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By Kelly Dickey | The Herald Bulletin | May 8, 2017

ANDERSON — With their use of colors and strokes, abstract paintings are often misunderstood. They elicit a typical response: My kid could make that.

But last year when the Anderson Center for the Arts highlighted abstract works from Hoosier artists, including Madison County's David Michael Slonim, locals had an open mind.

"A lot of our audience, it was their first real introduction to abstract art," Executive Director Deborah Stapleton said. "So we had this group of people who were just being introduced, just learning how to respond to it and how to understand it."

That curiosity led to "Abstract II," an exhibition featuring four Hoosier abstract artists. It runs concurrently this month with photography and mixed media abstract artist Nolan Preece's exhibition in the West Gallery.

More than 50 pieces hang by Indiana artists Dan Annarino, Paula Dalton, Heidi Harner and Avon Waters, each with their distinctive styles.

Annarino blends traditional and contemporary patterns in his many pieces devoted to Indiana landscape. He plays with lines and horizons, especially in "earthscape 29," which combines a horizontal canvas with a vertical one.

Waters' works are also influenced by the land, as well as the world in general. The strokes and color usage in his pieces are heavily influenced by music, other cultures and avant-garde influencers.

Dalton — an Anderson artist — uses layers and layers of color to create shapes that are often circular, yet somehow simultaneously angular at times.

Harner's work was featured in the art center's abstract exhibition last year, but this year's pieces work with a different color palette. Several explore greens and are inspired by the earth and seasons.

Stapleton hopes the variation in styles will showcase the talent and thought that goes into the genre of work.

"(It's) turning people's thinking around that, OK, look at the colors, look at the shapes and the patterns and enjoy a piece of artwork for the layers and the depths it has," she said. "...Some of it is pure abstraction about line and pattern and color and almost expressionistic in some ways of expressing themselves or a feeling.

"And others are more – it's kind of like taking something you recognize or know and turning it more into geometric shapes, so suddenly a tree becomes a triangle."

"Abstract II" is on display through June 22. Gallery hours are noon to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 2 to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Admission is \$4, \$2.50 for age 55 and older, \$2 for students and free for age 4 and younger. Admission is half off Tuesdays and free the first Sunday of each month.

Like Kelly Dickey on Facebook and follow her on Twitter @KellyD_THB, or call 765-640-4805.

If you go

What: Abstract II

Where: Anderson Center for the Arts, 32 W. 10th St.

When: Noon to 5 p.m. Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays and 2 to 5 p.m. Sundays through June 22

Cost: \$4; \$2.50 for age 55 and older; \$2 for students; free for age 4 and younger.



John P. Cleary | Paula Dalton's "Dirt 3: Summer" uses layers of color to create circular shapes that have an angular feel to them.



John P. Cleary | Heidi Harner focused on greens inspired by the earth and seasons for “Abstract II”. Her “Culture of Generosity” used mixed media on cradled panel board.



John P. Cleary | Heidi Harner participated in last year's abstract exhibition at the arts center. "Let the Land Lie Fallow" is a mixed media on cradled panel board.



John P. Cleary | Dan Annarino created “earthscape 8”, an oil on gallery-edged canvas. He combines horizontal with a vertical in this piece and typically, his works represents images of Indiana.