

# Bear Collage

inspired by artist Erica Neumann

Grades: k-8

Subjects: Art, mathematics, science

Time frame: 40-60 minutes

**Lesson Overview:** Students will view paintings of bears with a focus on the work of Erica Newman. They will then create a paper collage of a bear with an impressionistic background.



**Vocabulary:** collage, impressionism, abstract, shape, value, value scale, analogous color

**About the Art/Artist:** Erica Newman is a Canadian artist who participated in the Hockaday Museum of Art's 2018 exhibition *A Timeless Legacy: Peace Park*. The wildlife art of Erica Neumann honors both the spirit of the animal, and spirited painting. The Ontario College of Art graduate shares her deep love for wildlife by carefully crafting their expressions which invites the viewer to feel a personal, more intimate connection to the animals as well. Years of outdoor painting in the Rocky Mountains are responsible for the vigor of her brush work. The characteristic, heightened color and modeling seen in some of her current paintings are a result of impressionist color theory, modern technology and an unconventional interest in cave art. Represented by galleries in Southern Alberta and one in B.C., Neumann paints in her garage studio, on a historic street in Okotoks, Alberta. The town is just south of Calgary, where she instructs a few art classes.

## Materials:

12" x 14" construction paper in a variety of light and dark blues and greens- one per student

6" x 12" brown construction paper- one per student

3" x 3" brown construction paper lighter or darker than larger piece – one per student

Variety of brown, black and white paper scraps

Glue

Scissors

Pencil

*Optional – value scale*

## Teacher Prep:

Cut blue and green construction papers to 12" x 14"; then cut the remaining 4" x 12" piece into 1"x 12" strips. Cut brown construction paper into appropriate sizes for bears – 6" x 12" and 3" x 3".

Prepare trays of blue and green paper strips (or paper scraps) for each table to share.

Prepare trays of brown, black and white paper scraps for each table to share.

Lay out colored background paper at each place. Students will self-select color by where they sit in room. Have pencils, glue, and trays of blue/green paper strips on each table. For control purposes it is best to pass out scissors and brown papers after students are engaged in creating their background.

### Discussion:

1. Look at examples of bears in art with a focus on Erica Neumann's bears. If desired, show photographs of bears in action. Discuss shapes found in animals. For example: oval body, circle head, rectangle legs, etc. Look at how Erica used broad chunky brush strokes of paint in multiple colors to create her bears.
2. Look at color wheel to identify analogous colors (3 colors or variations next to each other). Notice how Erica used analogous colors in her paintings.
3. Discuss values – lights and darks. Show black and white version of sample picture to illustrate identical values of different colors such as blue and brown. *Optional: have students use a value scale to compare lights and darks.* Look at how Erica used different values of blues and greens in her impressionist inspired backgrounds.

### Background Demonstration:

4. Pick 3 different values of blue or green from tray of paper strips (or scraps). Use blue to represent a water background or green to represent meadow. Tear strips into 1" or slightly larger pieces. Emphasize that the strips need to stay large in order to finish project in allotted time.
5. Demonstrate proper use of glue – for liquid glue use dots or "bug hops" on each piece of paper holding glue bottle to paper, not up in the air. If using glue sticks demonstrate how to twist glue container to use and then twist back down before putting cap back on glue stick.
6. Begin picture by gluing an arrangement of background paper pieces onto large paper. Emphasize that this is a close up picture so there will not be room to put details such as mountains, sky, etc. into background. It is also not necessary to fill center of picture area with colorful background since that is where the bear will be placed.

### Student Procedure:

7. Instruct students to write their name on back of 12" x 14" background paper.
8. Have students decide if they want a water background or vegetation. Use mostly blues for water or mostly greens for meadow. Then instruct them to pick 3 different values of blue or green from tray of paper strips (or scraps). Tear strips into 1" or slightly larger pieces.
9. Instruct students to think about where they want their mostly dark and mostly light values in the background. Use glue to place paper pieces in their appropriate locations. Make

sure to allow the main color paper to show between glued pieces as part of the overall design.

10. Tell students they may add additional colors for background shadows or highlights after they have put the bear into their picture.

#### Teacher Procedure:

11. As students are engaged in their background creations collect pencils – no drawing needed for next step. Then pass out the brown papers, tray of brown paper scraps, and scissors. Tell students they will have another demonstration before they use the new materials.

