Anna Ursyn
Transformational Scapes

Kemper Room Art Gallery
Paul V. Galvin Library
January 25 - February 24, 2007

Opening reception:
Thursday, January 25, 4:30 - 7:30 pm

Exhibition hours:
Monday - Thursday: 12 noon - 6 pm
Friday: 12 noon - 5 pm
Saturday: 8:30 am - 5 pm
Sunday: 2 - 6 pm

art.iit.edu

The juxtaposition of nature’s regularly with man’s physical and intellectual constructions; Anna Ursyn’s twenty year digital exploration of what the technological and human worlds have in common.

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College of Architecture

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Kemper Room Art Gallery
Paul V. Galvin Library
Illinois Institute of Technology
35 W. 33rd Street, Chicago, IL 60616

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for additional information, complete hours, and related events:
art.iit.edu

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Anna Ursyn writes about her work:

Natural order infuses several levels of both worlds: some determined by man and some determined by nature. It guides our understanding of big data sets related to network analysis. Acutely aware of order, I examine what technological and human worlds have in common. My task is to juxtapose the regularity of nature with man’s constructions, both physical and intellectual. The big city images, for example, combine how humans affect their environment, and at the same time, how a city metaphor reflects rhythm and organization of big data sets, and makes data mining easier.

Some of my computer graphics explorations serve as a point of departure for a series of prints and sculptures. Processes in nature and events in technologies inspire my images. I transform an image of an animal into a simple image, an iconic object such as a rocking horse or a symbolic picture of a man or a bird, to present them in dynamic movement as the visible texture of the sky and the ground. Such processes also support my instruction in computer art and graphics, where students learn to create artwork inspired with science and demonstrate what they understand of scientific concepts.

I use repetition of lines, shapes and forms, select color combinations, change light intensity, and apply grid patterns and moiré effects. I convert, distort, and manipulate images by scaling, rotating, slanting, assigning various perspectives and changing the point of view (the center of direction of projection).

Typically, my creating art runs through stages. First I draw abstract geometric designs as starting points for executing my computer programs. I use the computer on different levels. Some of my computer programs produce two dimensional images; others are three depending on my composition’s final dictates. Then I add photographic content using scanners and digital cameras, photolithographs after computer programs and photo silkscreened prints on canvas and paper; they are included both into my two-dimensional and three-dimensional works. All of these approaches are combined for image creation with the use of paintier markings.

Some of my images are about music and noise inherent to the big cities. They encourage viewers to ponder about the nice and the displeasing sounds and the music of the urban environment, which creates the rhythm of living, evokes memories and defines the city’s style and character. Changing the appearance of programmed images adds more dimensions to the picture. One can obtain a gradation of color intensity using reiterating lines, grid patterns and some chiaroscuro effects, as well as moire effects, so 2D drawings gain a 3D look. Gradation of the intensity of color gives the effect of 3D space through the use of shading, similar to hand drawing.


The studio of Anna Ursyn can be reached at: www.ursyn.com, ursyn@unco.edu or 970-351-2476.
Now Showing
Computers and Chaos

By Fred Camper
February 16, 2007

Anna Ursyn
WHEN Through 2/24
WHERE Illinois Institute of Technology, Galvin Library, 35 W. 33rd, 2nd fl.
INFO 312-567-5293

ANNA URSYN'S PRINTS at the Illinois Institute of Technology -- which incorporate photographic fragments and computer-generated geometrical shapes -- have a complexity and suppleness unusual in computer graphics. Ursyn often repeats elements, sometimes with variations, to convey a sense of our cluttered landscapes and, as she writes, "the noise inherent to big cities." GPS (2006) shows similar images of a highway and an overpass pasted together to make a horizon, with a maze of cars and highways below. The scene is a mix of order and disorder, but the restrained tones and the blue sky above give it a gentle, open feeling characteristic of Ursyn's art.

"Order and repetition have fascinated me my whole life," says Ursyn, who was born and raised in Warsaw. "I look at architecture and man-made constructions for composition and pattern and the way the space is organized." Though she continues to paint and draw, as she has since childhood, she likes the way computers can create identical or distorted repetitions. She's also "intrigued by the fact that the computer is very precise and can do things that a messy person cannot." Ursyn's father, who began using computers when she was very little, once bought her a coloring book, and when she wanted to "do everything at once," she says, and "he saw how messy my work was, he insisted that I color it one page at a time." Even as a child she was interested in landscapes and urban areas alike, often drawing or painting scenes of nature and seeing up the culture of the cities her parents took her to. "Vienna and Florence were very important to me," she says. "Those are cities where you explore different layers."

Ursyn went to art school in Warsaw and got her MFA in 1983. After winning a two-year artist's grant from the Solidarity movement, she painted fields at the edges of Warsaw, which was expanding rapidly into the countryside. "People were fertilizing the ground," she says, "trying to make the soil the best for growing cabbages or corn -- and then all of a sudden you have a totally different meaning for the ground." When she enrolled in another MFA program, at the University of Wyoming, in 1986, she was pleased to see on a floor plan that there was a "McIntosh room," which she assumed would be a Mac lab. She quickly discovered that it was the studio of someone named McIntosh; the art department had no computers. She arranged for time on the university's mainframe, taught herself Fortran, and began to write graphics programs, manually entering the numbers corresponding to points and lines. She had to guess at the results, which she wouldn't see for hours, but she found the gap appealing. "The beauty of programming is that it's much more unpredictable than drawing with a mouse," she says. Several works in the current show, including this completely abstract Report From Colorado were created during that time, and the soft edges of its geometrical shapes and its remarkable depth effects create a feeling of vast space, the lines and stripes barely holding together in the face of the infinite.

Ursyn helped the University of Wyoming art department get its first Mac and entered an interdisciplinary PhD program, focusing on the integration of science and art. In 1993 she got a job teaching at the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley, where she lives today. After she left grad school, she says, her art became less abstract and more "story based." Common Desire of Spinach Eaters (2003) is a work in seven vertical panels that includes the repeating forms of a farmer, a wheeled vehicle, and ducks; she says it's about the "progression from the production of goods to their consumption." Pitch and Volume (2003) was inspired by her father, an acoustician. "It's about how sound influences our perception of a city." In it wildly diverse forms -- cars, rows of keys and home, abstract shapes made of dense lines -- seem to be colliding cacophonously. }