santa Fe Opera Magazine, 2005, "The Clearing"

-Genetics in Medicine, May 2005, Cover, "Discovery"

-Art Galleries & Artists of the South, Summer 2004

-The Roswell Neighbor, September 2002, "Cabernet"

-The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, August 2001, "Flower Box II"

-Genetics in Medicine, May/June 2001, Cover, "Jagged Edge"

-Museum & Gallery Guide, Atlanta, May/June 2001, "Unity"

-The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, January 2000, "Grape Divine"

Recent Awards:

-2016/2017, Best in Painting, Brookhaven Fine Arts Show, Atlanta, GA

-2016, Juror's Choice, Des Moines Art Festival, Des Moines, IA

-2016, Award of Merit, Winter Park Art Show, Winter Park, FL

-2015, Best in Show, Brookhaven Fine Arts Show, Atlanta, GA

-2015, Best in Painting, Estero Fine Art Show, Estero, FL

-2014, Best in Painting, Estero Fine Art Show, Estero, FL

-2012, Best in Mixed Media, Cultural Arts Alliance, Seaside, FL

-2012, Collectors Choice X3, Deland Art Show, Deland, FL

Professional Associations & Teaching:

2005-present National Association of Independent Artists, Member

2008-2012 Artists-4-Alzheimers, Volunteer Workshop Teacher for patients with Alzheimers,

William Bremen Jewish Home, Atlanta, GA

Books:

2017

Contributing Author, *Secrets of the Art World: Getting Real about the Process, Business, and Selling of Your Work*, By: Litsa Spanos, June 2017.

CAT TESLA

bio

Cat Tesla was born in St. Louis, Missouri in 1963. As a child she loved art and science, excelling in both. After receiving awards for her artwork in high school, she was given a scholarship for the first year of college if she majored in art, but was also awarded academic scholarships. "It was a difficult decision to decide what you wanted to do the rest of your life", says Tesla, the daughter of a mechanical engineer and mathematician, "but at the time I chose science." She obtained a B.S. in Biology, M.S. in Human Genetics, and later, an Associate's Degree in Graphic Design. Tesla became a faculty member of Emory University's Department of Human Genetics in 1990, working as a genetic counselor at Emory University for nearly 20 years before trading genetics clinic for art studio. Aside from genetics clinic, Cat also served as Marketing Director for the Emory Genetics Laboratory, was the Director of Genetic Counselors, and also conducted seminal research in the area of public education in genetics.

It was in 1997 that Cat went part-time in genetics to begin a journey that would eventually cause her to leave Emory University altogether. Tesla began exhibiting her paintings and things quickly took off. Defying popular stereotypes about right-brained and left-brained people, she had to juggle seeing patients in genetics clinic during the day, while painting in the evenings to get ready for shows. In 2002 Tesla planned to leave Emory but everything changed when her husband was diagnosed with colorectal cancer at the age of 41. "Getting the news of your young husband's cancer diagnosis was like being clobbered with a baseball bat", Cat recalls. Our lives turned upside-down and plans to be a full-time artist were put on hold. Cat's husband, Simo, has since fully recovered and is her art business partner and studio assistant.

Tesla's creative-side brought a new dimension to the workings of the Department of Human Genetics at Emory and they didn't want her to leave. The Department found ways to work around Cat's art schedule so that she could continue to work in both 'worlds'. Although she quit for the third time in 2006, she wrote a research grant that year that was funded and agreed to finish the research project by working one day a week through 2009. Tesla published her research as the lead article in the journal *Genetics in Medicine*, where they also put one of her paintings on the cover.

Early in Tesla's genetics career she began her practice of yoga, hiking, and mindful meditation. "My brain found peace and calm in nature, while mindful meditation allowed me to traverse more easily between the worlds of art and science", said Cat. Scientists hypothesize that being in nature allows the prefrontal cortex, the brain's command center, to dial down and rest, like an overused muscle. In fact, after just a 3 day camping trip, you can increase your problem solving by 50 percent.

It was inevitable that Mother Nature would become Tesla's muse. Her "Chrysalis Series" is an abstraction of nature, where her goal is to convey what it feels like being in it. Cat explains: "In my paintings I like to combine the opposing forces that exist in nature: birth, growth, death, decay, and rebirth. Hard edges, soft edges, dark against light. The visual relationships in my work speak of the polarities of the organization of sunflower petals (unity) against the scattering of leaves in a storm (discord), for example." Aside from Cat's degree in graphic design, she has done multiple residencies with Steven Aimone, author of "Expressive Drawing", studies with artist Nicholas Wilton, in addition to two international art residencies in France. In 2019 Tesla began teaching workshops on abstract painting in Santa Fe with fellow artist Julie Schumer.

Cat's husband Simo is a classically-trained accordionist who plays with the Atlanta Balalaika Orchestra, a Swedish ensemble and a Balkan music ensemble. He is also an avid photographer and paints small surrealist works in his spare time. Together the Tesla's travel extensively around the country to meet with collectors at art shows.

Cat and Simo live in a quiet suburb of Atlanta with a family of bluebirds who have taken up residence in their backyard.