

KELOWNA  GALLERY

DAY JOB

Curated by Neena Sood

Works by artists who have been employed at Opus Art Supplies, Kelowna over the last 20 years.

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January 18 to March 2, 2014



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The Kelowna Art Gallery gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance of the City of Kelowna, The Canada Council for the Arts, British Columbia Arts Council, the Province of British Columbia, Central Okanagan School District #23, Regional District of Central Okanagan, Central Okanagan Foundation, and our members, donors and sponsors.

Director's foreword

To draw, you must close your eyes and sing

– Pablo Picasso

The capacity for art to connect people in so many ways, by providing employment, forming life-long friendships and creating inspiring works of art, continues to fascinate me. The Kelowna Art Gallery was pleased to be offered the opportunity to present the exhibition *Day Job*, curated by Neena Sood. We are grateful for Sood's efforts to gather together twenty-seven artists, all of whom worked at the OPUS Kelowna over its twenty year history. Congratulations and THANK YOU to every artist who has taken the time and effort to participate in this exhibition. We hope to see you at the Kelowna Art Gallery often.

Thanks to Renee Burgess, Head of Public Programming, for her leadership in stewarding this project. We are excited to be launching *Day Job* as the Gallery's first on-line exhibition catalogue. Thanks to Graphic Designer, Kyle Poirier for his fine work on this publication and to curator Liz Wylie for her detail when editing the artist's statements and biographies for this publication. Thanks to preparator Michael O'Doherty, work in installing the show in the Front Project space. In addition, we are grateful for the work of KAG staff, Joshua Desnoyers, Marketing and Events Coordinator, Clea Haugo, Registrar, and Administrative Assistant and Membership Coordinator, Tanya Nahachewsky.

Thanks to the Gallery's Board of Directors who provide leadership and guidance in overseeing the Kelowna Art Gallery's operations. Finally, as always, thanks to all our supporters, members, volunteers, sponsors and granting organizations who contribute on an ongoing basis to the exhibitions and programming at the Kelowna Art Gallery. We gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance of the City of Kelowna, the Canada Council for the Arts, British Columbia Arts Council, the Province of British Columbia, School District #23, Regional District of Central Okanagan, and the Central Okanagan Foundation.

- Nataley Nagy, Executive Director

A message from Opus Art Supplies

I understand that the goal for many of the creative individuals employed with Opus is to be a full-time artist. One of my goals in developing this business over the past 40 years has been to provide an environment where their day job could help them achieve that. I have advocated that our staff should receive excellent training not just in how to conduct a transaction, but also in areas that will help further their personal art practice. We continually hear from our staff that they have learned more about art materials in one year of working with Opus than in all their years of art education, and my hope is that that knowledge is transferred to their own art practice. The *Day Job* exhibition at the Kelowna Art Gallery is certainly a validation of this.

Staff currently working at Opus Kelowna are very excited about this show. Seeing the work of their former colleagues plays a part in that, but more so is the opportunity for our customers to view the exhibition. The conversations about visual art, ideas, and materials that current and former staff have had with the artists that frequent our store form relationships; it's wonderful that our customers will have the chance to see the work of someone who may have helped them with a breakthrough in their practice, and to find they may have helped do the same. I'm proud to know that the skilled individuals in this exhibition are continuing to contribute to their community through the medium of visual art.

- David van Berckel, President, Opus Art Supplies

Day Job

By Neena Sood

A writer should write with his eyes and a painter should paint with his ears.

