

what
makes it

ART

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Margie Livingston (1953), *Angle, Drizzle and Dot*, 2010
Acrylic and adhesive; Courtesy of the artist and Greg Kucera Gallery

When lines and colors come together in unexpected ways, the mind often recognizes something unique. In this case, what’s surprising is not only the composition itself — which is quite intricate — but the way in which it was formulated and the fact that the artist did so outside the confines of a traditional canvas.

Margie Livingston’s unusual painting is a complex web, a network of loopy, colored lines that merge and intersect at rhythmic angles. Think about a nest, a dance, an explosion...

The series title, *Angle, Drizzle and Dot* suggests the artist’s process, the spontaneous motion of making this work by drizzling colors to make lines that create angled patterns and finally large, layered compositions. Why is this significant?

Every so often, an art critic claims that “painting is dead,” that it can’t be pushed any further — there’s nothing new to explore. Livingston’s work says otherwise, both in the way she experiments with paint and the compositions that result.

Certainly Livingston is not the first to explore this process, which can be traced to Jackson Pollack’s famous skeins of paint. But, whether consciously or not, the way she builds on the idea is noteworthy.

These paintings make me smile. It is fun to see ropes of color directly on the wall without a canvas support. Livingston’s activated lines cling tightly to the wall to be appreciated as pure design and texture.

How we perceive art depends on our culture and individual frames of reference. There is no right or wrong, but instead information, knowledge, and experience. As with all types of activities, the more you have, the more discerning you become. In other words, the more you look at art, the more you see.

Barbara Matilsky, *Curator of Art*