

## ART REVIEW

## Focus rewarded

Exhibit pays homage to long friendship between two artists

BY WESLEY PULKKA  
FOR THE JOURNAL

The Turner Carroll Gallery is hosting a historic installation titled “Karen Yank and Agnes Martin” through Oct. 22. The stunning exhibition features free standing and relief sculpture by Yank with prints and drawings by Martin (1912-2004).

All of the work by Yank was completed this year and represents a departure from her signature circular motifs that began in the 1990s. The new work is based upon rectangular and some circular compositions created with vertical alternating bands of black and silver metal. The edges are softened by spot welds and small fasteners offering a slightly blurred effect.

During the late 1950s Frank Stella did a series of shaped black canvases that were covered in white fuzzy edged pinstripes. Stella explained that he chose to use cheap masking tape that allowed the edges to bleed. His goal was to make his work more approachable.

Yank’s edges perform that same function of inviting the viewer into the composition.

Unfortunately, her transitional piece titled “Providence” was sold before the show. It represents the squaring of the circle with both rectangular and circular motifs. Leonardo da Vinci’s famous “Vitruvian Man” based upon the early Roman architect Vitruvius’ sketch of the human figure inside of a square within a circle may have inspired Yank’s new compositional structure.

Martin’s prints and drawings are dominated by horizon lines that read much like a musical score. Her aim was always to express abstract emotions that stemmed from her early abstract expressionist paintings from the late 1940s and early 1950s. In those early years she was an instructor at the University of New Mexico but soon moved to New York.

Though considered a minimalist by some historians, Martin’s commitment to the spiritual qualities and Asian philosophical inspiration embodied in abstract



“Us” by Karen Yank introduces vertical stripes to the circular composition in her joint exhibition with Agnes Martin at the Turner Carroll Gallery.



Agnes Martin and Karen Yank during a visit in Taos.

expressionism remained steadfast. Martin’s work alludes to the universal roaring silence within the contemplative experience.

There is a distant kinship between Martin’s work and painter Joseph Albers’ long running “Homage to the Square” series.

For Yank the iconic show emblemizes the end of the beginning of her career that really took off in 1987 when Yank met Martin at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine. The two women formed a friendship and mutual aesthetic understanding that grew and solidified over the following 17 years until Martin’s death. Martin considered Yank to be her only true student.

“Agnes taught me to meditate and remain focused on my work. At first meditation was difficult because my mind was always flooded with inspiration and ideas for new things I wanted to build,” Yank said. “Once I calmed down I could see a clear path that offered aesthetic continuity.”

That continuity and focus has netted Yank an impressive number of public and private commissions in New Mexico and Colorado along with inclusion



“Suite of Ten” by Agnes Martin shares a distant kinship with Joseph Albers’ long running “Homage to the Square” series.

## IF YOU GO

**WHAT:** “Karen Yank and Agnes Martin” sculpture, prints and drawings

**WHEN:** Through Oct. 22. Hours are 10 a.m.-6p.m. Saturdays-Thursdays and 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Fridays. Call 505-986-9800.

**WHERE:** Turner Carroll Gallery, 725 Canyon Road, Santa Fe

**HOW MUCH:** Free

in the permanent collections of the University of New Mexico Art Museum, UNM Hospital Collection, the Albuquerque Museum and other major venues across the country.

This joint exhibition is a personal breakthrough for Yank.

“In some ways I’m rebelling against or at least resisting Agnes’ influence by emphasizing the vertical instead of her horizontal designs. I guess I’m looking upwards while she remained fixed on the distant horizon,” Yank said.

This a wonderful show by a world-renowned master artist who mentored a world-class woman sculptor whose continued success will always bring honor to Martin’s patient and generous counsel.

Two thumbs up.



“From Chaos to Order” by Ron Lohrding.

## Glass detours retiree from life on the links

BY KATHALEEN ROBERTS  
ASSISTANT ARTS EDITOR

When Ron Lohrding retired from Los Alamos National Lab, he envisioned a life on the fairways.

Instead, he got bored.

“I wasn’t keeping my mind active,” the Sandia Heights resident said.

He thought of taking pottery, but couldn’t find the right class. Then he discovered a glass-making class in Rio Rancho.

“The fused glass artists now are doing beautiful work,” said Lohrding, who boasts a Ph.D. in math. “I thought of the ancient mathematical ratios. I started using the Golden Ratio or Divine Ratio that exists in our bodies.”

Lohrding’s work is on display at Albuquerque’s Weems Gallery.

Both Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo incorporated the Golden Ratio into their works. The ratio indicates the ideal moderate position between two extremes.

The artist also incorporates the Fibonacci sequence, a series of numbers in which each is the sum of the two preceding numbers.

Today he blends his technical background with the brilliant colors of dichroic glass to create pendants, crosses and wall pieces.

“I made a lot of mistakes; I have a lot of broken glass,” he said.

He enjoys the suspense

## IF YOU GO

**WHAT:** Works by B.C. Nowlin, Susan Klebanoff, Jon Oakes and Ron Lohrding

**WHEN:** Through Oct. 31.

**WHERE:** Weems Gallery, 7200 Montgomery NE, Louisiana Plaza

**HOW MUCH:** Free at 293-6133.

of placing something in a kiln to watch it emerge in another color.

Dichroic glass produces a dazzling range of colors when viewed from different directions. The material is a space-age composite produced by stacking micro layers of rare earths, metals and oxides on top of non-translucent glass.

Pendants proved especially difficult to make because of the thinness of the glass, he said.

A circle-in-a-square wall piece emerged from two pieces of dichroic glass.

“To me, that looks like a universe of chaos,” he said. “I try to put order in it with the Fibonacci sequence. I call that ‘From Chaos to Order’.”

“I thought this was going to be a hobby,” he said with a laugh. “For the past month-and-a-half, it’s become work.”

Lohrding also shows his work at the Little Bird Gallery in Santa Fe and at the Harwood Museum of Art in Taos.