

# laurie breen

## artist statement

Each of my pieces is the result of a deeply personal journey. When I begin, I have no idea how a painting will turn out. I do not have a plan. I start in an uninhibited manner, approaching the blank canvas with intuitive painting and drawing, piles of collage, lines, shapes, too many colors. Along the way, I take wrong turns, make mistakes, create ugliness. I try to keep my critical voice low, trusting the process as I build up layers, moving toward chaos.

The middle of the painting is the hardest part, when I have to make decisions but I still don't know where I'm going, when it's starting to come together but not working yet. It is at this point that I may falter, that I struggle with insecurity and doubt. To continue on, I have to risk losing what I have created. I fortify myself with the knowledge that I have survived previous journeys. I forge ahead, finding new paths and eventually reaching a place I could not have predicted but must have been heading for all along, a place of beauty and energy and balance and movement.

In today's world, I find that I need to explore, to challenge myself, to go through this process again and again. I create chaos on my canvas which reflects both the chaos I see in the world and the chaos of my life—the daily mayhem, the mess, the everyday moments, the political divide, the uncertainties about our future. As I work, I discover over and over again that I can find my way through, that the right and wrong choices I make add depth and richness to the completed piece. The end result is meaningful not in spite of, but because of, the path I took to get there. I am compelled to share the beauty I see in the world and my journey through it, to share the joy I feel in reaching my destination.

## bio

Laurie Breen is a mixed media painter with a studio at the Gateway Arts Center in Brentwood, Maryland. Her artwork is distinctive in its use of layering, bold colors and appealing forms. She exhibits in solo, group and juried shows in the Washington, DC area and beyond.

Laurie has been painting, exhibiting and selling her work for over twenty years. Her work is in private and public collections, including the Hotel at the University of Maryland, Kaiser Permanente, the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities Art Bank and Douglas Development. She has executed commissions both small and large. Laurie is a three-time recipient of the Individual Artist Grant from the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County.

Laurie lives in Silver Spring, Maryland with her husband and two children.