

# Step by Steps: Rita Blitt

By [Steve Brisendine](#) September 26, 2010

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"Seeking Truth," Ink on Paper.

## **Rita Blitt**

*Courage to Hope...While Dancing*

9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Lawrence Arts Center  
940 New Hampshire St.  
Lawrence, KS  
785.843.2787

Hours: 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Friday-Sunday.  
Runs through: Oct. 1

Artist's site: <http://www.ritablitt.com>

Gallery site: <http://www.lawrenceartscenter.com>

Sometimes, only a country music will do for an epigram. In this case, it's from John Michael Montgomery:

*Life's a dance you learn as you go.*

The idea of art as dance clicked for Rita Blitt years ago, as a grad student at the Kansas City Art Institute, when she began to perceive visual elements moving in rhythm together.

*My painting instructor Wilbur Niewald was a very important influence, she writes. He continuously talked about how one shape relates to another in a composition. The repetition of this concept puzzled me until one day when driving down the street, I became very excited by the sight of junk in the truck ahead of me. I saw a shovel, a broom and other assorted objects as shapes in a composition. I was amazed at my joy in this sight. It opened my eyes to suddenly see the world as art. To this day, it is exciting for me to see one shape relating beautifully to another.*

Blitt has been choreographing light and dark, color and texture, line and shape ever since on paper, on canvas and in three dimensions. All three forms — drawing, painting and sculpture — appear in her show *Courage to Hope...While Dancing*, on display at the Lawrence Arts Center.

In a way, the show itself is a *pas de deux* between two disparate lines of work: one a reaction to human suffering, the other a series which celebrates the joy of living.

In both cases, the interplay of elements within each piece is critical; they support and complement each other, "moving" to inner and implied rhythms that give even the darkest works a flowing grace ... and, yes, hope and bravery.

*I am happy that I had the courage in 1977 to begin letting my hands dance on paper, one at a time or both hands simultaneously, Blitt writes, and the guts to always follow my inspirations.*

That dance of intuition, courage and joy both moves to and creates its own music ... a stirring composition that, like life's dance, requires both moments and a lifetime to learn.