



June 20, 2021 - August 13, 2021



HEADBONES GALLERY

Artist Catalogue: Okanagan Rambling, SOS Copyright © 2021, Headbones Gallery

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Doug Alcock, Glenn Clark, Camille Clarke, Briar Craig, Robert Dmytruk, Jen Dyck, Johann Feught, John Hall, Joice M. Hall, Fern Helfand, Byron Johnston, Judith Jurica, Angelika Jaeger, Reg Kienast, Wanda Ivy Lock, Mary S. McCulloch, Steve Mennie, Rhonda Neufeld, Destanne Norris, Julie Oakes, Katherine Pickering, Amber Powell, Bryan Ryley, Kevin Spetifore, Heidi Thompson, David Wilson, Deborah Wilson

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Okanagan Rambling,





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COMMENTARIES BY JULIE OAKES





OKANAGAN RAMBLING, SOS

Looking back at anything signed off in 2020 will raise a mitigating flash just as the years of the Great Wars fire a signal. No one saw the pandemic in the same way, but we all knew it as an SOS- Shadowing Our Self Confidence. Some went through it as Smiling Okanagan Stoics while others experienced Simply Okanagan Safe. Artists found themselves in Solitary Okanagan Spaces perhaps with a Significant Other Supporting, convinced of their Secure Okanagan Solipsism. Sustaining Okanagan Socialness was impossible. This word game could go on forever, dependent upon Stultifying Okanagan Statistics which preluded the news and charted cases, rimming the comings and goings with an invisible fence built by a tiny bug.

Can we abandon SOS now? Headbones Gallery brings out the acronym SOS one more time to frame an exhibition where the letters can stand for each individual's personal experience. Each to his own SOS.

Much of the work was created during the pandemic or can be related to it. If art is the liaison between the creator and the viewer, then our link has been eroded over the past year. Connection between artists, the firing power of exchanging ideas and visuals has been replaced by time in solitude when ruminations change colour. Let's see what the rainbow looks like now that we are opening, June 20, a Sunday afternoon opening, an opening of the shutters welcoming a great flood of light.



Richard Fogarty and Julie Oakes, 2021 Headbones Gallery - Vernon, British Columbia



Doug Alcock

The glass is cast from the reclaimed metal, slumped under extreme heat until the impression of the pebbled rivets showed up and solidified. The glass became a plumper, clearer, bubbling child of the firmer parent. Alcock has placed it behind the steel, hindering the light from shining through in its entirety, veiling the clone and harnessing it with a shoelike support. When the imperturbable steel is frontal, the sculpture invites investigation. Looking behind, the bracing is curiously complex, jerry-rig-ish, with an old nail dangling from intricate tooling that is itself delicate. The strong steel sheath folds lyrically, poetically, into harmony that by virtue of the shapes used suggests mechanical potential.



Doug Alcock: DOUBLE JAB found, forged and fabricated steel, Montpetit glass, h38" x d17" x w10", 2020



Doug Alcock: DOUBLE JAB Found, forged and fabricated steel, Montpetit glass, h38" x d17" x w10" - 2020

Glenn Clark

When manufacturers picked the names for their cars or companies, they chose loaded words that aggrandize sensation (Cutlass, Le Sabre), suggest status (Coronet, Monaco, Classic), define shapes (Chevrolet) or bring speedy animals to mind (Mustang, Cougar, Pinto). They added numbers, usually at least three digits, to further specify the 'breed', cast the names and numbers in chromed metal, and attached them like jewelry onto scintillating, shiny hoods and boots. The vehicles zipped about the land, ferrying people and things to places. Then, at some point, they broke down and were put out to pasture where the rain, sun and a gleaner or two had their way with them. It was in this ravished state that Glenn Clark brought them up again, recognized their beauty, edited, enhanced, and, again, they seduce.





Camille Clarke

There is a community out there that uses the term 'junk journal' but 'reclamation of ephemera' is more accurate a description. There is a loving attention to detail and a reference to the maker, in this case effeminizing the original tome by inserting referential pages either to the contents of the book or autobiographical contingencies when personal objects are included. Each page is considered and yet so is that page's relationship to the whole as the books are rebound by stitching pages onto the spine. *Dies Frau als Hausurztin,* in its day, was a ground breaker for female medical practices. Deconstructed and added to during a pandemic that has been as challenging for the medical profession as perhaps at one time, the female body was to a profession largely regulated and administered by menit is now an art book, a work of art that utilizes the form of a book, displaying with an abundance of messaging and technical acumen.