– Gertrude Stein

Day Job is an exhibition comprised of work of past and present staff members of Opus Framing and Art Supplies in Kelowna. Opus is celebrating twenty years in Kelowna in 2014. Past employees now live across North America and as far away as Israel and New Zealand. Everyone who has worked at Opus had some art background, and created work in every medium, from painting to film. The idea for this show was hatched at the opening of the *Starting Point* exhibition at the Lake Country Art Gallery in the summer of 2011. That show was organized by former Opus employees Wanda Lock and Shauna Oddleifson. It was comprised of work of past students of area high school art teacher Rick Davidson. A number of Opus alumni/ae attended the opening, and the idea came about to organize a group show to celebrate Opus Kelowna's twentieth anniversary. I offered to organize the exhibition, and began a two-and-a-half-year-long journey. Efforts were made to contact as many former staff members as possible. In some cases this required a great deal of sleuthing. Facebook played a key role, both in uniting most of the Opus alumni/ae, and in disseminating the exhibition information. The title *Day Job* was suggested by long-time former manager, Wanda Lock. Most artists need employment to provide funds to support their expensive art habits. All of us who worked at Opus agree it was one of our better day jobs. Opus is not just a retail store, it is a family. We have formed life-long friendships with our fellow staff members, and today our children play together.

Gertrude Stein held salons in Paris at the turn of the 20th century. Great minds of art and literature, such as Picasso and Hemingway, met there to argue and share ideas and push forward modern culture. In many ways, Opus is the present-day equivalent of the salon in Kelowna. If you work there long enough, you will meet every art student and instructor, from elementary to university, in the Okanagan. All of the local artists come in and numerous lively discussions ensue. Many regular customers become friends. Staff delight in their accomplishments and share in their sorrows. Over the years we have witnessed births, deaths, and marriages amongst the staff. Opus plays a vital role in the art community in Kelowna. It is a day job I am proud to have had. This exhibition is dedicated to the memory of the first manager of Opus Kelowna, Richard McClymont.

Randy Bone

Artist's Statement

Bone's time at Opus totaled almost nine years, from April of 2004 to August of 2012. He was instantly passionate about learning and sharing knowledge with the great long-term staff and inquiring customers. He tried to spend much of his time in the paint aisles, often dashing between sharing his enthusiasm for oil and acrylics.

Bone has produced several bodies of work since 2001. These were initially inspired by a fellow artist's oil painting, and further influenced by the images of gaseous nebulae of deep space that the Hubble telescope was showing us at that time.

