



Fun With CATS



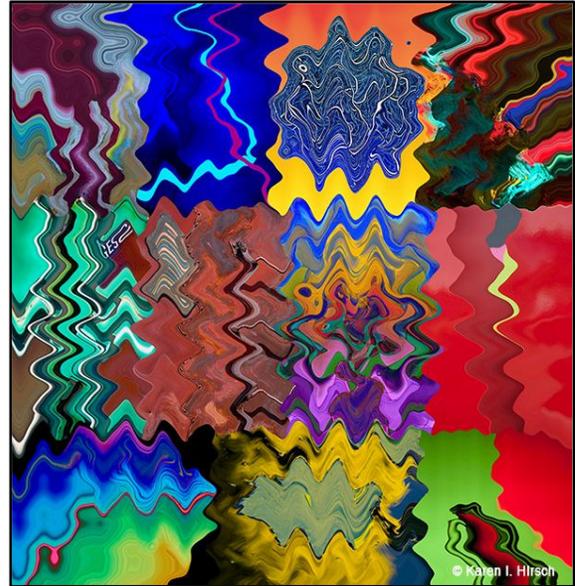
Fun With CATS #4. FWC is a collaboration between the Social Committee and the Director of Communications. It will be published occasionally until CATS is able to resume playing tennis. It's a way of keeping in touch with each other and remembering how much fun we have on and off the court. We'll look at photos of past events, share news about members or information about tennis instruction—anything we can think of that's fun and relevant to CATS! If you have suggestions, please contact Jim Vahey at jimvahey@sbcglobal.net.

Imagine you are a professional photographer. Now imagine every event, every situation you normally photograph has been cancelled because of the pandemic. What do you do?

If you're Karen Hirsch, you get busy. In mid-March, Karen wrote on her Facebook page: "All the talk about Covid-19, the roller-coaster stock market and the disruption in all of our lives has us on edge. It's hard to know what we should be doing. As a creative person, while hunkered at home today, I expressed my feelings by creating new images."

Karen is a visual artist, in addition to being a photographer. Using Photoshop, Karen made collages of some of her existing images — drawing from areas such as architecture, graffiti, musicians and plants — looking for colors, shapes and textures that would work together. She then distorted the collage and sometimes added color or shapes.

The first image she posted on Facebook was *Covid-19*. "It kind of represented my feelings—frustration, a little bit of anger—and the distortion gave it movement, so that represented the spread of the virus."



March 15: *Covid-19*

When digital photographs are shown online, it is very easy for anyone to copy the images and use them without permission, so photographers are usually concerned about protecting their images online. "I'd always been reticent about posting my images," Karen said. "Because of the pandemic, I had the feeling 'The sky is falling!' Then I thought, 'I had the images, so I may as well post them directly to social media. I might as well express myself,' so I started to do that."

At that time, the expectation was that the quarantine period would last two weeks, so that's how long Karen thought this project — aptly titled *Image of the Day* — might last. July 1st marked her one-hundredth posting in the series!

In the first weeks, not every image was given a title, and Karen sometimes asked her Facebook friends what the image suggested to them. Throughout most of April, titles usually referred to the Corona virus, and the images often used sharp angles to show anxiety and danger.



March 21: *Shelter in Place*



March 22: *Hot Spot*. Karen wrote, "This serpentine virus has teeth."

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April 6: *Peaking*

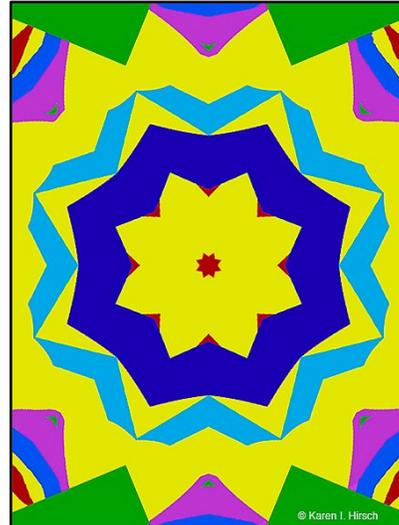


April 17: *The Face of Corona*

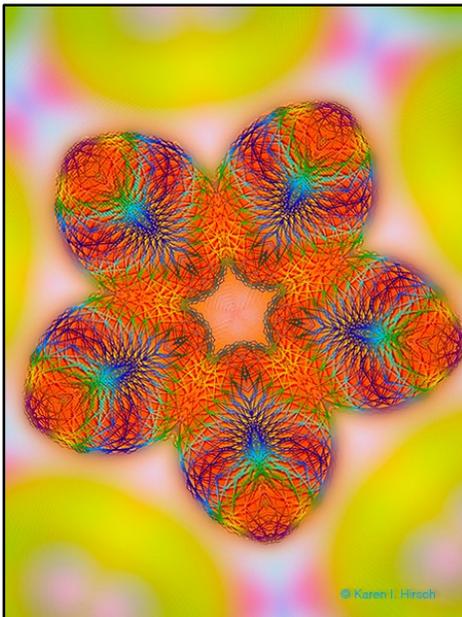
As the weather changed, so did the images. Warmer temperatures made Karen less anxious and more hopeful, so on April 26, she posted *Rainbow Sunshine*. There was only one image about the pandemic after that. She started creating flowers from “previously made photos and designs and rearranged them to create geometric patterns. I made multi-layered Photoshop files, changing colors, removing textures, and sometimes adding shadows for a 3D effect.”