Camille Clarke: DIE FRAU ALS HAUSARTZIN - 2021 Handmade mixed media art journal, 9.5x6.25x5.5 inches

Briar Craig OMG

OMG — the abbreviation for an exclamation that at one time would have been a holy utterance, is now popularized by the urge to record an impression quickly and send it to someone; a text message that doesn't spell but says it all. Completed during the pandemic, there is a sad resonance in the superbly shortened reach of the times. It is a hyperbolic resignation created by the confines of transmitting emotionally charged data over a cell phone. Craig has it backwards as if seen from the inside of the screen looking out through a gauzily blurred field that is further obliterated by a blob as if the screen has been dropped in a lake and is bubbling downwards. The reason the text is backwards is that this print is based on a photograph of a piece of rice paper sitting on top of some wood printer's type. The sheet of rice paper had a wet spot on it so when it came in contact with the wood type, it became transparent with the wet paper clinging to the smooth surface of the type pieces. The letters are backwards in wood or lead type because the printed image from backwards type would be correct reading.



Briar Craig: OMG - 2020 Ultra-violet screen print on paper, 29.5x21 inches, Ed. 6/10

Robert Dmytruk

Between the dots and slashes, stripes and spots, smudging and transparency, saturation and hesitant modeling, a character emerges. It comes from the world of comics, of playgrounds, of brash bold, confident gestures that are cinematic and climax with a burst of joy. Dmytruk, of late, will not be confined. Cut shapes cavort across the wall, prop each other up, dance in syncopated rhythm and yet they maintain a stylish sophistication in the process. And when on a smaller platform, with the subtly tinted acetate backing, the colors reach a practiced pitch so that the choreographed performance sings.





Robert Dmytruk: SPECIALIZED 1 - 2021
Oil, spraypaint and resin on Gator board on acrylic glass, 24x24 inches

Jen Dyck

Each piece is like the documentation of a moment in a one act play set in a staged room while the world goes on outside like a familiar projection. The actors are occupied with each other but still insulated within their own being as if the script is common but the episode for each is individual. United by their common humanity, they appear engaged, open to exchange, but stultified and unresolved in their attempts to break free as if they are doing the best they can within the created environments. Fulfilling roles, doing jobs or doing nothing, it is humanity in general, hoping to get ahead by stepping across a tenuously constructed bridge. Supported or carrying, they are figuring it out, whimsically, romantically endearing and naively pure.



Jen Dyck: A BIRD IN THE HAND - 2020 Collage and paint on wood panel, 12x12 inches



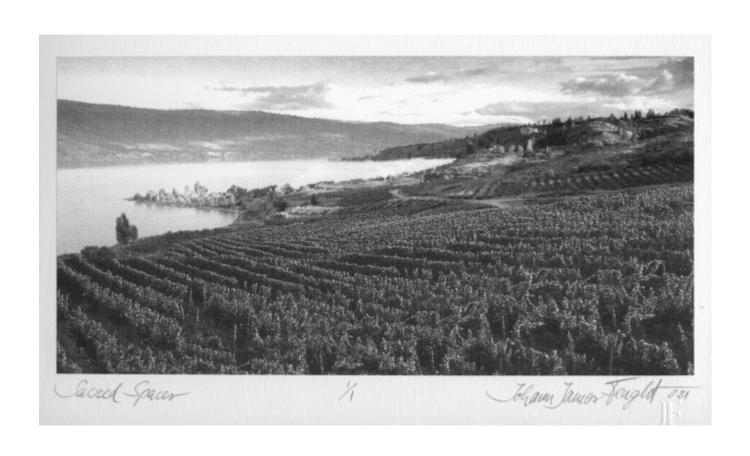
Jen Dyck: DOWN AND OUT - 2020 Collage and paint on wood panel, 12x12 inches



