

Future of art is looking blue

By **Viola Brown**

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All the works in the Blue Door Art Center's latest show were made using art apps on iPads and iPhones or computer programs like Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop.

Co-curator and Gallery Manager Robin Hutchinson hopes that "Future/Canvas: The Emerging Medium of Digital Art" will expand visitors' conceptions of art and prove that works made through digital means can make the same claims to beauty as more traditional approaches.

Artist Bob Robinson has spent about 20 years making art with computers and has had his work rejected from publications due to the fact that it is digital.

"I would understand if I'm not working in the style that you are looking for," said Mr. Robinson, whose portraits made with Adobe Illustrator are featured in the show at the Yonkers gallery. "But what does the medium have to do with it? Art has always involved technology."

Alix Merritt has been painting for over 30 years. When she bought her first iPad in 2011, she had no intention of painting with it. But she started downloading art apps and enjoyed the experience.

"I fell in love with it and experimented with what I could do," said Ms. Merritt. "[With] tools like a palette knife... you are dragging the colors the way you would on a canvas."

She credits technology with allowing her to create abstract works and experiment with how she views the world. She predicts more artists will utilize digital tools over the coming years.

Co-curator Jean Messner likes digital art because it allows her to create wherever she is. She is also able to easily put her work on social media and make her pieces more accessible to the public.

"It gives me the ability as an artist to always be able to do art because I'll always have tools," said Ms. Messner. "I get to experiment since I'm not afraid of ruining a canvas or wasting supplies."

The artist moved from Queens to Riverdale several years ago and enjoys painting landscapes of the Hudson River.

"I don't wait and be worried if someone is going to like it, because somebody will," she said. "I paint because I must."

Over the coming weeks, Ms. Messner will host a workshop at the Blue Door Art Center

about creating art on an iPad.

"I hope it encourages them to think beyond the traditional boundaries of creating art and expand their thought on how art can be created using technology," Hutchinson said of the exhibit and upcoming workshop.

"Future/Canvas: The Emerging Medium of Digital Art" runs at the Blue Door Art Center, located at 13 Riverdale Ave. in Yonkers, through Saturday, March 5.

The gallery is open from 4 to 9 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays and from 12 to 5 p.m. on Saturdays. For more information, visit www.bluedoorartcenter.org.