Between Dream & Reality

Visionary artist Samantha Keely Smith's paintings occupy the surreal space existing somwhere between the ethereal and the physical.

Perhaps one of the greatest qualities of abstract art is that it evokes our imagination—instead of presenting us with a concrete, clearly defined form, it invites us to co-create with the artist and read into it what we will. Like an amorphous bank of clouds drifting through the afternoon sky, everyone sees something different. The experience is personalized and unique, and deeply reflects our own perceptions and dreams. Inspiration, as they say, breeds inspiration.

And what better embodiment of this form than the surreal paintings of Samantha Keely Smith, an English-born and New York–raised artist whose paintings, in her own words, occupy "a timeless place that hovers between dream and reality." And certainly expressions of each can be clearly seen in her work, which definitely evokes the essence of the natural world in an entirely impressionistic way.

Each painting is an ethereal evolution of form, as she states of her work it "is painted and partially destroyed many times before completion, resulting in a complex surface that is informed by the limits of the materials themselves in conjunction with a response to the traces of the painting's former incarnations."

Her paintings conjure an undeniably visceral reaction in the viewer—Smith somehow manages to translate raw emotion into physical form, which is something many artists strive for but few are able to achieve so vividly. Her paintings command attention with their dramatic, swirling waves and explosions of color, and yet reveal themselves in ever subtler layers of detail and finesse. As one is slowly drawn into the otherworldly images, new shapes and forms begin to emerge and the complexity and depth of her work can be fully appreciated.

To learn more about Samantha and view a complete portfolio of her paintings, visit her website: samanthakeelysmith.com