

Hazelhurst Arts Centre

# ART ENGAGE

Artist Focus: Ildiko Kovacs



Ildiko Kovacs *Serpentine* 1999, Oil on plywood, 155 x 275 cm

Collection of Museum of Contemporary Art, donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Ann Lewis AO, 2009

Image courtesy the artist and Museum of Contemporary Art Australia  
© the artist

Hazelhurst

SUTHERLANDSHIRE  
ARTS  
CENTRE

Developed by Hazelhurst's Public Programs & Education team, 2021.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

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### Ildiko Kovacs



**Ildiko Kovacs** *Serpentine* 1999, Oil on plywood, 155 x 275 cm

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Ildiko Kovacs is a Sydney abstract artist who studied at The National Art School in East Sydney. Kovacs has been influenced by her Hungarian upbringing and the artistic influence of European artists such as Malevich and Mondrian, Australian artists such as Tony Tuckson, Ian Fairweather, Aida Tomescu and Indigenous artists such as Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Rover Thomas and American painters like Cy Twombly and Philip Guston. This has given her a confidence and grounding in her development with a focus on line and a stripping back of the picture plane to voids and colour fields.

As an abstract artist with four decades of practice, she has developed a visual language over time that uses line, mark making and colour, exploring her feelings and responses. Kovacs' use of line and colour become the subject of the painting.

Ildiko Kovacs survey exhibition: *Down the Line 1980 - 2010* was held at Hazelhurst Regional Gallery in 2011. Ildiko Kovacs is represented by Martin Browne Contemporary: [Martin Browne Contemporary | Ildiko Kovacs](#)

Further information can be found on her website: <https://ildikokovacs.com.au>

## ABOUT THE WORK

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### **Serpentine 1999**

In *Serpentine* Kovacs has reduced the elements to line and colour on a single colour plane. Kovacs' line becomes organic and suggests an energetic pathway that hovers within its rectangle, crossing and dancing with vitality.

The line and colours echo and vibrate, concertina like over the three panels.

**On closer inspection, some of the lines appear in front, some behind. Where does line begin and end?**

### Vocab:

**Serpentine** means of or like a serpent or snake; surging, writhing, meandering.

**Abstract** means a style of art that is a personal expression of an emotion or idea and is not recognisable as an object or person.

**Survey** means an exhibition of artworks made through out a long period of the artist's practice, in this case the years 1980 to 2010.



## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

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- Trace the line with your finger.
- Where do the lines begin and end?
- Is it fast or slow? How would you describe it?
- What colours are used?
- How does colour contribute to the energy of the line?
- The artist has called this painting *Serpentine*. What does this mean?
- Imagine this is a map of a pathway. Where are we looking from, above or side on?
- Do these shapes and colours remind you of nature? Why?
- What title would you give this painting?

## ART MAKING

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### You will need:

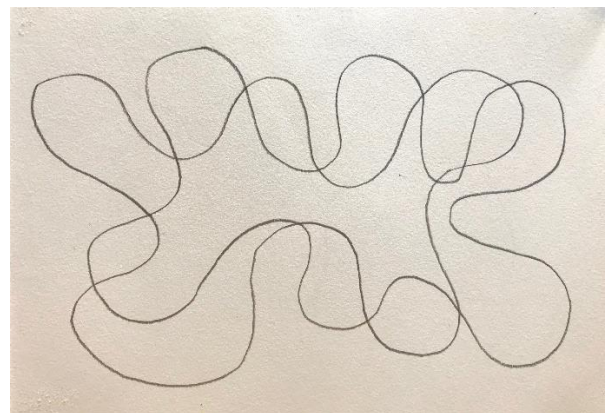
- Cartridge or watercolour paper
- Waxy Crayons or cray pas
- Pencil
- Diluted paint made with acrylic or gouache paint or watercolour
- A large paint brush or roller
- Newspaper



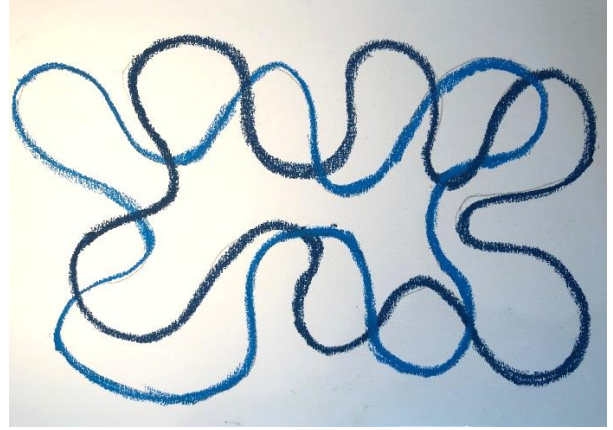
**STEP 1:** Do some warm up activities, moving arms in a circle from the shoulder, then from the elbow, lastly moving hands in a circle at the wrists, then in the opposite direction.

Think of a pathway when you go on a walk. Mine is a long winding walk through the bush and returns to where I start. Yours might be a short walk back and forth.

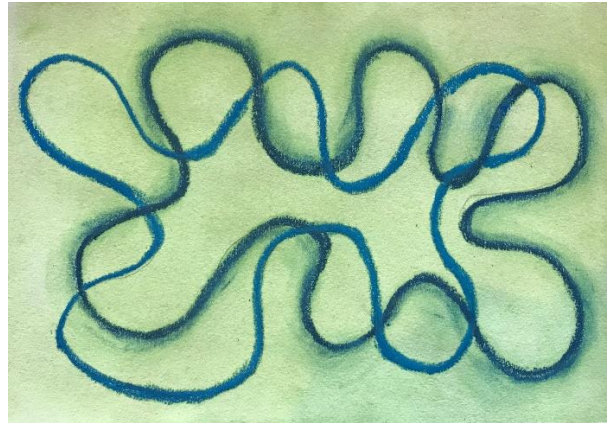
Using a pencil, draw these lines on your page, maybe meeting back where you started. Repeat this drawing letting lines overlap. You could even turn your drawing upside down and draw the same type of lines, but we don't want them to look exactly the same.



**STEP 2:** Using a waxy crayon, draw on these lines. Repeat so you have at least two colours.



**STEP 3:** Using a large brush or roller apply the watercolour or a wash, covering your painting so the wash becomes the background colour.



## REFLECTION

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### Display and view

- What worked well?
- Did you like the process of making the artwork?
- What do you like most about these works?