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ART

**'COLORS OF PASSION'**

**EXHIBIT** • Turning the motion of dance into art

By Lauren Back  
For the Camera

**F**or Boulder artist Dvora Kanegis, the phrase “it takes two to tango” applies not only to the actual dance, but also to the relationship she has with her paintbrush.

In Kanegis' work, passion speaks not only for the emotional colors in the paintings on exhibit at the University of Colorado's Andrew J. Macky Gallery, but also for the art in motion on which she thrives. “Colors of Passion's” reception tonight will feature live music and a professional dance performance.

The tango calling came to Kanegis 10 years ago.

“When I first heard the music, it's like it went into my soul,” she says.

Unlike other dances such as the swing, which she had done before, tango spoke to her in a different way.

“Tango is a dance,” Kanegis says, “but it's also almost a philosophy and a way of life.”

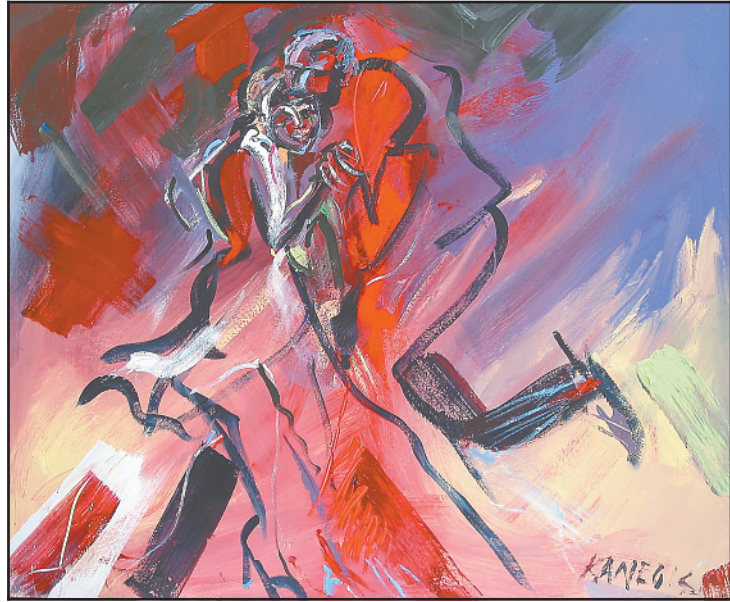
She describes the meditation-like focus and the intense body control as a Zen experience.

It was the similarities in the dance and painting that inspired Kanegis to combine them in her work. Unlike other subjects, she tapped into the compromise that comes with both.

With painting, she says, “if you don't take a chance, if you don't give up control, nothing magical happens.”

And so goes the dance that rose from Buenos Aires' poorest immigrant barrios.

“When you're dancing tango, it's two people, and your bodies are connected,” Kanegis explains, “so you're interpreting the music together, and you have to give up control, yet



**TWO TO TANGO** Dvora Kanegis' “Hot Tango” is on display as part of her “Colors of Passion” exhibit at the Andrew J. Macky Gallery.

keep control.”

While Kanegis' pieces in tango art range between quick line drawings and layered paintings, the basic idea for the body of work comes down to line and color.

“I see the line as the rhythm, the movement, and the color as the emotion or the melody,” she explains.

In a finished painting like “Hot Tango,” the lines that make up the dancers don't necessarily contain the colors woven through them, but that's part of Kanegis' strategy. A blue streak that sweeps from a dancer's body into the background might be a breath of air, while an unfinished body line highlights the couple moving across the canvas that's about to dip or whirl.

Just like her disregard for staying in the lines, Kanegis doesn't limit herself to just one medium. She divides the paintings on Macky's walls into three categories: the acrylic on

canvas can be identified by quick and thick brush lines, with no intention of copying photo-like images; the “tango calligraphy” combines acrylic and rice paper, with lines much like the scripture of Oriental artistic writing; and, finally, perhaps the most bold works are Kanegis' acrylics over thick layers of gesso, or acrylic primer. The surface of the paintings are textured, combed through, with layers of color below the gesso etched in.

There's no doubt that Kanegis' interaction with the music and dance contributes to the power in her work. From Denver to Buenos Aires, she attends milongas, or tango dances, to get her fill on the dance floor, but also to capture the magic in fast drawings.

Back at the studio, her method for getting in the mood to paint might be a bit different than what other artists do. She turns on the music — tango, of

ifYOUgo

**WHAT** • “Colors of Passion: Paintings by Dvora Kanegis”

**RECEPTION** • 5-8 tonight

**WHERE** • Andrew J. Macky Gallery, Macky Auditorium, University of Colorado campus, Boulder

**TICKETS** • Free

**INFO** • (303) 492-8423 or www.tangoartist.com

**ETC.** • The exhibit remains on display through March 21; regular gallery hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesdays.

course — and dances alone.

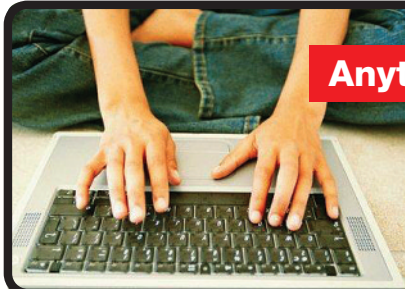
“A lot of the movement in the brush comes not out of a vision that I have as much as out of the feeling of the dance in my body,” she says, noting that sometimes she puts on a favorite movie like “The Tango Lesson” for inspiration as well.

Not only have Kanegis' interpretations of tango and passion gained respect from within the artist community, but others who have identified the dance as a way of life appreciate the work, too.

“Any sort of artist will very quickly want to make tango the subject of their work,” says tango dancer Chas Gale of Denver, who will dance at tonight's reception with his partner Gaia Banovich. “You can see that (Kanegis') experience in the tango is coming through in a much more complete way.”

To Gale, Kanegis' love of tango shines through: “Her art has a lot of movement in general, but she seems to have the skill and the passion in the dance,” he says.

Kanegis, 63, says she plans to dance the tango well into her 90s. As for her art, she hopes that both the exhibit and the reception will inspire people to look beyond the social commentary that is often seen in today's popular work, and “celebrate the passion and joy in life.”



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