

> **Fact Sheet**

KJ Kahnle, gunpowder artist
impressionistic and abstract art

Gunpowder art is created by igniting gunpowder to burn paper

Press Kit:

Online version at www.kjkahnle.com/presskit

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> **Art Process** _____

All artworks are original, and created by igniting gunpowder to burn 140# watercolor paper. Various types and amounts of gunpowder are put on the paper along with organic objects, inorganic objects and/or templates depending on the desired result. The work is then covered with another paper and the gunpowder is ignited. The powder burns fast enough to flash burn the paper but not long enough to actually catch the paper on fire.

The process is then repeated in various ways and as many as over 20 times to achieve the final art. Mistakes can't be redone, painted over, or erased but they do often produce wonderful unexpected results and lessons in what not to do. Finished pieces are mounted on foam core and archivally laminated.

> **Customer and visitor comments** _____

"I have never seen anything like it!" the statement most often made.

"It's incredible! There is so much energy in it!" – P.S. customer

"Her work is amazing... you "see" things in it!" – M.K. artist

"What you have done is unbelievable! How you create this beautiful art using gunpowder... they're absolutely unbelievable!" –AJ, marketing director

> Artist Statement

Gunpowder is a medium that encourages my desire to artistically experiment. The variables and reactions are endless. Seeing the result after igniting a piece is always exciting - sometimes it's fantastic, occasionally it's a lesson in what not to do.

Not being able to completely predict nor control the final outcome is part of what draws me to it. I also love that it often creates wonder, engages thought and sometimes provokes question because it is a substance more often associated with destruction than beauty.

Creating art with gunpowder is kind of like life - no matter how well you plan and prepare you will get unexpected results. So it's much more enjoyable to let go of things you can't control, not becoming too attached to the outcome, and enjoy the journey. - KJ

> Artists Bio

In 2012 when I finally relented to that never ending "voice" and committed to pursuing my artwork. It was by no means always easy, but it began to take on a life of its own through experimentation with various mediums and styles. In 2016 gunpowder, as an art medium, "naturally found me."

When I was young I loved to draw and photograph abstract elements in nature. With the changes of "adult life" I pursued a degree in education and later gravitated toward graphic design. In 1983 I moved from Louisiana to Missoula, MT attended grad school at UM, and over the course of the next 20+ years, married, had two amazing children, divorced, and lived in Texas, Idaho, and New Zealand among other places. My jobs varied almost as much as the places I lived, always gravitating back toward artistic endeavors: chasing wax for Robert Deurloo, doing detail work for a taxidermist, photo restoration for Kodak, and a successful graphic design business.

In 2008 my own artistic endeavors began re-surfacing. This led to combining photorealistic drawings with abstract texture and color; and constantly experimented with a variety of mediums. My participation in USPSA (United States Practical Shooting Assn) matches was the 2016 connection that introduced me to gunpowder as an art medium. I fell in love with its nature, the impressionistic and abstract results I could achieve, the endless experimental possibilities, and the fact that I couldn't completely predict nor control the final outcome. My medium and I found each other.

Creating artwork with a material that is typically thought of as "destructive" can be quite thought provoking. It has opened dialogue across personal and cultural differences. And has also provided me with great lessons about letting go of things are often beyond our control - much like life often is.

> Profile

Artistically my work has evolved around experimentation; and the culture and environment in which I live, work and play. In 2016 I discovered, and fell in love with, gunpowder as an art medium. The fact that I can't completely control nor predict the final outcome is part of what draws me to it.

It's very nature and power are endlessly variable in relation to the elements it combines and interacts with. I have found that creating artwork with a material that is typically thought of as "destructive" to be an interesting vehicle for opening dialogues and providing unexpected lessons.

As an experienced speaker and teacher I have a strong foundation for presenting and sharing my work. Because I also enjoy them, demonstrations and presentations are well thought out and engaging for each audience.

