



"quintessence," by Judith Sanazaro, is part of the Kansas City artist's exhibit at the Joseph Nease Gallery.

The spaces in between

Panels provide construct of sequential art

By KATE HACKMAN
Special to The Star

In Judith Sanazaro's aptly titled exhibit "spacing" at the Joseph Nease Gallery, the gaps of wall in between the Kansas City artist's canvas panels are as important as the painted surfaces themselves.

Composed of two to five panels each, the paintings hinge on a tension introduced through spatial separation.

With names like "caravan" and

THE SHOW

"Judith Sanazaro: spacing" continues at the Joseph Nease Gallery, 1819 Central, through Feb. 16. Hours are noon to 5 p.m. Friday-Saturday and by appointment; (816) 421-2166.

"fruit salad," these recent paintings are cheerier, pop-ier and roomier than the dense, aggressively expressionistic canvases Sanazaro showed in her first solo exhibition at the

gallery roughly two years ago.

In those earlier works, the 1998 Charlotte Street Fund winner employed paint salvaged from abandoned pieces and stored for later use — a material she termed "sludge." This silvery gray "canned angst," as she described it, referenced time and process, asserting the emotional and physical energy transferred to canvas through painterly action.

In the new works, Sanazaro — a faculty member at the Kansas City Art Institute — has maintained her signature practice of finger painting, using oils squeezed straight from the tube. Applied on top of evenly toned, matte opaque or metallic grounds, this practice yields floating shapes that are frostinglike in their glopby tactility and of pure, unmixed, high-key color.

While Sanazaro's attachment to the viscerality of painting remains apparent, these new works are also investigations of relationships, specifically among abstract forms as they span and morph across a series of uniformly sized, evenly spaced canvases.

While the eye may first be drawn to the concentric shapes of hot pink, yellow, aqua and so forth, which delineate the large amoeboid forms dominating each of Sanazaro's individual panels, it is the interaction among the various panels and how we perceive that interaction that is of larger interest.

For example, "Spring Clip" is composed of two large vertical canvases, their grounds slightly different shades of orange. Each features a large starlike central form, whose spiky tentacles radiate from a pea-pod shaped, brightly striped center. A thin, ropelike line, joining the two "stars," is broken by a few inches of wall space between the panels while various symbolic or notationlike painted marks are dispersed across both canvases.

In this instance, the two panels seem like simultaneous halves of a whole, as if portraying a set of twins

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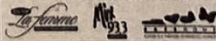
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—one more "perfect" than the other but still clearly related and co-existent. The panels might also be read as two views of one subject, altered by a shift in light or perspective. In any case, the structure of paired canvases plays on our binary mode of thinking, inviting a sort of compare-and-contrast examination of the two variations.

The five-panel "quintessence" suggests instead a series of contiguous moments — a sequential depiction of a main character and surrounding environment as it "mutates" from one panel to the next. In her artist statement, Sanazaro notes the similarity of this format to comics strips or film stills. That association inevitably underlies our perception, prompting us to "read" the canvases from left to right. Like an animated cartoon character, the multi-appendaged main form seems captured mid-action in each progressive frame. Again a thin, lit-up painted cord links the panels, though this time seeming to reiterate the form's forward motion

rather than suggesting an umbilical-type connection.

With these paintings, Sanazaro draws the painterly language of abstract expressionism into the realm of pop culture. Nail polish colors, shapes that seem hybrids of organic creatures and video-game characters and a structure that echoes mass media formats lend the work a contemporary appeal. Further, the over-the-top gobs of paint and graffiti-like denotations across the surfaces might be understood as a self-conscious deconstruction of abstract painting itself.

By instilling the primary forms with awkward, humanlike qualities, Sanazaro posits them as surrogates for ourselves. Her tracing of their evolution in the many-paneled pieces, as they seem to adapt to changes in their environment and the passage of time, speaks to the necessity of our own ability to respond to and accommodate shifting conditions — whether terrorist threats, ice storms or new technologies — as we move into the future.

