

Active Colors

Anna Kocherovsky



Plea for Wisdom, 16" x 16"

I came to tapestry from studying to be a painter. I have that painter's habit of mixing colors on pallet or directly on a paper, adding layers, keeping them transparent or letting them tangle one over another. When I draw, I do not use outlines, preferring to place my shapes directly with different colors. I want my colors to vibrate, have depth — sparkle. For the tapestry I always combine several thin threads together to achieve this property. I keep my yarn in baskets next to the loom, organized like a box of pastels by the color. This makes all of them available so I can pull out any colors that please me.

My work has a lot to do with the process of making choices. I do not think about color when I start a new tapestry; first I decide what it will be about, the feel of the piece and the emotions. I make a lot of little drawings with crayons or acrylic paint, mostly focused on shapes and choosing colors that just please me. When I settle on the design's structure, I continue these small studies, keeping the shapes but playing out the color variations. The intention is simply to clarify the idea, because I never try to match yarn to crayon or paint, or vice-versa, they have different properties. I only concentrate on the effect and not on the exact hue. When I am ready to weave, I will select the type of color I think the new piece will be about. Then I start making choices in relation to that color, going for emotion, and for the overall effect. It just happens. What is important is that shapes are fused softly or they break apart; they are veiled or stand out clear.

Next, I will put all the little drawings aside and paint in shapes at full scale with black ink on what will be a cartoon and just have an idea of the main color in mind. It will be about that — often I try to use a limited pallet, very limited in fact, but the plan is actually never sustained, I will add more and more. It is like music — keeping the main theme and having fun by adding variations on it.

Shapes and colors will be fused with one another, then as I chose the next one, maybe it should mix ever so softly or perhaps I need to have the transition ragged and broken or make it shimmer. I search for answers in painting and sculpture.



Angels in the Dream (Jacob), 16" x 16"

I like Abstract Expressionism — it looks alive and full of energy pouring from it, especially strokes that create vibration of colors and depth. I learn about colors from George Seurat and Josef Albers. I like Marc Chagall, Henry Moore, Jim Dine and Nicolas de Stael. And the list is long from Rembrandt to David Smith.

I like to explore and experiment, that is why I do not like to be tied up to formulas – I always tweak and try something new. Other ways make no sense, but I think it has to do a lot with emotion, what all work is about.