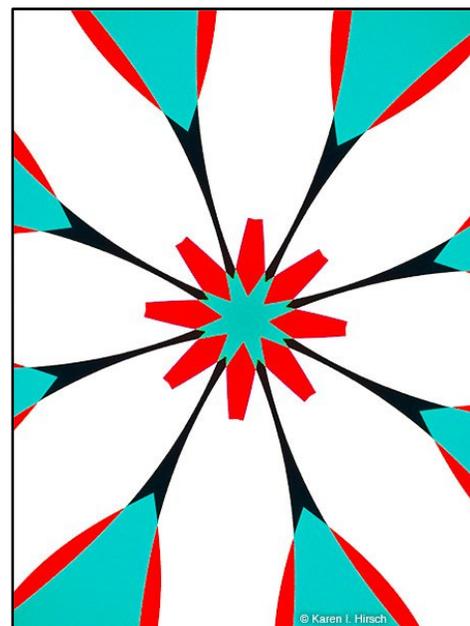
April 26: *Rainbow Sunshine*



May 3: *Yellow Flower Party*



May 24: *Webbed Flower*



May 29: *Spring Flower*

In late June, the weather was gorgeous, Chicago started opening up, Covid statistics improved, so Karen's images reflected those changes. With real flowers in bloom, Karen's flowers became even more abstract and started giving way to exuberant geometric shapes or free forms. These images experimented with texture or a 3D effect, and sometimes reinterpreted earlier abstracts.



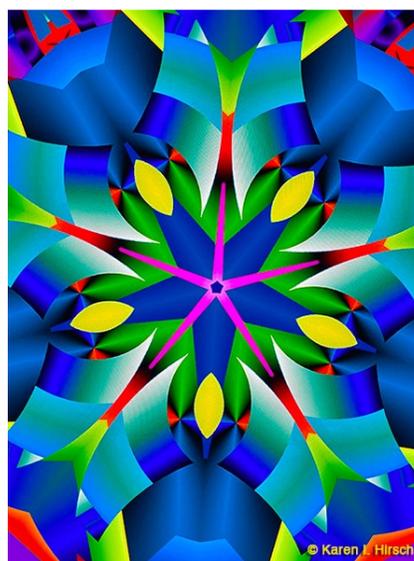
June 22: *La Fleur Noire*



June 27: *Color Burst*



July 5: *Star Burst*



July 9: *Pink Pentagrams with Lemons*

Where will the project go from here? Karen hasn't decided. She thinks it will continue for now, but might not post an image every day. She still isn't going out much or getting photo assignments, so she calls this time "a period of experimentation." In addition to this project, Karen used the time to take online art classes and is learning about e-commerce.

If are not one of Karen's Facebook friends but want to see the images in *The Image of the Day*, you can see them at:

<https://www.facebook.com/karen.hirsch.923> or <https://www.instagram.com/karenihirsch/>

Karen is an international award-winning photographer/visual artist whose work has been published internationally, including in "Communication Arts" and "Graphis" photo annuals and in "Architectural Digest." She has photographed such prominent personalities as Presidents Barack Obama, Bill Clinton and Donald Trump, gold medal Olympians, Muhammed Ali, Michael Jordan, Oprah Winfrey, Jay Leno, Julie Andrews, Jennifer Hudson and Richard Branson. She has received grants from the City of Chicago and the Illinois Arts Council. Hirsch's prints have been showcased in Chicago art galleries, as well as in art centers in Fort Collins, CO, Palm Beach, FL, and Los Angeles, CA. Her photography was included in the 20th Century Fox film, *Widows*.



You can view some of her other abstract images and sign up to get her latest news at: <http://www.karenihirsch.com/visualart/blog/index.html>

If you are a fan of photography, then visit her portfolio page at:

<http://www.karenihirsch.com/portfolio---galleries/index.html>

Short Tails

 One last word about **Karen Hirsch**: Karen joined CATS when it was still limited to people who worked in advertising. It looks like Karen has been a member longer than anyone else who is still playing!

 **Meg Givhan** and **Jon Sollberger** – and Trixie the Cat – briefly appeared in a segment about Puppetgrams on WTTW's *Chicago Tonight*. Meg said, "We were there to show that people of all ages like puppets; I guess we showed you don't even have to be human!" See: <https://news.wttw.com/2020/07/16/chicago-puppeteer-brings-theater-your-door-pop-show>

 **Jim Vahey** used his down time to study several languages: "At the beginning of March when I saw clearly where things were headed and the need for new hobbies, I got busy early and worked on my conversational Russian ..."

Почему рыба никогда не бывает хорошими теннисистами? Они не любят приближаться к сети.

Why are fish never good tennis players? They don't like getting close to the net. We'll share more of Jim's language prowess in coming issues!