#### Bear Demonstration:

12. After students have worked on the background for about 10 minutes, have them take a break to watch a demonstration for the next step. Pick up the 6" x 12" brown paper. Tell them that they will be removing the paper that is not a part of the bear body. Keep the body as large as possible by rounding the corners to create an oval shape.
13. Choose a 3"x 3" square paper that is a different value of brown from the body. Remove the corners to make a circle for the head.
14. Decide where to place the body on the background. Show how body can be oriented in different directions and positions. (upright, horizontal, left facing right facing, etc.) Then glue it and the head to the paper.
15. Tell students that they will be looking through the scrap tray for paper to cut snout, legs, paws, ears, eyes and nose for bear. Demonstrate this step if your student group needs to see how to cut pieces. Use scraps of brown paper to cut snout and legs.

#### Student Procedure:

16. Have students cut the body and head for their bears.
17. Remind them to choose a good place on their picture to place their bear and that they can use several colors of brown while making legs, snout, etc. Black is a good color for the nose and eyes. White is a nice highlight color.
18. As students work encourage them to think about the overall composition of their picture. They may want to add shadows and perhaps white or light color highlights to their background.

#### Clean Up:

19. Have students return larger paper scraps to appropriate trays for future use. Tiny paper scraps should be thrown into garbage. Make sure glue caps/lids are properly closed.
20. Collect student work to give to teacher.