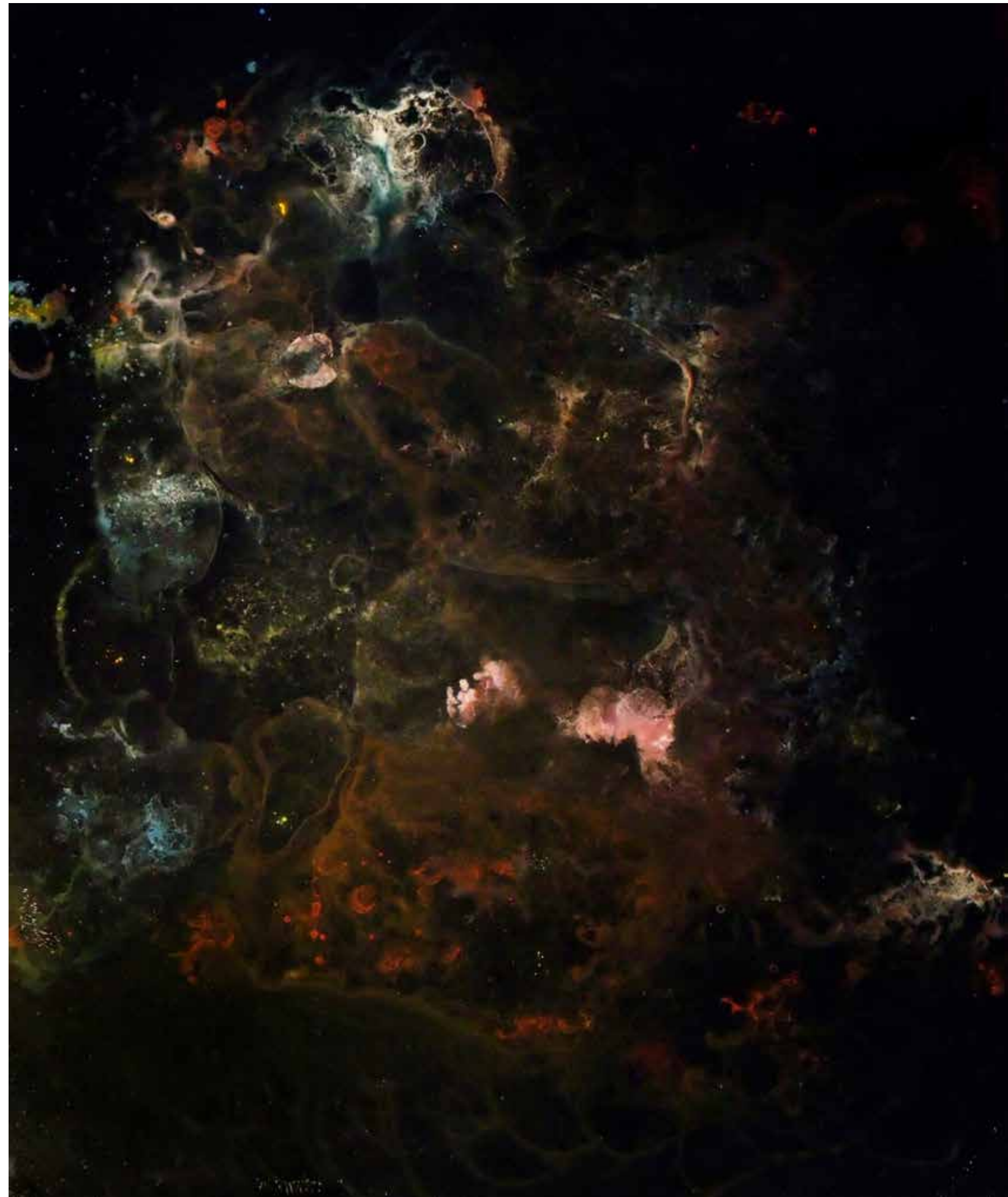
A lifetime of influence from his father's own interest in astronomy fed directly into the longevity of this ongoing work. Spying the moon through a telescope in the chill of a clear night as a child; fast forward to viewing the latest colour images from Hubble's deep field views of star nurseries. There is no end to inspirational imagery.

The works themselves delve into the physics and mark-making potential of both the flow and dispersion of pigment and acrylic medium, and the physical impact of objects upon the surface itself. The mind space during the creation of these works is a constant battle between 'letting go' and corralling the puddles into some semblance of organized chaos. Attempting to control this disorder within the very confined layer on a panel caters to a sense of discovery, self, and power, defining what being artistic is all about, and hinting at what it means to Bone when he is 'in studio.'

Artist's Biography

Randy Bone grew up in the Okanagan and resides in Kelowna. He spent his childhood in nature, and lived on a spacious corner lot fitted with gardens, trees, and a workshop – all inspirational sources. Bone's most important memories were of the moments in time when he silently observed, alone in this environment. He was able to witness the silent business of life's growth, decay, dormancy, and re-growth, learning by observation, experimentation, and contemplation.

Since early adulthood he has pursued his interests in painting and drawing in a dedicated, self-directed manner. In 2002 he completed two years of formal fine arts instruction at Okanagan University College, now the University of British Columbia Okanagan in Kelowna. He now balances work and family life with his studio practice.