Jen Dyck: ROPE THEORY - 2020 Collage and paint on wood panel, 12x12 inches

Johann J. Feught

Sacred Spaces - To realize the sanctity of lived experience is to catch the moment, seize the day, even if it is a solitary experience. Having delved into a history of the geology of the valley, and ruminating on a time before houses and cars dominated the landscape, Feught photographed a winery, capturing the rich, lush, bounty of this area. By visually rubbing, working the image, he created a digital mezzotint with deep blacks, a semblance of burrs, and the attention to details revealed through an even more acute attention to what is taken away. The spaces between, the light behind, the belief in being as fully present as possible, inspired Feught, who, from the bubble's interiority, brought peace and a subsequent visual resolution to this picture of a more natural modernity where black and white become an ancient scent.



John Hall

The plastic doll appears dubious as if she awoke to find herself duct taped against the piece of ripped cardboard and, despite the happy face pinned to her breast, she is not convinced that she belongs against the backdrop of shiny red and green plastic. She was made to be cute with her blinky eyelashes and kewpie doll lips but now her head is cracking. She tries to see the photo of herself, another place - a better time? - dated 1973, where she was also hanging on a piece of cardboard. The roses in that photo wore brighter colors. Something is different now. The rose has greyed and casts an ominous shadow across another photo, dated 1982. It is of a painting of plastic handcuffs and the clue is taken that this painting is done on top of that earlier painting, and that she, though old and cracked in 2021, is still rising. She is *Phoenix 8*.





John Hall: PHOENIX 8 - 2020 Acrylic on canvas, 24x24 inches

Joice M. Hall

Joice Hall's rainbow is from the remembered world, before the pandemic. But has it been that different this past year? The sun still shone through the mist and became a rainbow while the land below, was verdant, refreshing. This was in the Okanagan, where the outdoors was accessible without having to wear a mask, where solitary stoic walks were possible and the glory of nature healing. The sunsets, are also from before, before, when Mexico was an Okanagan option to the harsh cold gray winter skies. Although exotic travel has not been possible, each evening the sun set and each morning it rose as the firmament amazed with displays based on the transformation of elements, a transformation we understand through science as well as aesthetically. Hall's works speak of the surety of change and also of the potential within that change for greater glory.



Joice M. Hall: SUNSET AT BANDERAS BAY I Oil on linen, 16x20 inches - 2007



Joice M. Hall: SUNSET AT BANDERAS BAY III Oil on linen, 16x20 inches - 2007



Fern Helfand

A photograph was once used primarily as evidence of a moment in time, frozen proof of the existence of an aspect of reality, but Fern Helfand's layered testimony demands a cross examination. There are clues and references abounding. The columns on the grounds of the Ringling Brothers tourist park in Florida are props, part of a constructed Venice. The Roman columns in the other photo are indeed Roman but they are located in Turkey. The columnar ceramics are pots but also columns and one has the same decorative embellishment as the roof of the White House. The works are all part of a series, *Watching from North of the Border*, 2020, when confusion reigned in the states and what was real or fake still defies the jury.





aj Jaeger

When considering consciousness, seated within the brain, while at the same time imagining every physical sensation that is translated through it, the workings of this organ is, for the layperson, as mysterious as Life itself. To visualize the partial deterioration of that mystery while bringing to bear all that has fed into the artist's understanding of both the physical reality and the tools that are at hand to express that understanding, this is what aj has created in *Encephalon Implosion*. Dealing with the aftermath of a close encounter with just such a surprising misfiring of consciousness, she has visually mapped her response and the result is as intriguing as the mystery.





aj Jaeger: ENCEPHALON IMPLOSION - 2021 Acrylic, acrylic gel, ink on canvas, 40x40 inches

Byron Johnston

The works raise questions, comments, exclamations and recognition even though the reference may have been initially personal or oblique. The *Pink Cedar* particularly appeals to men who have a similar piece of wood in their domain and McCalls to women who have had mothers whose subscription to normalcy lay in the styles, recipes and signals on whereand-how-to-shop that the magazine dealt. And hardly anyone has seen a boat burning so that's a commonly appreciated marvel though the reflected image often prompts "but *why*?". Johnston's work is inherently social, good in company, and unafraid to clown.



