

# ★ Abstract Stamp Art ★

What happens when you mix abstract art images--defined by Britannica.com as 'art in which the portrayal of things from the visual world plays no part'--and rubber stamps? You get an exciting stamp line from RubberMoon Rubber Stamps!

by Karen Sweeny-Justice

"I carried the idea around in my head for almost a year before I actually designed it on paper," says Kristen Powers, who also goes by the 'artistic' name of Kae Pea, a play on her initials. "Stampstracts evolved as I really got into painting abstract art and I love using rubber stamps in unexpected ways. I set out to create an interactive line of stamps where the artist could create abstract art pieces. When I began to use the line I realized the possibilities were even more than I'd hoped or dreamed."

RubberMoon released the first set of 33 Stampstracts images in June, 2016. A second set of 32 stamps came out later that year, and a third set of eight images—called Scenic Stampstracts—was released in May, 2017. A fourth set will be released in the fall of 2017.

To introduce the line, Kae Pea does a video demo on the company's website, and also teaches classes at stamp stores around the country. One of these stores, The Queen's Ink [Queensink.com], is located in Savage, Maryland, and that's where stamper Jackie Grace met up with Kae Pea for an all-day class with 25 other participants.

## Classes with Kae Pea

"The Stampstracts class was the first official stamping class I've ever taken," says Jackie, "and I'm grateful for the opportunity. Being a big fan of RubberMoon and owner Kae Pea and her whimsical art, when I heard she was going to teach, I immediately signed up hoping to learn innovative stamping techniques. Stampstracts were designed to create abstract art, but Kristen found they work well as components of landscapes and

all manner of creatures and with whatever a person can imagine. The class exceeded my expectations. We made all sorts of fun art!

"Our first assignment was to use the Stampstracts images to create something from our own imagination using just black ink and paper," Jackie continues. "Then we moved on to stamping with permanent ink on Stampbord and Amper-sand's Claybord and Gessobord. After she demonstrated the use of Peerless Watercolors and Dr. Ph. Martin's Radiant Water Colors,



**Interactions** / Estrella Bianchi

(Stamp credits: All images—Stampstracts by RubberMoon Rubber Stamps.)

we added color to our stamped images.”

“To spark and inspire creativity is a delight and an honor,” says Kae Pea, who lives in Louisiana, Missouri. “It is so, so fun and very gratifying to see the absolutely wonderful things people create and how much fun they have using these stamps.”

“Kristen was a nurturing teacher who easily built confidence in her students,” adds Jackie, who lives about an hour away from The Queen’s Ink in South Bowie, Maryland. “She willingly shared her extensive art knowledge and skills in a humble, yet inspiring way. It was a fun day spent with a group of lovely women.”

“I have been stamping, designing stamps and innovating projects for about 25 years now and hope that my passion and excitement for what I do shows and is contagious,” adds Kae Pea, who bought RubberMoon five years ago. “Inspiring and empowering others to be creative and to make art is what I love most of all.”

## Interactions

Another stamper inspired by Kae Pea is Estrella Bianchi of West Orange, New Jersey.

“My love affair with RubberMoon goes back to the mid-90s,” says Estrella. “They always had quirky, innovative images and that wonderful sensibility continues today. The Stampstracts line reminds me of the days, many years ago, when we didn’t have as many art stamps as we do now. In those days we had to create images with the stamps we had access to.

“I belong to the RubberMoon Mail Club,” Estrella continues. “Members receive a monthly exclusive stamp and other goodies and have access to the Club Facebook page, where we can post artwork and see announcements about new designs. That’s where I first heard of Stampstracts. The minute I saw them, my mind soared—I saw so many ways

to combine the abstract images into magical compositions.”

Estrella created two of the cards featured here. “They were stamped on watercolor paper using Imagine Crafts/Tsukineko’s StazOn black ink and painted with Nicholson’s Peerless Transparent Watercolors.”

For the first card—an abstract piece called *Interactions*—Estrella started with the circle in the upper left corner. “I added the triangles, and then the design took off,” she says. “I swear I couldn’t get the images down fast



**The Other Side of the Mirror** / Estrella Bianchi  
(Stamp credits: All images—Stampstracts by RubberMoon Rubber Stamps.)

enough. It came together in one fell swoop. I lived on an Out Island in the Bahamas in the 70s and I was taken by the bright, tropical colors used to paint the houses. I based the colors in this piece on those wonderful hues.