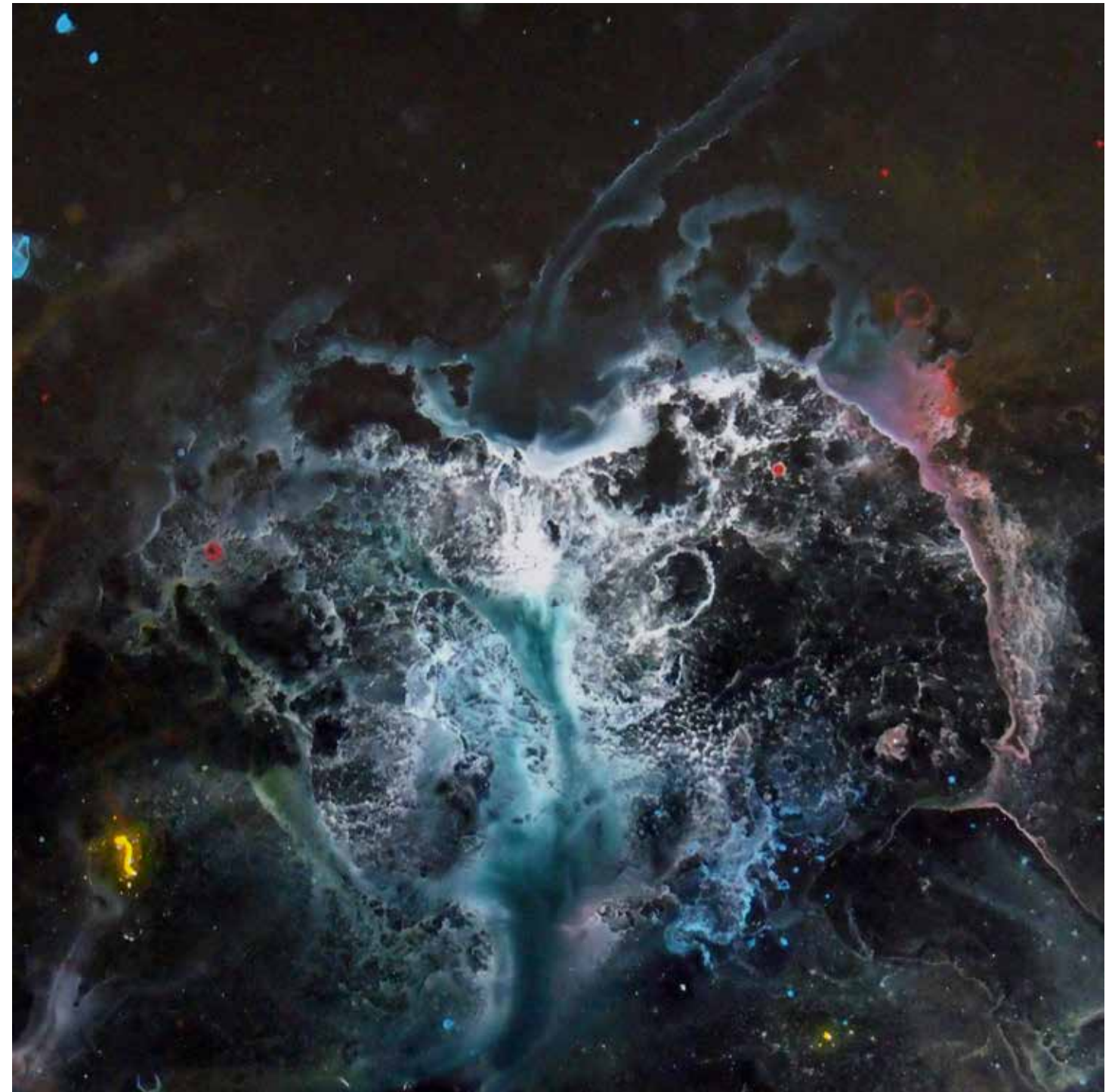


Randy Bone, *Lost In The Deep*, acrylic on panel, 30 x 24 in.

Randy Bone



Randy Bone, *Lost In The Deep*, detail, acrylic on panel, 30 x 24 in.



Randy Bone, *Lost In The Deep*, detail, acrylic on panel, 30 x 24 in.

Kim Buchanan

Artist's Statement

Your art is your voice, it is an expression of your soul. I believe that art can connect you to the world, to others, and to yourself. It is through our art that we often discover who we truly are. I love nature and grew up playing on the side of a mountain. Afternoons felt carefree and it was easy to get lost in exploring all the wonders the forest had to offer. To this day I still believe there is nothing more nourishing than walking through the forest on a sunny day.

Over the past several years I have become increasingly more concerned about the environment and the seeming lack of concern that most of the population displays. Honey bees are crucial to our food production and ultimately hold the key to our survival, yet they are rarely spoken of in main-stream media. Instead we hear about the latest celebrity scandals and most popular TV shows. Thankfully there are people who are speaking up and voicing their concerns about GM's and the use of toxic pesticides that are poisoning our food and threatening our honey bees.