Byron Johnston: A CAMPING TRIP GONE WRONG photo, aluminum, copper, 12x7x31 cm, 1991-2021



Byron Johnston: MCCALLS - 1991-2021, Found object, USD, aluminum, copper, 12x7x31 cm



Byron Johnston: PINK CEDAR - 2020 Cedar, paint, aluminum, copper, 18"hx12"wx16"d

Judith Jurica

It looks like fun, Judith Jurica's *Imaginary Travel*. Past series in her repertoire had been figurative and referentially she still is creating leaps and bounds of human movement - limbs striding, hair bouncing, the music of cityscapes where patterns of being are consumed. She captures grit, fatigue and patina, the chatter between and the impossibility of being able to take it all in. Using paint and collage (wallpaper, dress patterns) the papers are yellowed and the surfaces scrubbed away, dripped upon, scratched out and rediscovered. It is wildly confusing and stimulating, never to be completely known but the challenge is welcomed with each intake of flabbergasted breath.



Judith Jurica: IMAGINARY TRAVEL - 2021 Mixed media on wood Panel, 24x24 inches

Reg Kienast

Because there is a circular configuration towards the top, there is a figurative intonation. The head filled with cogs form nuanced juxtapositions like thoughts coinciding in different permutations. A step away from the figure and the circular structure becomes an image of the earth if it is considered in indigenous stories where terra firma is known as Turtle Island. When light shines on *Stillness*, the shadows cast multiply the imagery in lacey looping configurations belying their solid steel origins. *Stillness* was created during the time of mandated stillness that, although isolating, lent a respite from the comings and goings of 'normal' distractions leaving room to birth, to create, in the quietude.



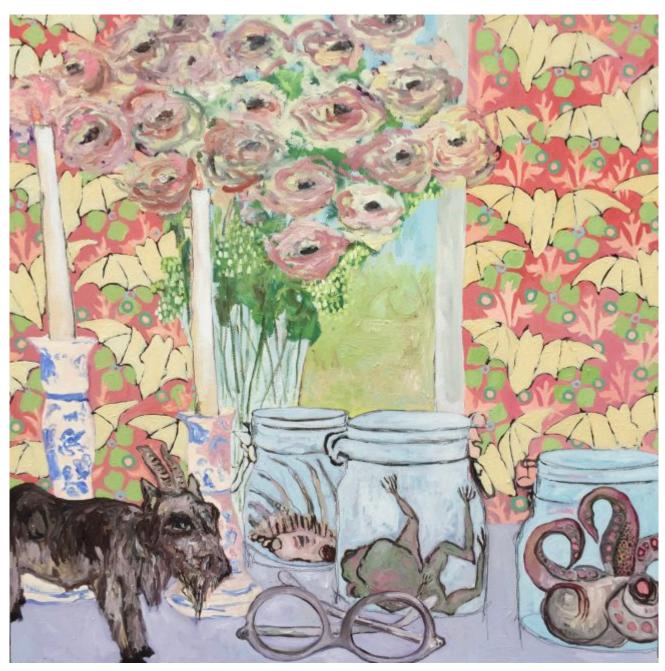


Reg Kienast: STILLNESS - 2020 Steel, caste iron, powder coating,h38" x d7" x w18"

Wanda Lock

Ladling out wonder in generous proportions and from various pots, Lock engages the appetite with all that is tasty in painting and nourishing in life's diversity. Still Life with Goat and Glasses can be savored from an art connoisseur palate, relishing in the slippery sugary paint that is accented with the carefully observed and tended darker drawing of the goat, glasses and contents of the mason jars. Eyeglasses, made for examining beside that which is framed to be examined, the contents of the glass jars, bring 'looking' into view. The juxtaposition of a goat, a very small goat, emphasizes strangeness like the addition of a strong delicious spice. An arbiter of taste, Lock knows where to sweeten and when to relax and throw in that extra something that satisfies her urge to try something new.