> Shows and Collections

- 2017 Out West Art Show and Sale, Great Falls, MT
- 2017 Montana Miniatures Show & Sale (juried), Western Art Week, Great Falls, MT
- 2016 Out West Art Show and Sale, Great Falls, MT
- 2015 Celebrate Montana Art, Helena
- 2015 Out West Art Show and Sale, Great Falls, MT
- 2015 Corridor Magazine, juried for full page back outside cover
- 2015 The Water Works Museum, Art Across Montana, (juried)
- 2015 Artist Along the Bitterroot
- 2015 The Water Works Museum, Art Squared Show (juried)
- 2015 Opportunity Bank on Montana, one person show
- 2014 Commissioned work for Tough Enough to Wear Pink
- 2014 Bar 3D Bucking Bulls Collection ("Big Tex Rocks Montana")
- 2014 Artist Along the Bitterroot, Studio Show and Sale
- 2014 Artrageous, in the Bitterroot
- 2013 Montana Art[ists] Collection, (inaugural piece,) housed at Ravalli County Museum ("U.X Spur")
- 2013 Ravalli County Bank, one person show
- 2013 Artrageous Show

> Related Skills

- Gunpowder art using a variety of techniques and powders
- Abstract and impressionistic techniques that capture a mood and ideas, using gunpowder, mixed media and pencil.
- Mixed media abstract and impressionistic
- Easily communicate with people from all walks of life, business and backgrounds
- Project communication with clients, media representatives and organizations to complete projects on time and within budget.
- Graphic design, layout and illustration for many types of print and electronic media;
- Extensive experience using and teaching art and graphic design; pencil, colored pencil, watercolor pencil; Adobe's Photoshop, InDesign and Illustrator.

> **Related Work History**

Gunpowder Artist
2016 - present
Photorealistic pencil and mixed media artist
2012 - present
Beyond the Image - Graphic Design, Web Design, and Instruction
2005 - present (part-time)
2004 - 2005 part-time (also Owner/Mgr: Internet Coffee Station, Hamilton)
Instructor: Art, Photoshop, and Graphic Design, Bitterroot College Program, Continuing Ed
2013 - present:
Write Source (educational publishing), Product Development, Design, and Presentation
2001 - 2003
Laser Photography: Photoshop Artist
1997 - 1999
Teacher, Free Lance Photographer & Writer
1985 - 2003 (full and part-time)

> **Education**

2011 - present: Continuing Ed: numerous seminars/classes related to art, design, and marketing.
2013 - present: Montana Artpreneurs Program, State of Montana - Arts Council
Developing the business side of a visual arts business
2011 - 12: University of Montana (Bitterroot College Program)
Art 105 and 106 (night classes) GPA: 4.0
1982 - 84: University of Montana; Missoula, MT
36 hrs toward Masters of Education. GPA: 3.0
1981: Northeast Louisiana University; Monroe, LA
Bachelor's of Education. GPA: 3.0

> **References**

Deb Essen, Fibre Artist, Instructor, and Montana Artpreneur Coach
Phone: 406-642-6424 • Email: eccmontana@hotmail.com

Karen Savory, Artist - Hamilton, MT
Phone: 406-363-0028 • Email: karen@simplysavoryart.com

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Pat Easley, Office Manager, Bitterroot Valley Chamber of Commerce
Phone: 406-636-2400 • Email: peasley@bvchamber.com



KJ Kahnle, artist

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Event: -event-

Location: -location-

Date: -date-

Contact: -contact-

Exploding Art

Art will be exploding at -event- -date-

KJ Kahnle will literally be igniting a piece of art to demonstrate her Gunpowder Art process.

Kahnle ignites gunpowder to burn paper, creating impressionistic and abstract artwork. Many of these burned pieces are recognizable subjects such as waterfalls, bison, etc. Others are more abstractly designed to create a mood with their depth, shapes, textures, and contrast.

Last year Kahnle discovered gunpowder as an art medium and loves its artistic potential. "The variables and reactions when igniting gunpowder to create artworks are endless. Once it's ignited there is a continual chain reaction of elements: the powder type and amount, the directions of the "blast," objects in its path, the amount of air, where the air is coming from...The fact that I can't completely predict nor control the final outcome is part of what draws me to it." Kahnle has since had work accepted into the Montana Miniatures Show at Western Art Week and shown her work in the Out West Art Show in Great Falls.

With a desire to give back to the community Kahnle actively supports this scholarship fund for women who have career and education goals and need financial assistance to achieve them. "I'm honored to be able to support this scholarship fund!" says Kahnle "I've been there - I know what it's like to work toward a career goal and lack resources. Without the Montana Arts Council's - Montana Artrepreneur Program, which provides invaluable business education for artists I wouldn't be a working artist with the means to help others."

To attend the -event- and watch art explode contact -contact- for more information.

To learn more about KJ and her gunpowder art visit www.kjkahnle.com or call her at 406-360-5240.

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submitted by:

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