My work is a conceptual exploration of the contrast between industrial and organic, destruction and creation, toxic environmental issues and the power of natural regeneration.

Artist's Biography

Kim Buchanan is an artist and grade one teacher living and working in the Okanagan. Her childhood was spent in the East Kootenays and often involved hiking through the forest, playing by the river, swimming in the lake, and building tree forts made of drift wood. Weekends were often care free and involved endless hours of exploring the mountainside near her home. There were always new plants to discover and photograph, and bugs to examine.

Buchanan completed her Bachelor's Degree in Fine Art from Okanagan University College in Kelowna in 2004 at which time she began working at Opus Framing and Art Supplies. At this time her art had a wide range of mixed media and digital photo manipulation, which progressed to an exploration of materials that was driven by curiosity and the desire to create new effects. Over the years, her love of nature and growing concern for the environment have begun to emerge as primary influences and inspirations for her more recent work.

The decision to return to university in 2006 to pursue her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education was fueled by her need to make a difference in the world, through educating the future citizens of our country. Today, Buchanan teaches her students about the importance of taking care of the earth, connecting with nature, and using art as a way of communicating about with the world. Buchanan had the opportunity to work at Opus from approximately 2005 to 2010. It was an amazing experience that allowed her to learn about a variety of different art media, see some truly inspiring art, and form some wonderful friendships. She has many happy memories of her Opus days.



Kim Buchanan, *Forced Evolution*, mixed media , 48 x 24 in.

Kim Buchanan



Kim Buchanan, *Forced Evolution*, detail, mixed media , 48 x 24 in.



Kim Buchanan, *Forced Evolution*, detail, mixed media , 48 x 24 in.

Amy Burkard

Artist's Statement

Process, materials, and tradition propel my ongoing interest and shape my experimental practice. My work is best interpreted by feeling the “mood” of the raw material and vibrant colours of the piece. *A Mind of My Own* represents a free-spirited vessel, alive and full of movement. The dramatic red spikes represent a reaching, stretching, grabbing for something. Since 2009 I have been fascinated with felting and all the different techniques used to produce felted works. In September of 2013 I celebrated Canadian Felting Week on Salt Spring Island by participating in a workshop where I learned new felting methods and was surrounded by equally enthusiastic fibre artists. Working at Opus (2009-2011) opened up many doors to new life experiences and in turn altered the face of my artistic practice. Through the connections I made working with some of the most talented, hard-working, driven, and extremely innovative people, I eventually developed enough confidence to further my own practice on a more professional level. Not long after leaving Opus I began teaching more in the community and continue to teach and create. My practice continues to grow, and I am constantly inspired by material, and the sustained friendships that were created over the course of my working at Opus.

Artist's Biography

Amy Burkard is a Kelowna-based artist who has been presenting work professionally for over 10 years. Originally from Courtenay, BC, Amy realized in her mid twenties that being a professional artist would be the best career she could envision. After completing her BFA at Emily Carr University of Art + Design in 2003, her creative voice as a Canadian female artist emerged. Guided by material curiosity, she continues to discover her dream.

Currently her practice involves a fun and energetic juggling act of being a new mom, a wife and a domestic diva, along with her passionate art making. Carving out time for art is a very important part of her world. She goes back and forth from the clay to the felting world often, keeping things fresh, as a high level of intensity is often needed. Burkard has developed an active audience on social media, where she posts images of her new work. She has had a solo show at the Vernon Public Art Gallery, and has been a featured artist in gallery shops in Vernon, Penticton, Summerland, and Kelowna. In December of 2013 she was in a group show in Alvin, Texas, at Ooh La La Crêpes. She has also been commissioned to do large site-specific installations in both Kelowna and more recently in Vancouver.

