

ART

inspires



Art Inspires Calm

Artist: Kim McKay

In 2008, Kim McKay was living in Texas when Hurricane Ike swept across the Americas, leaving hundreds dead, thousands displaced, and devastation everywhere.



Kim, an architect for most of her professional life, witnessed the destruction first-hand. "Everything was totaled," she says. "There were boats in the road. 75% of the houses in Galveston were damaged. I went and helped some of my neighbors clean up. It was terrible."

The event left Kim feeling intensely upset, anxious, and stressed, and so, she started to paint.

"It calmed me down enough to deal with the chaos that was all around me. When everything gets upended like that around you, sometimes you have to disappear into whatever you're doing and art gives me a way to do that. **Art saved me.**"

It also provided a way for her to process the pain.

"I did a painting about the hurricane. Embedded in the painting are the names of all the people that died in the hurricane," which was very therapeutic for her.

Ultimately, Kim says art brings **calm** into her life.

"For me, art is calming. If I can get deep enough into the piece I'm working on, I just go to a **calm** place. When I start getting too intense about stuff, I just paint and then it goes away. I think if we had more art, maybe we wouldn't have so much craziness in this world."



The calming effect of art has served Kim over and over through the years, including during the pandemic and lockdown and now through the terrible news surrounding war.

When Kim retired, she left Texas and made a beeline for her hometown: **Tucson**.

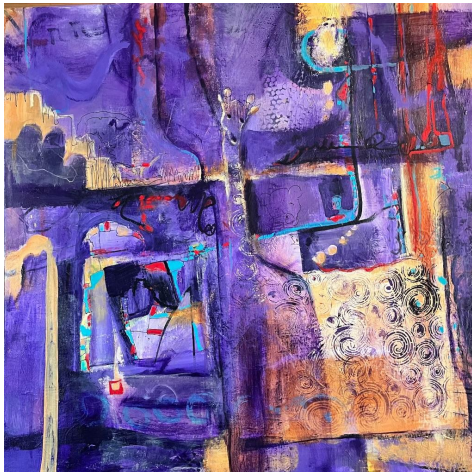
"As soon as I got to Tucson, I grabbed a friend of mine with whom I had done art and we came down to **The Drawing Studio** together and started art classes."

"I love the people that I've met at The Drawing Studio and the teachers I've taken classes from. It's been great for me because everybody kept saying, 'You've got to have some plan when you retire.' And I said, 'Well, I'm going to paint. That's what I want to do. I've been waiting my whole life.'"

Thank you for sharing your story with us, Kim! If you are inspired by Kim and wish to contribute to our end of year campaign, please visit <https://thedrawingstudiotds.org/about-us/support/donate-online/> or scan the QR code to the right with your smart phone camera.



*The Drawing Studio is a local arts nonprofit bringing art education and experiences to thousands of folks every year. We rely on donations like yours to increase arts access through free and reduced-cost arts programming. Thank you for your support! **Our EIN is 86-0992193***



**Kim McKay is a regular student of Lisa Mishler's Abstract Painting Studio.
You can find more of her work at ktmckay.com**