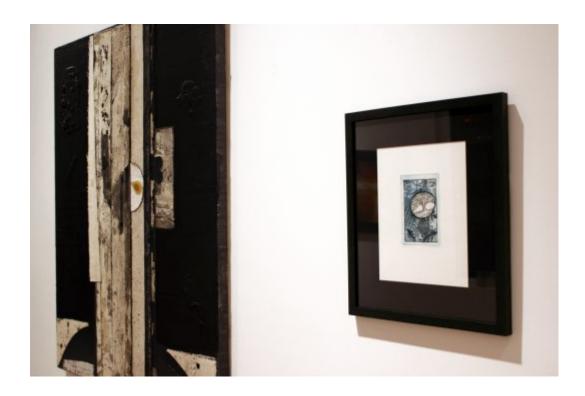


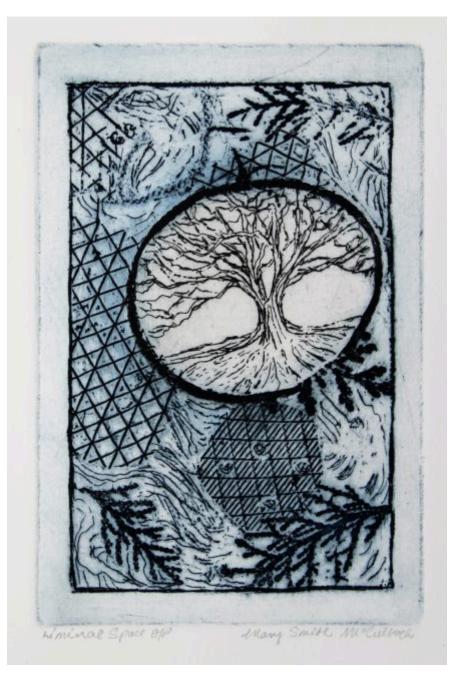


Wanda Lock: STILL LIFE WITH GOAT AND GLASSES - 2021 Acrylic on canvas, 36x36 inches

Mary Smith McCulloch

Liminal Spaces was inspired by The Book of Kells, an illuminated manuscript that originated in Scotland, Ireland or England, perhaps with contributions from the three territories. Created somewhere around 800 AD and claimed as the pinnacle of insular illumination, The Book of Kells spurred McCulloch with a glowing testamentary to her Scottish origins as she set about to formulate an image considering the spaces between, the liminal areas. The etching is set up like a page of a book where, once opened, a delicate clarity within the circle bounces light outwards, set like a diamond in the deep indigo markings. From her detailed renderings of orchards where gnarled fruit trees, row on row, held quotidian dignity, to this sacred edification of canopy and roots, McCulloch's recent step out of pandemic isolation is regally ascending.





Mary Smith McCulloch: LIMINAL SPACE - 2021 Ink on paper, etching, artist proof, 6x4 inches

Steve Mennie

Each is a portrait, and each is the artist himself summoning another wry, witty, informed and perspicacious take on character. Clear sighted or muddle minded, references to the news, directional confusion, well-meaning though blind perspectives, retrofitted in black and white with 3-d glasses and cogs a whirring; these portraits show more brain than face, more thought than cosmetics. Yet style is tantamount – the pastel backgrounds making a set of the images, the cool, canny cuts that cover and reveal simultaneously and the simplicity of composition that convinces beyond doubt. Then again, the images are disturbing as if referring to incomprehensible problems of our time such as man's singular isolation constantly being interrupted by his need to communicate.



Steve Mennie: UNTITLED (peach, lavender, yellow, green, blue) - 2020 Collage on painted wooden panels, each 13 x 11 inches

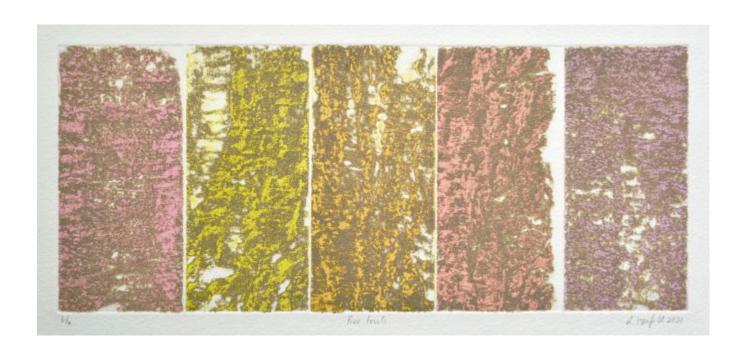


Steve Mennie: UNTITLED (yellow) - 2020 Collage on painted wooden panel, 13 x 11 inches