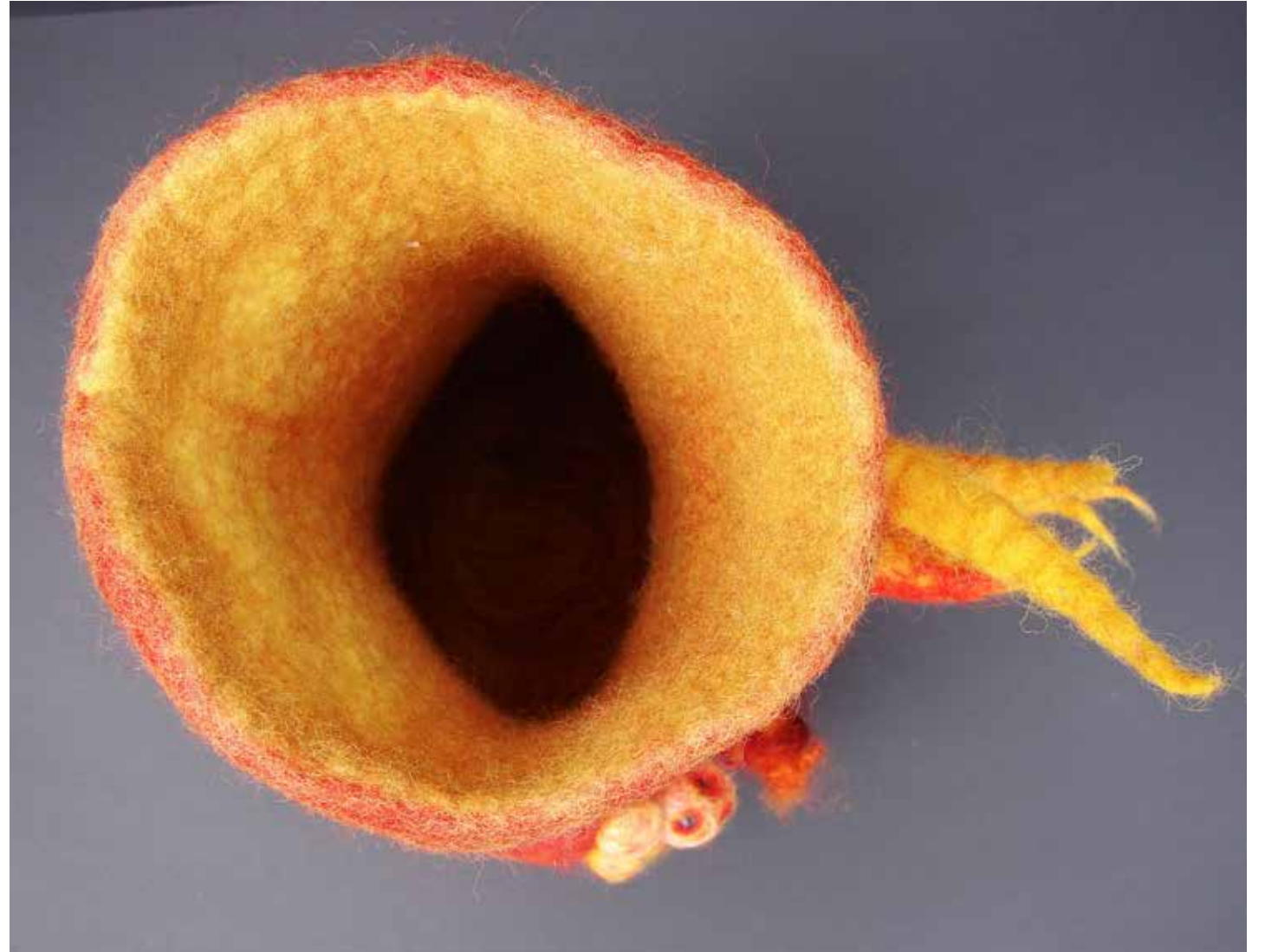


Amy Burkard, *A Mind Of My Own*, soft wool, string, marbles, 16 x 15 x 12 in.

