

# SANCTUARY

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*women united*  
ART MOVEMENT

Women United ART MOVEMENT  
is proud to present

## **SANCTUARY**

a solo exhibition by

**KAREN KURKA JENSEN**

### **EXHIBITION SYNOPSIS**

Even from a young age,  
I sought solace and inspiration in the great outdoors.  
Nature became my sanctuary, a place where I could lose myself  
in the vastness of the natural world and find peace amidst the chaos.  
Walking through the wilderness,  
I felt a profound connection to the rhythms of life, as if I were a part of something greater than myself, part  
of the cosmos. It is like walking through an invisible veil, one moment embodied, the next without form.  
I am air, the breeze in the treetops,  
the water flowing in the stream, the firmness of rock.

Landscape and nature know us, hold us.  
I am in the music of creation... and I am home.

This is why I create, this is who I am,  
Karen Kurka Jensen

### **ARTIST BIO**

Karen Kurka Jensen is an accomplished sumi-e artist, portraying her deep connection to nature through mystical, inspirational landscapes and abstract images. Jensen grew up in Minnesota, where she was sidetracked from a library career following a traumatic car accident. She went in search of alternative healing after her doctors could not relieve her chronic pain. She met a traditional Chinese healer who not only treated her successfully but introduced her to his Chinese culture and heritage. This "accident" led her down a path of discovery, falling in love with the art of sumi-e. Karen met and began studying with American sumi-e masters, Susan Frame and Susan Christie shortly after they returned from formal studies overseas in China and Japan, where their teachers were Zhuo He-Jun and Lu Yen Shao. Jensen studied with her teachers for over 10 years. They continue to be her mentors, teachers and close friends. Jensen has taken workshops with Cheng Khee Chee and Lok Tok and has continued her own research studies with renowned sumie artists such as Diana Kan and Gao Xingjian.

Early in her career, she developed her own sumi-e-inspired style of abstract expressionism; her dreamy landscapes and images take the viewer on a journey into their own souls. Immediate and lovely, Jensen's desire is to inspire. She conveys her poetic style through the use of natural and traditional materials, creating fantastical images on delicate rice paper with water, ink and color.

Jensen now resides in North Liberty, IA, after establishing a successful career in galleries and workshops across the West and Midwest. She continues to exhibit locally and nationally. Her work is in public and private collections across the country.

### **ARTIST STATEMENT**

As an artist who specializes in sumi-e art, I am deeply passionate about exploring the relationship between art and spirituality. My artwork is a reflection of my innermost thoughts, feelings, and beliefs and is intended to serve as a vehicle for self-expression, meditation, and contemplation.

My journey as an artist began at a young age when I discovered my love for drawing and painting. Over the years, my passion for art grew, and I began to explore various mediums and styles. However, it wasn't until I discovered sumi-e that I truly found my voice.

Sumi-e, also known as ink painting, is a traditional art form that is deeply rooted in heart and vision. The practice of sumi-e involves using a brush and ink to create bold, expressive strokes that capture the essence of a subject, rather than its physical details. For me, sumi-e is the perfect medium for expressing my spiritual beliefs and exploring my innermost thoughts and emotions.

From ancient times, the people of China have long held that their magnificent culture was a gift from the heavens. Art was primarily a means to explore the connection between humankind and God. Artists cultivated virtue in themselves because they felt that to create art worthy of the divine, there must first be inner beauty. Part of that practice for me is in waiting. It is dwelling, quiet and patient. It is prayer. Prayer as the absence of wanting and asking. Prayer as emptiness, prayer as silence, prayer as stillness.

In my expressive style of sumi-e art, I strive to capture the spiritual essence of my subject, not simply the physical form. In fact, much of what I currently paint is entirely abstract, revealing the mysteries of the soul. My goal is to create a piece of art that speaks to the viewer on a deeper level.

To achieve this goal, I approach each piece of artwork with a clear and focused mind. Before beginning to paint, I take time to meditate and reflect on the subject, allowing my thoughts and emotions to guide my brush strokes. I also pay close attention to the flow and movement of the ink, using it to create dynamic and expressive strokes that capture the energy and spirit of what I'm about to create.

