

Art exhibit exudes energy

Brenda Heim's works have an Asian influence

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Brenda Heim's paintings blaze with energy — energy released by her spontaneous handling of the paint.

Her large canvases allow her to paint actively, not just with her hands, but with her whole body.

Heim's one-woman show, "Calligraphic Abstract Expressionism," opens with an artist's reception from noon to 4 p.m. Sunday at the Lake Eustis Museum of Art.

The Umatilla-based artist also will be on hand from 6 to 8 p.m. today during the Eustis Street Party and from 5 to 8 p.m. Thursday, when the Eustis Chamber of Commerce holds its Business After Hours in the museum.

Her recent paintings are often embellished with strings of fanciful calligraphy, kanji — a Japanese system of writing based on Chinese characters, red dots and playful comments.

In "Amethyst Abstract," Heim adds the words *Tra La La* to an acrylic on canvas with gold metallic powders.

The paintings' Asian themes are accentuated by a gatelike structure in the center of the room that frames the painting "There Is Beauty in Peace" on the rear wall.

The East-meets-West portal is a twisty oak branch, covered with lichens, leaves and acorns, dripping Spanish moss, which tops two terracotta-colored columns. A rope and wood swing is suspended from the branch. A paint-encrusted drop cloth and a spattered pair of sandals lie on the floor beneath.

Mary Ziegengast, president of the museum, praised Heim for the installation.

"This shows we can morph the room into something wonderful," she said.

The columns are faced with black-on-white abstract calligraphy done with Sumi ink on watercolor paper.

Heim's work is often accompanied by mini-essays about the piece.

Next to "My Heart Is Om," which includes the kanji for *devotion* and



grace, Heim wrote: "I could easily roll out an 8-foot-by-300-foot canvas down the street and paint to my heart's content, splishing and splashing all the way."

Heim, who is from Alliance, Ohio, attended Lake-Sumter Community College. She has exhibited widely and gives painting workshops across the state.

The exhibit will continue through Sept. 30 at the Lake Eustis Museum of Art, 113 N. Bay St., which is open Mondays through Saturdays from noon to 4 p.m.

For more information, call 352-483-2900.



Opens Sunday. Brenda Heim's show opens with a reception. Her works include Japanese symbols, such as those in "There Is Beauty in Peace" (below).

KELLY GRIFFITH/ORLANDO SENTINEL