Amy Burkard



Amy Burkard, *A Mind Of My Own*, detail, soft wool, string, marbles, 16 x 15 x 12 in.



Amy Burkard, *A Mind Of My Own*, detail, soft wool, string, marbles, 16 x 15 x 12 in.

Artist's Statement

I continue to see deconstruction as a theoretical base and as a methodology for investigating the concept of identity through the lens of memory.

In *Reduction Road* I used frottage and collage, based on work I had done in Wells in 2012. These formed an underlying surface with which to explore the ideas of memory, inheritance, and monuments.

I continued with these ideas in my *Egress* series, in which the workings of memory are furthered by having shifting my studio investigations to expand the vocabulary of marks with which to map the shifting landscape of personal identities.

Artist's Biography

Carin Covin received her BFA from Okanagan University College in 2003, and her MFA from UBC Okanagan in 2010. Her artistic practice involves interdisciplinary research of written and visual language through the methodology of visually mapping of textual intersections. Recent exhibitions include *Reduction Road*, at the Station House Gallery in Williams Lake. She is currently employed as a sessional lecturer at UBC Okanagan in Kelowna. Covin was an Opus employee from 2003 to 2005 in both the Kelowna and Victoria locations.

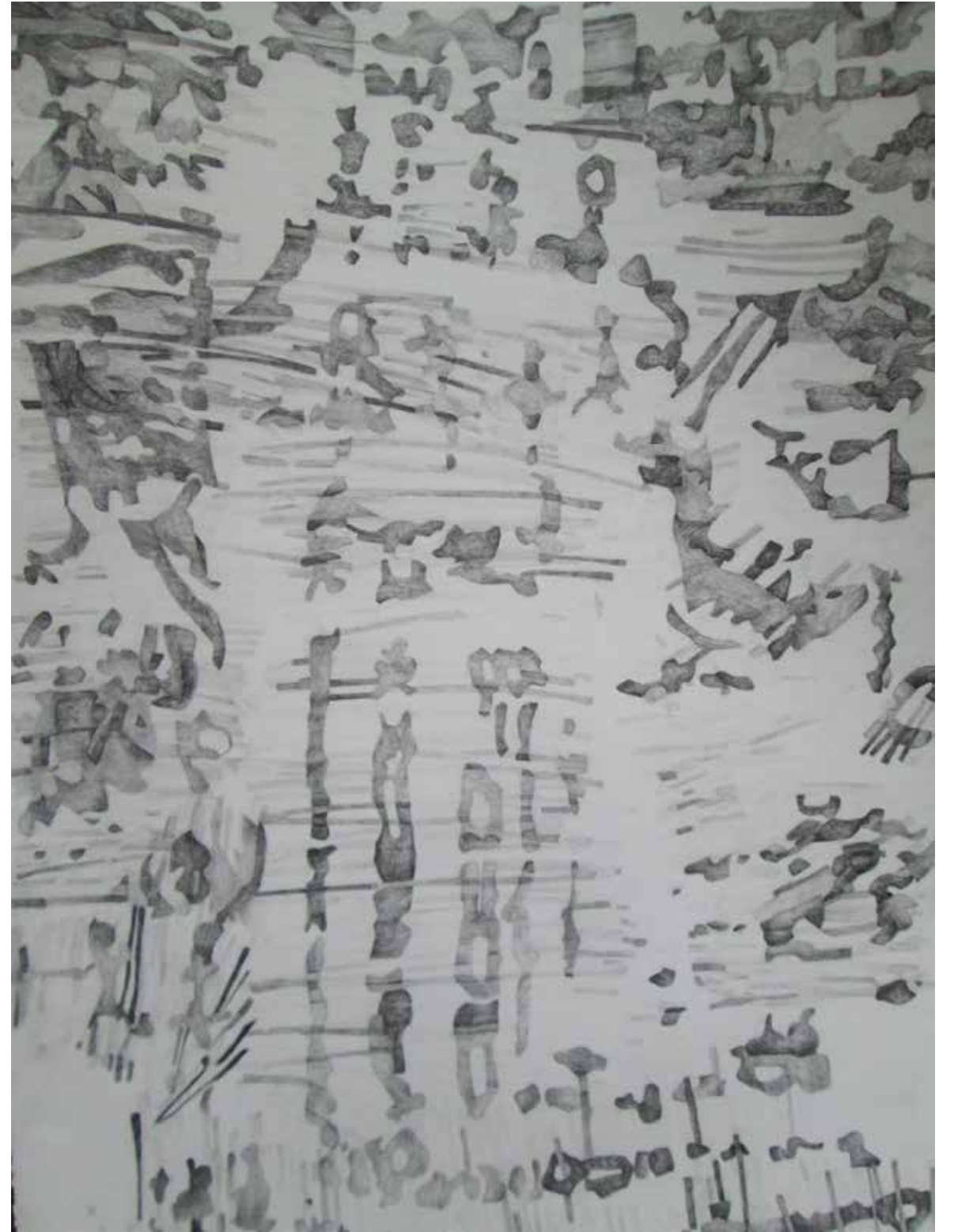


Carin Covin, *Monument xi*, 2012, acrylic on panel, 6.6 x 7.5 in.

Carin Covin



Carin Covin, *Egress I*, 2013, graphite on Stonehenge paper, 40 x 20 in.



Carin Covin, *Egress II*, 2013, graphite on Stonehenge paper, 40 x 20 in.

Artist's Statement

The immeasurable vastness of the environment intrigues me. My images are a reflection of the various things found within my environment and although they may not seem to be a true representation of life, for me there is a reality within them. My objective is to create an inviting environment that allows the viewer to revisit their memories through their contemplation of colour, shape, and texture. My goal is to make art that allows viewers to formulate journeys that will instigate their own memories and knowledge of the world around them.