Rhonda Neufeld

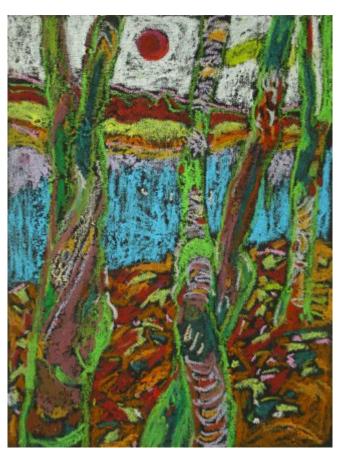
Each window originated as a rubbing from the bark of a fruit tree that had been planted as a baby and grown under Neufeld's care. Having yielded cherries, pears, apricots, apples and plums over years, and as plans are being made to leave the land, the patterns developed by each specific fruit tree's bark have been preserved by the hand of an adept and sensitive print maker. From rubbings translated into etchings through a process that used fresh scented wintergreen oil, the subtle tints hint at the color of fruit, bringing on recognition as pleasant as the first blush of scent when the lid of a mason jar is popped.



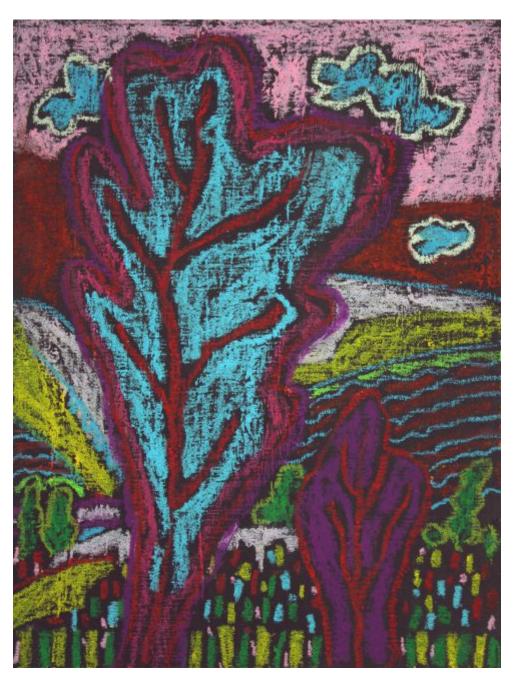


Destanne Norris

Each of the panels have trees in the foreground, landscape escaping through and behind. The result of years of soul searched painting, of striving for the connections between physical existence and a grander consciousness, Norris has hit her mark. In the field, in the studio, the confrontation with self is explored in color and gesture, her memory and influence leaning on the imagery in the moment of making. During a process that critically culls the response to the physical world, the refreshing vitality of trees and background has become a miasma of positivity.



Destanne Norris: LAND OF MAKE BELIEVE II - 2021 Oil pastel on archival panel, 12x9 inches



Destanne Norris: LAND OF MAKE BELIEVE III - 2021 Oil pastel on archival panel, 12x9 inches

Julie Oakes

A portrait of a character from a novel in the form of a scroll, drawing loosely from a literal narrative in order to upset the branding routines that characterization is prone to become, *Vivinni*'s size dictated that only a section could be accomplished at a time. The full impact couldn't be seen until the banner unfurled and the history of mark-making jelled just as the succession of incidents in real or imagined life becomes a story. *Vivinni, from Stellar Helly,* made during the pandemic isolation, grew to dominate the artist's social circuit, like a paper doll replacing a friend.





Julie Oakes: VIVINNI (detail) - 2021 Gouache & oil pastel on Stonehenge paper, 180x40 inches

Katherine Pickering

Katherine Pickering has used images that are veiled or masked, paintings that suggested draped heads. Developing the idea of draping through reductive imagery and a pioneering style, Pickering has found a unique visual vocabulary where she is able to direct the attention towards an isolated area, one that is saturated with color that often suggest undulations, fractured planes and limitless expansiveness while still bringing attention to the surface. Like psychic messages bleeding through from other realms, the result is reassuring despite unfamiliarity and offers a way into a purely visual experience.