ART CALENDAR

COMPILED BY CATHY IBARRA/THE STAR

VISUAL ARTS

Openings & receptions

LIGHT AND SHADOW: BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE McMULLEN: Opens 5-7:30 p.m. Feb. 8, Corridor Art Space, 4041 Mill. (816-931-6655)

ROAD TRIP: NEW WORKS BY PAM PEFFER: ORIGINAL OILS ON CANVAS: Artist reception, 6-8 p.m. Feb. 8; exhibit runs through March. 1 Ward Jewelry, 309 E. 55th. (816-361-4466)

HABITAT — NYC: MIXED MEDIA BY JOSH GEORGE: Opens 6-8 p.m. Feb. 8, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Saturday, and by appoint-

ment. Jayne Gallery, 4540 Main. www.jaynegallery.com (816-561-5333)

TIM ROLLINS, KIDS OF SURVIVAL, AND LANGSTON HUGHES PROJECT (opening reception, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Feb. 9, South Balcony Gallery), **SHOUTS FROM THE WALL: POSTERS AND PHOTOGRAPHS BROUGHT HOME FROM SPANISH CIVIL WAR BY AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS** (through March 10) and **FORM, LINE, AND LIGHT: WORK OF SHINODA TOKO AND PARK KWANG JEAN** (through Feb. 24); Lecture: "Art and the Dream De-

ferred," Tim Rollins, artist and teacher, 1 p.m. Feb. 10, Auditorium. Museum hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Thursday, noon-5 p.m. Sunday. Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, Lawrence. (785-854-4710)

FROM ANCIENT TO CONTEMPORARY: PAPER FOLDING DESIGN BY NANCY LOO BJORGE: Opening reception, 2-4 p.m. Feb. 10; 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday. Stocksdale Gallery, William Jewell College, Liberty. (816-781-7700, Ext. 5415)

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Tim Rollins+K.O.S.: The Langston Hughes Project

Saturday, February 9

Public Celebration
5:30-7:30 p.m.

Music by "Sounds Good"
Spencer Museum of Art
The University of Kansas

Sunday, February 10

"Art and the Dream Deferred"
1 p.m.

Lecture by artist/teacher Tim Rollins
Spencer Museum Auditorium

Artist-in-residence Tim Rollins and 24 Lawrence middle-school students are producing a collaborative work of art inspired by the writings of Langston Hughes. The project is underwritten by a *MetLife Foundation Museum Connections* grant.

Tim Rollins + K.O.S.: The Langston Hughes Project is part of the Lawrence Celebrates Langston Hughes, centennial celebration. For complete information: www.kuce.org/hughes

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The MS Challenge is more than physical endurance, more than a test of mental strength. It is a life-changing event, a celebration of human spirit. Those who accept the challenge believe that one long journey over three days will ultimately shorten the road to the cure for multiple sclerosis.

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This may be the greatest walk you ever take. Through this 3-day, 50-mile event, participants raise money for vital research and programming dedicated to finding a cure, and aiding those who live with MS.

The National MS Society... One Thing People with MS Can Count On

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic disease of the central nervous system that strikes adults between the ages of 20 and 50. One new case of MS is diagnosed every hour. The unpredictable physical and emotional effects can be lifelong.

Thanks to significant advances in research, the FDA has approved several treatments that may alter the underlying disease course of multiple sclerosis, and early treatment is critically important. People with MS should consult their doctors about using one of these FDA-approved medications and other effective treatments for the symptoms of MS.

If you or someone you know has MS, contact the National Multiple Sclerosis Society at 1-800-FIGHT MS or nationalmssociety.org.

Attend a Free MS Challenge Informational Meeting

| Date | Time | Location |
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| 2/22/02 | 5:30 p.m. | National MS Society-Springfield |
| 2/22/02 | 6 p.m. | Maryville Public Library |
| 2/22/02 | 6 p.m. | Shawnee Mission Medical Center |
| 2/22/02 | 6:30 p.m. | National MS Society-Topeka |
| 2/19/02 | 8:30 p.m. | Joplin Public Library |
| 2/19/02 | 6 p.m. | Westport Public Library-Kansas City, MO |
| 2/21/02 | 6 p.m. | Union Station-Kansas City |
| 2/21/02 | 7:30 p.m. | Brookfield Public Library |
| 2/26/02 | 6 p.m. | Raintree Lake Clubhouse-Lee's Summit |
| 2/28/02 | noon | National MS Society-Springfield |
| 2/28/02 | 6 p.m. | Blue River Community College-Independence |
| 3/05/02 | 6 p.m. | Shawnee Mission Medical Center |
| 3/07/02 | 6 p.m. | Great Mall of the Great Plains-Olathe |
| 3/13/02 | 6 p.m. | Shawnee Mission Medical Center-Kansas City |

The National MS Society is dedicated to ending the devastating effects of multiple sclerosis.

Call 1-800-FIGHT MS