Bear sample picture in black and white





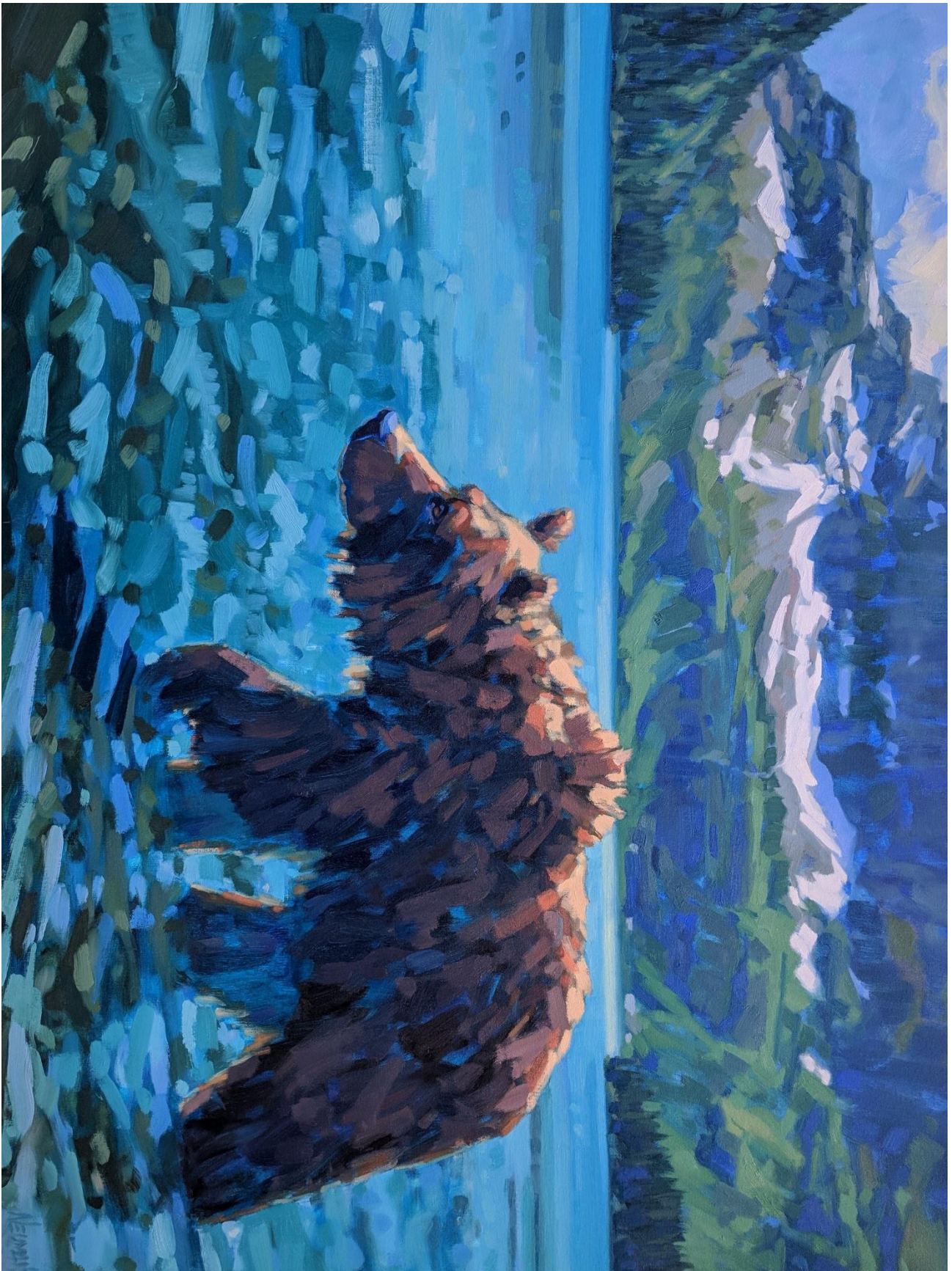


Erica Neumann

*To Higher Ground*

9" x 12" Oil painting



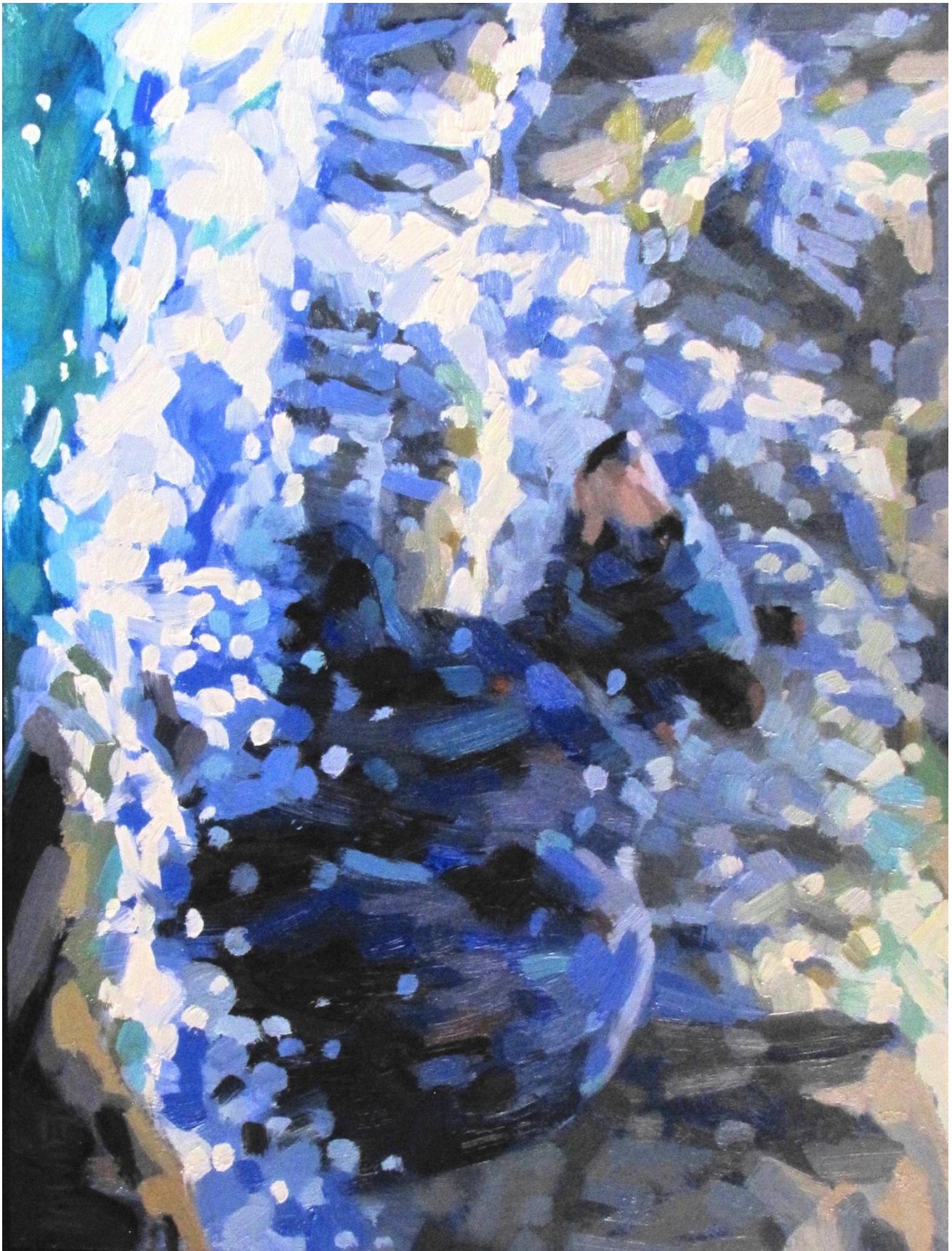


Erica Neumann

