



MATT RIEDL. The Wichita Eagle

Rebecca Hoyer's "Bringing the Outside - Inside" opens Friday at Reuben Saunders Gallery.

Wichita artist's College Hill paintings return, with twist

BY MATT RIEDL
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In Rebecca Hoyer's whimsical paintings, quaint College Hill bungalows dwarf the spectacular trees lining the street.

Hoyer, a longtime Wichita painter, is known for her signature abstract style — featuring bright colors and almost-cartoonish landscapes.

Hoyer's works from the past year and a half will be on display at Reuben

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Saunders Gallery in April, beginning with a Final Friday opening this week.

It's easy to read into the paintings a sort of man-versus-nature theme — as the natural elements overtake and reclaim the houses and streets. But in this exhibition, Hoyer is experimenting with a different theme.

Hoyer often uses her exhibitions to provide

▶ VIDEO

Take a peek at the exhibit at Kansas.com/video.

commentary on the art world, and this is no exception.

The entire exhibition space at Reuben Saunders Gallery has been painted to look like one of Hoyer's paintings. She's painted a fireplace, chairs, bookshelves and even a wandering cat on the walls — in grayscale, to avoid distracting from the art.

'Bringing the Outside - Inside'

When: 5:30 to 9 p.m. Fri.

What: Opening reception for Rebecca Hoyer's new painting exhibition

Where: Reuben Saunders Gallery, 3215 E. Douglas

Hours: Regular gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday.

twist, it's a riff on the online art market, Hoyer said. Many websites will attempt to show a potential buyer how a particular piece would appear hanging on a wall or above a mantle, she said — hence why she painted the "living room" walls in generic grayscale.

"My paintings really have the same story — it's a house, it's a tree, it's how they interact together — then you have a show and you say, 'Well, what can I really talk about?'" Hoyer said. "Sometimes I add another layer of interest or another story about what I'm thinking about."

"Bringing the Outside - Inside" champions brick-and-mortar galleries, celebrating that authentic experience of seeing and appreciating artwork in person.

"To me, (buying online) is kind of scary because you don't really know what the quality of the piece would be," Hoyer said. "The real thing, I think, is so much more than what you can see on a flat screen. It's the texturing, it's the subtlety of the colors, it's the layering. ... You can't really see that on the internet."

The paintings themselves represent an evolution in Hoyer's style. Nor-

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Rebecca Hoyer

mally a methodical painter — the type who plans and sketches out her paintings well before hitting the canvas — Hoyer exhibits more spontaneity in her recent paintings, often dropping splatters of paint over a finished product to inject an unexpected element.

"It's very scary for me. You could ruin it at the end," she said. "It's an added feature, and it kind of enlivens the whole piece because of its spontaneity."