“This piece has very little added to it,” she adds. “I saw some of the elements as glass and that’s why the colors change on some of the overlaps. I recall I thickened some of the lines in the lower left-hand corner, and I may have lengthened one of the lines, too.”

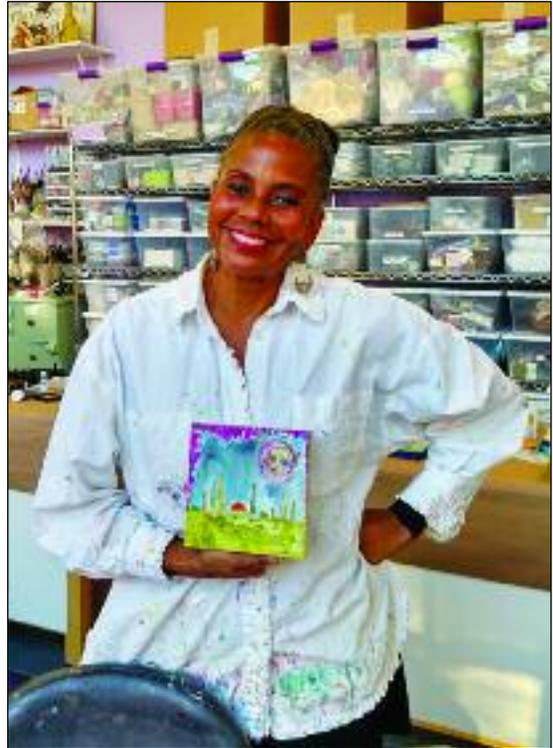
The common denominator in both of Estrella’s pieces is the rectangle image. “Don’t ask me why, but when I first saw Stampstracts, the rectangle looked like a mirror to me,” she says. “That was the starting point for the *The Other Side of the Mirror*.”

While not exactly a self-portrait, the girl Estrella created shares some of her features. “She has curly hair; I have curly hair. My name means star; her hand is a star. After that, I continued to add pieces that made me happy.

“The collection has a very basic face stamp so it was a no-brainer to use that as the reflection,” she says. “With those images in place I decided I would find what I needed for the clothes and body parts from the rest of the Stamp-



*Kristen Powers, aka Kae Pea, created the Stampstracts line for RubberMoon.*



*Lynda Sheppard of Bowie, Maryland, participated in Kae Pea’s class at The Queen’s Ink.*

stracts stamps. The cape is a dotted triangle, which was great because it had some perspective and I connected the stamped triangles with the triangles that were formed between them with a Micron pen. I added the criss-cross lines, masked the cape and added arms and legs.”

In addition to the lines of the cape, Estrella added lines to the face and a few of the curls.

The object in the frame in the top right corner came about as Estrella played with as many Stampstracts as she could. “Originally it was just going to be a painting, but after painting it, I saw a weird color wheel or a target. Don’t ask me why anyone would hang a color wheel or a target on their boudoir wall, but this is a strange girl!

“The other little object I imagined was going to be

**“Kae Pea’s classes are a beautiful time for exploring--with no rigidity or expectation of conformity. I enjoyed the problem solving of producing a recognizable image using abstract stamps, followed by applying colors to the image.”**

**--Cindy Radcliffe Adler**

an abstract piece hanging on the wall, but after I painted it, it looked like a purse. I think this is a very organized girl who hangs her purse on the wall.”

## Wide-Eyed Cat

*Wide-Eyed Cat* is from the class at The Queen’s Ink. It was created by Cindy Radcliffe Adler who lives in Hunt Valley, Maryland.

While Kae Pea had selected an owl as the class project, Cindy—who is “mom” to two felines nicknamed Fat Cat and Black Cat—decided to go with a cat. “Kae Pea enthusiastically welcomed all image changes,” she says.