Ultimately, my art is a reflection of my own personal journey. Through my artwork, I seek to explore and express my own thoughts, feelings, and beliefs, while also providing a source of inspiration and reflection for others. Whether viewed as a simple piece of art, or as a vehicle for meditation and contemplation, I hope that my work serves to uplift and inspire all who encounter it.

[www.karenkurkajensen.com](http://www.karenkurkajensen.com)



WOMEN UNITED ART MOVEMENT  
IS PROUD TO PRESENT A SOLO EXHIBIT

# SANCTUARY

BY  
**Karen Kurka Jensen**

18 FEBRUARY - 5 MARCH 2025



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Purple Reign 1, 2024

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
28 x 18 in (h x w)

\$ 1,800



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

The Altar of Dawn, 2024

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
18 x 14 in (h x w)

\$ 895





KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Purple Reign 2, 2024

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
28 x 18 in (h x w)

\$ 1,800



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Puff, 2020

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
37 x 27 in (h x w)

\$ 3,500



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Camp Out Among the Glacial Meadows (diptych),  
2020

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
34 x 26 in (h x w)

\$ 6,500



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Camp Out Among the Glacial Meadows (diptych),  
2020

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
34 x 26 in (h x w)

\$ 6,500



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

'Nature's Peace' will flow into you as sunshine flows  
into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness  
into you, and the storms their energy, while cares  
will drop off like autumn leaves. (J. Muir quote. Short  
title: Nature's Peace), 2019

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
34 x 20 in (h x w)

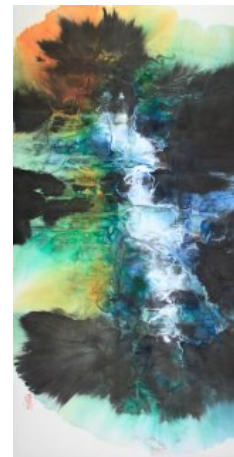
\$ 5,000



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

May This Be a Morning of Innocent Beginning,  
When the Gift Within You Slips Clear, 2023

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
63 x 35 in (h x w)



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Take the Wings of the Morning, 2022

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
24 x 33 in (h x w)



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

On the Shores of Gitchie Gumee, By the Shining Big  
Sea Water, 2023

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
27 x 21 in (h x w)

\$ 2,000



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

River of Dreams 1, 2020

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
63 x 35 in (h x w)



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Avalanche, 2019

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
33 x 24 in (h x w)

\$ 2,995



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Springtime in Sugarbottom, 2023

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
35 x 63 in (h x w)

\$ 7,500



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Stars Hollow, 2022

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
33 x 24 in (h x w)

\$ 2,895





KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Hoodoo Rendezvous, 2023

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
20 x 35 in (h x w)

\$ 2,650



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Deep Parts of Myself Pour Onward, It Seems Like  
Things Are More Like Me Now (diptych), 2020

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
34 x 35 in (h x w)

\$ 7,300



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Deep Parts of Myself Pour Onward, It Seems Like  
Things Are More Like Me Now (diptych), 2020

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
34 x 35 in (h x w)

\$ 7,300



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Lightning!, 2022

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
24 x 27 in (h x w)

€ 2,695



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Rock Paper Sky (or alternatively known as Earth,  
Wind and Fire), 2017

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
24 x 22 in (h x w)



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Still Pool, 2019

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
27 x 18 in (h x w)

\$ 1,800



KAREN KURKA JENSEN  
Redemption (from The Winter Series), 2011  
Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
34 x 22 in (h x w)



KAREN KURKA JENSEN  
Walkabout Timberlakes 5, 2017  
Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
34 x 24 in (h x w)



KAREN KURKA JENSEN  
We Are StarDust (diptych), 2022  
Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
32 x 9.5 in (h x w)  
\$ 2,500



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

We Are StarDust (diptych), 2022

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
32 x 9.5 in (h x w)

\$ 2,500



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Shekinah, 2020

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
25 x 34 in (h x w)

\$ 3,000



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

Floralia - MayDay Fest 1, 2019

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
28 x 18 in (h x w)

\$ 1,900



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

The Breath Between Trees, 2022

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
20 x 40 in (h x w)



KAREN KURKA JENSEN

A Walk in the Park, 2019

Sumi-e - ink and watercolor on rice paper  
39 x 21 in (h x w)





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ART MOVEMENT