

“After my entire studio was destroyed in Hurricane Helene, I found myself without a working space for the first time in over 20 years. I was, in a sense, starting again from almost nothing. Because I paint full-time, I knew I needed to find a path as quickly as possible.

The best option in front of me was to create a new space. I was fortunate in that we had an unused structure on our property- a solid two-car garage, separate from our home and only being used for storage. It presented a huge challenge- to create a studio space from scratch. By a stroke of great luck I was able to secure a contractor who was willing to put me on their wait list (in the wake of the hurricane, finding anyone to help with even basic services was an uphill battle). I worked with him to design the space with an emphasis on light quality and effective working areas, and demolition began in early February of this year.

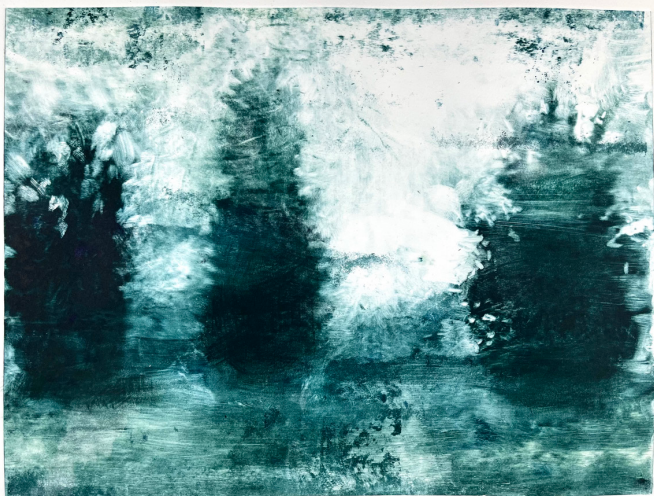
It was an exciting process to watch: a new studio developing before my eyes, over a period of about 3 months. As Asheville began to emerge from the devastation caused by the storm, my new studio was also born.

I was able to take possession in April, and spent the first couple of weeks replacing furniture, equipment, and supplies. Then, about 7 months after the hurricane, I was had a working studio once again.

The storm was a physical challenge, but also an emotional one. It took me some time to get my painting “feet” back under me. There were days I’d just go into the studio and...sit. And think. And sit. Finally one day, I stretched a large canvas, prepped it for painting, and got to work.

As of this writing, I’ve been working in my new space for about 7 months. I’m now feeling excitement about the work I’m doing, and about making work in general. It feels great to watch the new pristine white walls become broken-in with paint splatters.

The past year, following the storm, has been dense with sorrows, losses, challenges, and previously unthinkable issues. It’s been a constant march forward, but it hasn’t always been smooth for anyone in our area. However, through all of it, this studio sits in my mind as a symbol- of resilience, new possibilities, and of the growth that be possible out of a devastating experience.”



IN THE AIR,
ON THE GROUND