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OUTSIDE THE LINES

AN ARTIST CREATES HER OWN MOVEMENT

WRITTEN BY JENNY MILLER PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF STOCKTON

Whenever someone tells Allison Gregory that she's lucky to be making a living as an artist, the Austin-based painter denies that it's due to anything other than constant work. "I stand by the motto that luck is persistence meets opportunity," says the 30-year-old, and it's a motto that works. With just six years' experience as a full-time professional artist under her belt, Gregory has already taken part in several public art projects, including Austin's enthusiastically received "GuitarTown" installation. She's also received an increasing number of commissions for corporate venues and private homes, her work is featured in galleries across the state and country, and she's recently held successful shows in San Antonio and McAllen.

Gregory maintains that momentum by discovering new ways to express herself, and by experimenting with different media. Her work—always abstract, rather than realist—has manifested itself through wood relief, classic abstract, acrylic on Plexiglas, and most recently, two new styles she's dubbed "pop-stract" and "squiggle abstract." "I spent weeks obsessing over this one piece," she recalls of the emergence of the latter. "Then I just started etching squiggly lines into the paint—and so began my squiggle abstracts."

For her "pop-stracts," Gregory employs the back end of her paintbrush, and old pens and pencils. "It's basically like I'm drawing with acrylic or enamel paint and 'sticks,'" she explains. The works combine neon colors and intricate, miniscule drawings or patterns, and incorporate stickers, collage and pen-and-ink. Gregory describes them as being influenced by 1980s pop culture. "The Lite-Brite, the Bubblegum-pop music, and the exaggerated, tacky neon patterns that defined our fashion sense," she says. Her most time-intensive work to date, one large piece entitled "Eye Candy," took the artist five months of eight- and 10-hour days to complete. But whatever she's working on, Gregory continues to believe that persistence is key. "Nobody is going to do this for you," she says. "You have to do it for yourself." allisongregoryfineart.com

ALLISON GREGORY PAINTER

