



Kyle
Selley

www.kyleselley.com
mail@kyleselley.com
(913) 963-9597

Artist Statement

The smells and sounds produced by fireworks continue to fill me with an invigorating sense of nostalgia and inspiration. I will never forget my childhood memories of the unique marks and colors left by the fireworks we ignited on my uncle's driveway every Fourth of July. Inspired by these memories and feelings, I rediscovered fireworks as a mark-making medium during my undergraduate education at the Kansas City Art Institute.

Fireworks ignite a part of the human psyche that is innately curious and captivated by irregular light and movement. I am studying to gain a better understanding of people's reaction to fireworks and to compare these findings to my own interests and personal history. My continued fascination with fireworks manifests my belief that childhood interests must be deliberately nurtured rather than disregarded because they are sincere and unjaded. Through nostalgia, playfulness, and unpredictability, my art practice allows me to connect with the childlike sense of sublimity and openness that was progressively forgotten as I became an adult.

I archive the ephemeral beauty of fireworks through multiple mediums-glass, plexiglass, canvas, paper, ceramics, digital imagery, videography, and performance. My most recent series, *Spiritual Renderings*, was created by igniting smoke bombs and transferring the pigment onto canvas. This series is a more refined version of my artistic process and an exploration into the juxtaposition of fireworks as a gentle art form. Unlike traditional pyrotechnics, my work explores novelty fireworks as delicate and serene rather than erratic and forceful. Through fluid, atmospheric images, I provide a subtle experience of meditative sublimity, similar to what I feel while creating the work.

Following Kandinsky's desire to convey profound spirituality through a universal visual language, these *Spiritual Renderings* express the evolution of my own spiritual life and the

recent progress I have made. Creating art has always been a spiritual process but my awareness of this has become heightened. During the COVID-19 lockdown, I got sober, improved my diet, made commitments to charity, and began studying vipassana, ethics, and stoicism, through teachers like Tara Brach, Sam Harris, William B. Irvine, and David Whyt. Along with ancient philosophers like Aristotle, Marcus Aurelius, and Seneca. These studies have brought a deeper sense of peace and acceptance. My work is produced through experimentation, intuition, and moment-to-moment reactions to the aberrant marks created by fireworks. It is a balance between control and acceptance. As my mind has found a deeper sense of peace and tranquility, the aesthetic of my work has organically and unconsciously been influenced. I've chosen to accept and embrace this.

Nostalgia and spirituality are intrinsic to us, yet mysterious and not easily defined. They are deeply individualistic and sacred human experiences. These transcendental occurrences are closely linked through their sublime and ephemeral nature. My art practice continues to evolve through nostalgic contemplation and spiritual growth, along with my understanding of these concepts and their convergence.