*A Walk In The Peace Park*

30" x 40" oil



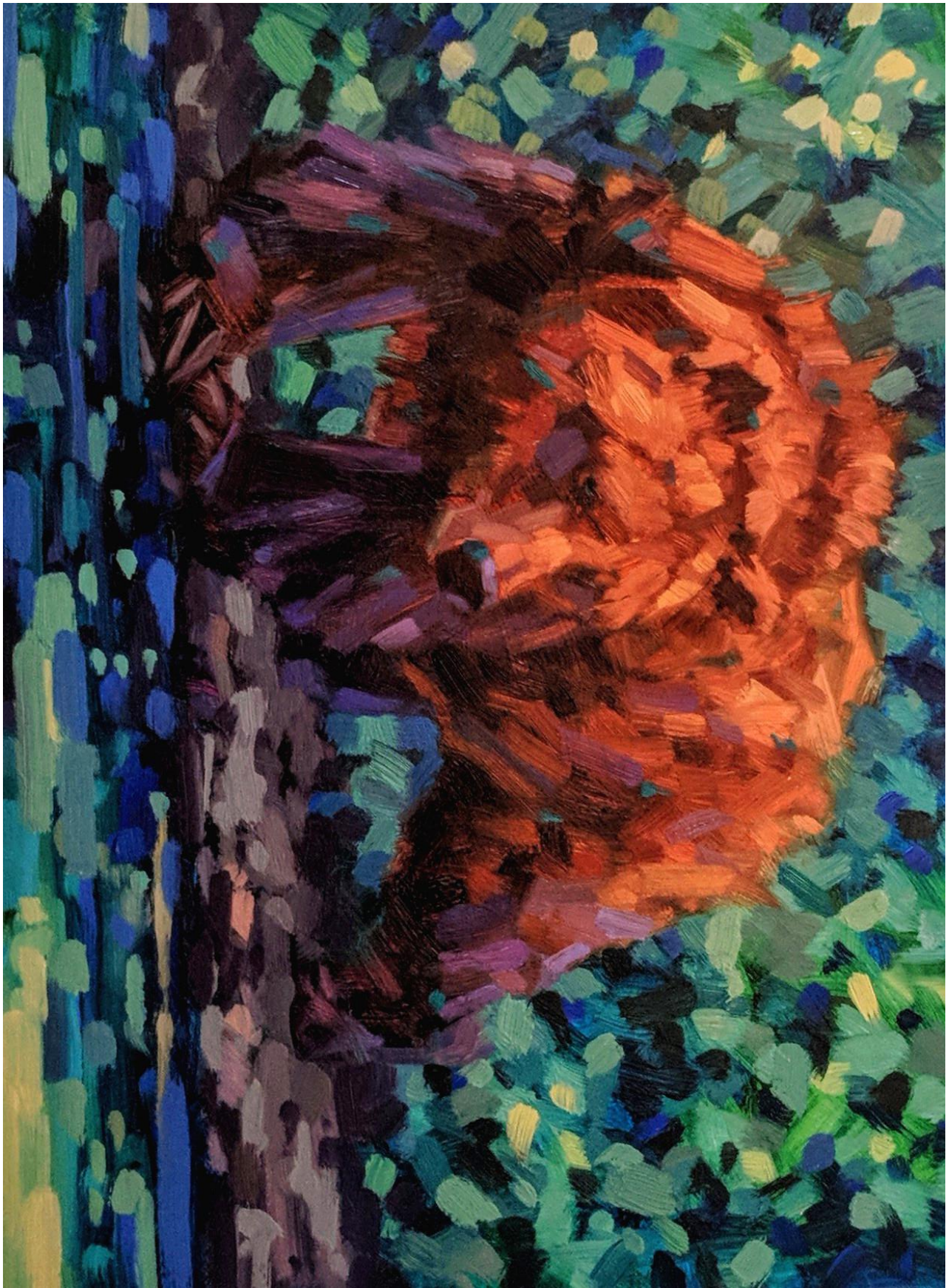


Erica Neumann

*Hot Day In Waterton*

9" x 12" oil





Erica Neumann

*Hidden On The Shores Of Cameron Lake*

9" x 12 oil painting