



ART SMART



Art in Action

Photo by Allie Goolrick

It would be hard, maybe even impossible, to find anyone who is more passionate and energetic about his work than Asheville artist Jonas Gerard. His enthusiasm for his artwork is infectious, and the energy just pulsates through his studio in the River Arts District.

Gerard's studio is filled with his expressionist paintings that explode across the canvas in a riot of color. The paintings remind you of the famous abstract works of Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee and Jackson Pollack, and Gerard points to those artists as major influences on his work.

"People compare my work to Jackson Pollack often," he says with a huge grin that never seems fade. "I usually tell them that Pollack did his paintings by dripping paint onto the canvas, but I do mine by flinging paint and using a brush."

Gerard is an artist with the heart of a showman, and he happily welcomes visitors into his studio to watch him work. As he paints, he dances in front of the canvas to music that blares raucously from his CD player. He laughs and talks while painting saying that he has no idea where the music and paint will take him.

Gerard's love of painting has led him around the world, and eventually brought him to the mountains of Western North Carolina earlier

this year where he opened his studio and gallery at 240 Clingman Avenue in Asheville. The studio's opening reception featured one of his art performances — Gerard says the welcome he received from the Asheville arts community confirmed that he had made the right choice.

"Just like my painting, I went with the feeling that this was the right move for me, and it has worked out well," Gerard says.

He hopes to repeat the success of the opening reception with the new exhibit, *Landscape Energy*, which opens on October 5th and runs until November 2nd. Gerard plans to hold an art performance for the public at 2pm on October 6th. After the painting is completed, Gerard will auction it off and will donate the proceeds to the Asheville Arts Council.

"It's important for me to give back to the community that has given so much to me," he says. **B**

— William B. Leonard