Katherine Pickering: UNTITLED (light green) - 2016 Acrylic on canvas on cut-out Dibond, 18x15 inches



Katherine Pickering: UNTITLED (float - purple) - 2016 Acrylic on canvas on cut-out Dibond, 54x27 inches

Amber Powell

Amber Powell has named her drawings *My Cooties* using a common term for body lice, those small annoying presences that get under the skin. Her drawings have been a way through the discomfort of illness and yet through the act of drawing, the marks have assumed a precious quality, as if every living thing has a right to an image, be it painful and unwanted or anticipated and consumed. Through the very human inclination to record, to draw, comes reclamation and the significance of personal specificity. From the unwanted comes a phenomenal, absolutely unique, expression through art. The communication, savored, and appreciated, gets under the skin, yes, but in a now pleasant way.





Amber Powell: MY COOTIES #2 - 2020 Pencil and pencil crayon on Yupo translucent paper, 5x7 inches

Bryan Ryley

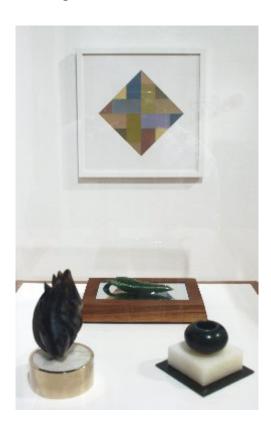
The artist talk that Ryley gave at the Vernon Art Gallery, the evening before the pandemic closed that institution, explained a concept of portrait imagery. He pointed out that there was an ear in the painting that once read as an ear, makes it possible to see the head on the now obvious shoulders. *Morning Briefing* is painted in gradations of newspaper white and inky black. Checking in with the news of the world before heading into the studio, Ryley situated his perspective in the vicinity of the collective social consciousness as he prepared to enact a very individual process.



Bryan Ryley: MORNING BRIEFING - 2019 Acrylic and collage on canvas, 48" x 40"

Kevin Spetifore

In a time when so many unknown variables (and variants) have overridden the secure, Kevin Spetifore offers a space of closure, a no-room-for-error combination of colors and shapes that confirm the potential for order. Comfortably within parameters, but not without dynamics, the rectangular muted tones butt against each other, ascend or cross, and then end at an angle, making a slice that relates to another mirrored or opposite but of a different color with another way of being. The same color may appear more than once but the fact that it is in relation to different colors around it, allows for a new take, as if within a new conversation. Not entirely peaceful, there are questions raised as to the powers of perception so that another route is explored that includes the connection of the piece to the eye and then to the discerning mind.

