



# CONVERSATION

## THEA LYNN PAUL

"Conversation"  
9 X 8 inches



Inspired by Wassily Kandinsky and Alan Blackman

I looked at the suggested list for inspiring artists and loved Wassily Kandinsky's work. The bright colours and shapes really caught my eye. I decided on a 12-square grid and then looked up 12-letter words that had meaning for me. "Conversation" seemed to fit the piece perfectly. I played with many drafts to decide how to do the lettering. I was working on something else using Alan Blackman's Square Round Lettering (as interpreted by Lynn Slevinsky in her Marker Lettering book, Volume #1) and decided it was perfect. I did many trials to get the colours to sing. When I tried the Peerless watercolours, I knew I had it right. These are so transparent and bright. I used a yellow watercolour pencil to draw the grid and one part of the square (usually the letter itself). I then worked without additional guidelines so there would be no pencil marks. I tried to stay relatively true to the colours in the inspiration piece. The lettering on the bottom was done with a black glaze pen. Each square in the grid is two inches.



## DONNA UNCLES

"PS - Neither Here Nor There"  
8 x 10 inches

The poem "POSTSCRIPT" by Seamus Heaney, from *The Spirit Level* © Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1996, inspired me to find an artist but not just any artist, a Canadian artist, whose work depicts something rugged. The images by Lawren Harris came to mind. My first thought was to scribe Seamus Heaney's poem over Harris' image. Then I decided to limit my palette, force the contrasts, and imitate the graphic shapes Harris uses, to produce my own Canadiana background. Antwerp blue, water and the white of the page was the decision, thinning the blue with water for the lighter values, strong from-the-tube pigment for the dark

values. Now, with a raw, Canadian-sort of image of my own, I decided to take the challenge one step further. Working with the language and images from "POSTSCRIPT", which depicts an Irish scene, a Canadian counterpart began to take shape. "PS: NEITHER HERE NOR THERE", is the result. The lettering was done with pencil on tracing paper first to figure out spacing. The lettering on top of the watercolour was done with pencil and a white gel pen. And there you have it: IN THEIR STYLE(S) – BOTH HARRIS & HEANEY.

Something I noticed at the IN THEIR STYLE Galleria in February was a few other contributors had also followed the contours of the original artists' work to place their lines of text. There were exceptions. Linnie used the colour palette and lettering to imitate the textures and shapes of Claude Monet's water lilies. What sort of alphabet could be made using Harris' style? How do we convey the shapes of letters using strong contrast, without creating texture? Harris would probably be quite annoyed by the amount of detail thrown at his powerful, crisp, stylized symbols of landscape. Harris liked to reduce, reduce, reduce, leaving just enough to tell the story. Typography has already had lots of people attempt to create letters by reducing the amount of information while each letter retains its readability. The mind and the muses are still muddling with that.

Participants in the February Galleria focused on other design elements (line, shape, value, texture, colour, volume) giving us a fresh way to look at our own art and the art of the masters. This has been a terrific challenge for learning and researching the art, layout and design decisions made by artists.

