



WABASH CENTER

For Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion



Abstracting Grace - further adventures in Art Theology: Part One

Angela Hummel, *Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design and Front Range Community College*

Blog Series: Re/Kindling Creativity and Imagination

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“If your writing were a building what would the design be? What is the shape of your writing?”
Steven Dunn asked.

“Chaco canyon,” she replied, “It represents circular, communal thinking, rather than the linear thinking of the colonizers.”

In seconds she gave me a new perspective that shifted my writing, and my life, my living. I had been waiting to hear that, to be invited to think in circles. Began to realize ways I had always thought in circles.

The structure of my writing is a spiral.

Circling certain ideas again and again and again,
living deeper and deeper into them.



What they don't tell you about abstract painting is **HOW** it flows from and encourages abstract thinking. It says what is beyond words. Thinking that opens up a universe, a multiverse of possibilities.

Rather than settling into one little sharp corner of an answer it opens you up
and opens you up
and opens you up

and opens you up

the opening never has to stop

It is like love

I think it is love

at least it's the way love moves.

Abstraction flourishing out into space, swirling into everything. Then curling into the most tender recesses of the heart. Never giving you a fixed landing - because it doesn't want you to get stuck there. It flows beyond the canvas or any other seeming limitation.

In the opening we are all connected.

It's funny now to think about how I used to hate it, abstract painting, how I used to make fun of it. Until that day - I read what Kandinsky was after. He was trying to say something new about the spiritual. Something that had not yet been said in words.

Inspiration welled up and I wanted to paint the color of God.

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