



**By Carolyn Lee**

***The Imperial Republican***

Abstract art with symbolism. Needs to be explained.

That's how Marcia Bauerle describes her art, which is hung all over the walls of the house she and husband Bill share in Imperial.

Bauerle uses mainly acrylic and collage for her paintings. She incorporates other materials such as paper, cardboard, thread, old paintings and fabric.

In one piece, a picture of the Nebraska Capitol, some ridged cardboard and red paint came together to create a Nebraska Cornhusker portrait for a wedding present.

In another, a picture of a fighter jet, some London Underground symbols and an aerial view of London created a Christmas present for son-in-law Scott Leibbrandt, stationed with the Air Force in London.

Yet another uses black beads, railroad tracks, circles and some quotations to represent Union Pacific and North Platte.

Ideas or thoughts, but mainly colors and shapes, inspire Bauerle. "A lot of things happen because of a theme word or quote," she explained.

She's becoming well known in Nebraska due to her participation in a number of art shows and displays at galleries.

Bauerle showed 20 paintings as featured artist at Art & Gift Gallery in North Platte. She also had 20 paintings on display at Great Plains Regional Medical Center in North Platte.

In 2009 she had four paintings exhibited at the Emerging Artists Exhibition in Omaha at the Artists Cooperative Gallery.

In 2011 she was the featured artists at the Governor's Residence Exhibition in Lincoln, sponsored by the Nebraska Arts Council, showing 25 paintings.

Bauerle also exhibits at The Most Unlikely Place in Lewellen and Noise Gallery in Lincoln, where she must submit a new work every month.

At present, she is one of only 24 artists represented in a traveling show by the Association of Nebraska Art Clubs Juried Competition. The show recently moved from Fairbury to Seward. It will be in Ogallala the first part of April and in McCook May 21, 2014.

Her art began in grade school and high school, Bauerle said, with good instructors. She majored in interior design with a home economics emphasis on housing and equipment at Kansas State University.

Three weeks after she and Bill married Bauerle found herself in Arizona in 1978. She took an American folk art class, and became hooked on it.

That carried over when the Bauerles moved to Germany in 1983, where Bill was stationed with the Air Force.

Bauerle found a German woman who was willing to teach her bauernmalerei, which is "farmer or peasant" painting, in exchange for learning American folk art from Bauerle. With the woman's daughter providing just a bit of translation, Bauerle rapidly learned German as well as the

German folk painting.

That art shows in Bauerle's work with cancer patients in the Imperial area. The group has created art that is shown on the walls at Chase County Community Hospital.

In 1995, with the Bauerles living in Imperial, she began working toward an art endorsement through the University of Nebraska-Kearney and Mid-Plains Community College.

The professor overseeing her senior show, Jack Karraker, encouraged her to move away from folk art, and "I ended up going with watercolor and collage."

Another teacher who inspired Bauerle was Don Dernovich, former head of the art department at McCook Community College and a landscape artist.

In addition, Bauerle used to receive encouragement and critiques from fellow artists and former Imperial residents Cindy Simon and Melinda Hippel. They painted together in each other's houses for over five years.

Bauerle has used her art endorsement to substitute at Chase County Schools. She also has taught art at Mid-Plains Community College in Imperial for four years, and also at the campus in Ogallala.

This January she will teach a six-week "Acrylics, Collage & Altered Book" class through Mid-Plains in Imperial.

In Bauerle's studio in her basement are several unfinished paintings. That's not unusual.

Sometimes she puts a work aside for years, and then finishes it in a totally different direction.

Take a painting of the Acropolis in Greece that she painted years ago. As she studied it while it hung (in a nice frame) on her wall, Bauerle began to really dislike it.

She took the painting out of the frame, and began researching Athens, finding out that Athena, the goddess of weaving, was associated with the Acropolis.

Bauerle began weaving paper through holes on the canvas.

She added some bits of old paintings. She added more things, but left some of the original painting to show through.

In some places she had 12 layers of paint or other material on the canvas.

She likes it now.

Bauerle has a website, [marciabauerle.com](http://marciabauerle.com), at which you may view her artist's statement and her paintings. Some are for sale and some have been sold.

It used to be hard for Bauerle to sell a painting, because it was hard to let it go. Now, "I really don't have trouble selling one unless a family member says they want it" in the future.

Now, selling is exciting. "They give an emotional response to something visual that I've been able to create," she says of a customer.

"It's wonderful to see someone connect to my work and want it. That means so much."

Bauerle loves the "magical" way people relate to art. "When they 'get it' I'm honored."

What is next in Bauerle's growth as an artist? She has several commissions, and her connection with Noise Gallery in Lincoln keeps her on her toes.

She'd also like to be teaching some more.

For now, she's exploring the theme and idea of grace, looking at art and religion and the spiritual themes portrayed in art.

The creative ways of expressing her faith.