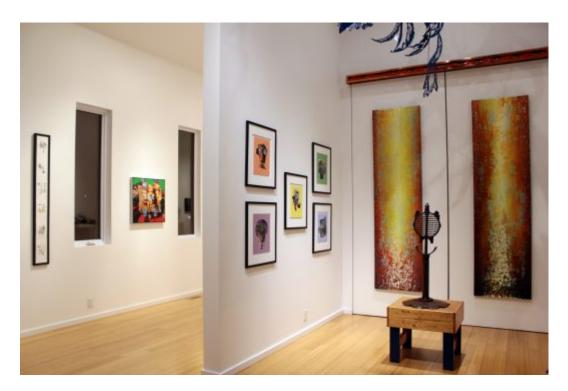


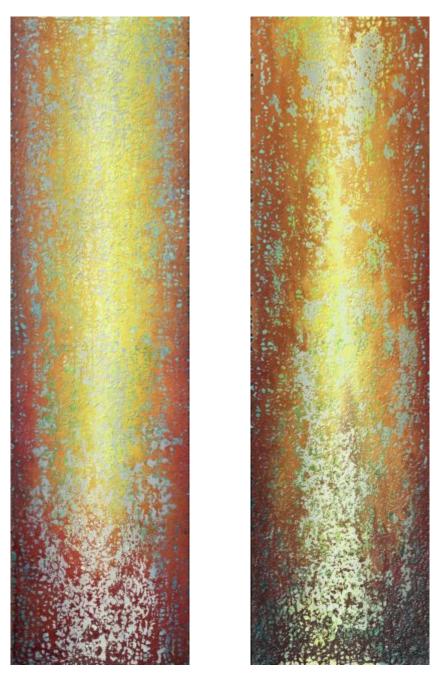


Kevin Spetifore: UNTITLED - 2020 Paper, 17.25x17.25 inches

Heidi Thompson

Columns of light. The outsides are darker and the centers a shimmery ascension so pronounced that the works appear in relief as if a cylinder has been sliced in half through the center, top to bottom, and fixed to the wall. Concentrating on the surface, the illusion of light is made with a technique similar to the mosaic dome of the Basilica San Marco in Venice which shines like a beacon. The dome is covered in small mosaic tiles of a slightly irregular press that were then applied to the surface of the dome so that an edge here or there irregularly breaks the smoothness. It is this unevenness that catches the light and glitters back, only to change as the perspective shifts. The grit that Thompson applied to the canvases work in this manner especially when the next ground coat is silver. The physical, therefore, communicates a spiritual message of light in simpatico with the gold dome signaling heaven.





Heidi Thompson: PASSIONATE ASCENSION (left) & SPRING ENERGY (right) - 2021 Acrylic on canvas, 90x24 inches, each

David Wilson

Returning to the Land from the Transformation series depicts, within Wilson's very specific visual language, a framed building with a cross on the top of it. From within the blackened skeleton, a riot of reddish-orange blooms or burns with mighty antlers rising like branches of smoke ascends. On the cross in front of this structure, Wilson superimposes a medicine wheel and from each arm places a cloth colored to symbolize the four directions. Central to the overall circle as if gently anchoring, is a stately pine tree crowned by a caterpillar with a single eye, that in turn suggests the shape of a human face - the nose and mouth symbolizing the beginning of the transformation of mankind.



David Wilson: EYE INTO INDIGENOUS CONNECTIONS TO THE LAND - 2021 Acrylic on canvas, 66x66 inches



David Wilson: RETURNING TO THE LAND - 2021 Acrylic on canvas, 66x66 inches

Deborah Wilson

Art opens a conversation around philosophy, spirituality and the mystical through the physical, by virtue of an object that concentrates on an essential idea and elaborates upon it. The phenomenology of the geological substance is enhanced as Wilson shapes. Jade transforms from rock to vessel with a parameter of perfection that raises the vessel to become the focus of an intellectual gaze. The universality of the concave, the dark secrets of inner, womb-like enclosures, draws the consciousness inwards while reflection of the outer world cup round the darkness. In *Flame* the labradorite draws inwards with the layers of translucence before it reaches out, radiating, from the shining convolutions. Stones become distinctive, iconic, and even, as with a vessel, useful.



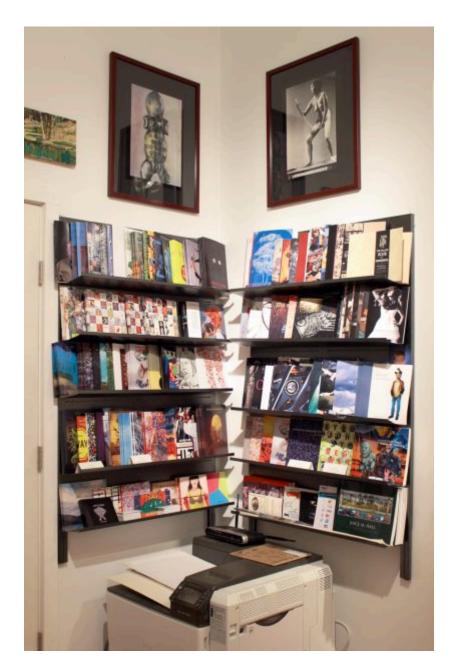
Deborah Wilson: SAFE LANDING BC Nephrite Jade, 5.5x 2.25 x 1.5 inches, black Walnut, mirror



Deborah Wilson: FLAME Labradorite, 5 x 2.5x2.5 inches, bronze base 4x1.5"



Deborah Wilson: VESSEL - 2020 Ogden Mt Nephrite Jade, 1.5 x 2.5 x 2.5 inches



Rich Fog Publishing (a selection of catalogues) - 2021 Headbones Gallery, Vernon, British Columbia, Canada