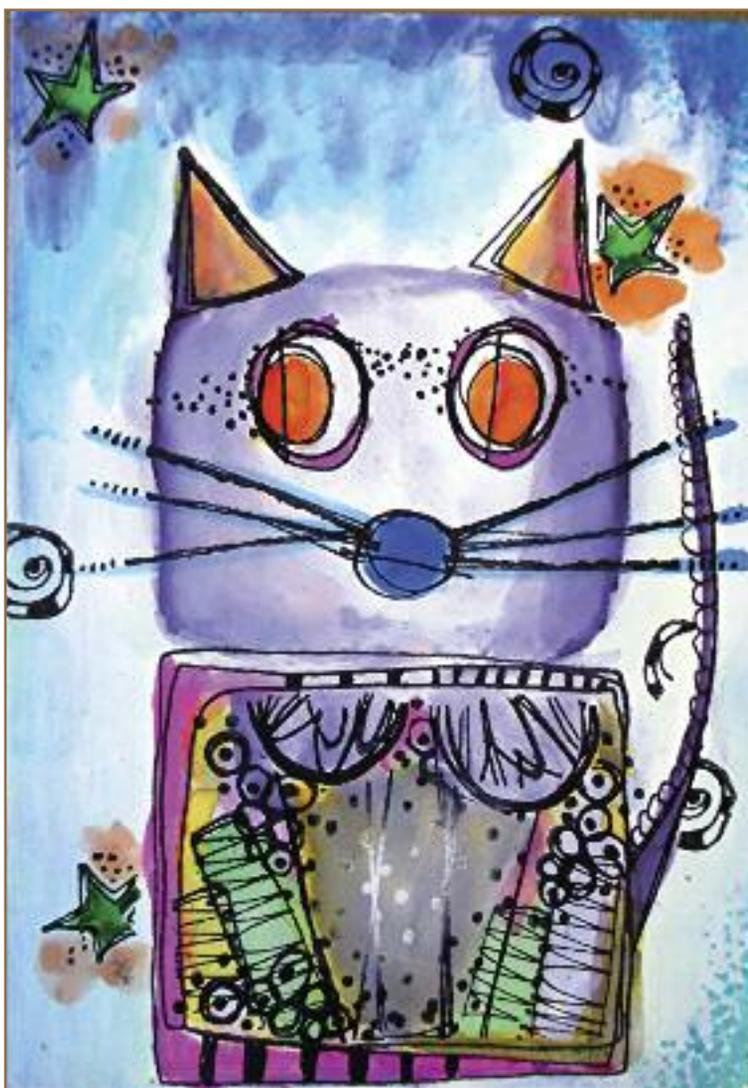
“The class was instructed to stamp the main image with archival black ink. Once dry, I placed a heavy layer of pigment onto the edge of the Stampbord and worked my way towards the cat image with a wet brush. As that dried I switched between blue and purple to anchor the image and create a slight halo.

“Using various Stampstracts stamps, I found images that would tease the eye into seeing cat legs, fat cat body and cat tail,” Cindy says. “Whimsical and cheerful were the intended feelings for the cat, which is why I selected purple for its body and head. The supporting colors added joy to the image, although I see now my cat is looking a bit apprehensive about life.”

Coloring was another element of Kae Pea’s class. “The class was as much about using the stamps to create an image as using color to highlight the stamping,” Cindy says. “Kae Pea talked about placing color at the edge and working towards the center with a wet brush, creating depth by lessening the purity of the color.

“Coloring around the stars was a way to highlight the cat image, so the stars appear to be floating around it, adding to the whimsical look.

“Many RubberMoon stamps are unconventional quick-line drawings, not your typical stamp image,” Cindy continues. “They have an edgy art student quality to them that is out of the ‘normal’ rubber stamp look. That is my type of



**Wide-Eyed Cat** / Cindy Radcliffe Adler  
(Stamp credits: All images—Stampstracts by RubberMoon Rubber Stamps.)

style! My purple cat was not intentionally mechanical, and in fact, I didn’t think of it as mechanical until you [the writer of the story] suggested it, but now I see that, too.”

*Karen Sweeny-Justice wishes she could have more fun time in the abstract world, but the real world just won’t leave her alone.*

For more information on Kae Pea and to see a list of upcoming classes, visit her blog, The Moon and the Maker, at: [themoonandthemaker.com](http://themoonandthemaker.com).