I work with imagery that is reminiscent of landscapes in all forms, and of mythical critters that seem somewhere between Beetle Juice and Doctor Sues. My works are a mixture of print, paint, and drawing. I have been working for Opus Art Supplies for nine years. I enjoy working at Opus because I am constantly learning about art practices and the supplies that coincide. One of my favorite parts of my job is exploring the art supplies and learning how to push them in creative ways.

Artist's Biography

Trina Ganson received her diploma of fine arts from Okanagan University College in 2005. She then became an active member of Malaspina Printmakers Studio on Granville Island in Vancouver. After a number of years Ganson returned to the Okanagan to finish her BFA. After graduating from the University of British Columbia Okanagan in 2008, Ganson became an active member of Studio 113 in the Rotary Centre for the Arts in Kelowna.



Trina Ganson, *Traveling Worm*, Lino Block, 24 x 36 in.

Trina Ganson



Trina Ganson, *Celestial Wars*, handcoloured collograph, 24 x 8 in.



Trina Ganson, *Common Descent #1*, handcoloured collograph, 34 x 45 in.

Heather Hawkshaw

Artist's Statement

In my last years of study in the Fine Arts program at Okanagan University College I had heard about this place called Opus from artists who had made the trip to Granville Island, where the store was located. I never went, but its mythic status stayed with me. I first started working at the old Pandosy Street location in 1997, and left the Ellis Street store in 2004. After the gilded time of art school, Opus was a new and appreciated community of artists who talked about art, made art, and encouraged one another. I feel fortunate to have spent time at Opus Kelowna. I learned so much about all sorts of art materials, as well as many aspects of running a business. I now measure customer service wherever I go against Opus principles. Training and opportunities to pursue strengths and be creative were encouraged. I carry with me lifelong friendships with a number of inspiring artists with whom I counted inventory, unpacked thousands of paint tubes, built shelves, and rang through sheets of Opus water media paper. And then there are those customers who walk in the door whom you know you'll see again and again. If there weren't an Opus Kelowna, there wouldn't have been a Randy, who walked through the door fourteen year ago. Now I look back on our twelve-year-long marriage, nearly a decade of which Randy worked at Opus, two kids arrived, and we have a studio containing art supplies that we couldn't live without. I will always think of Opus with great fondness.

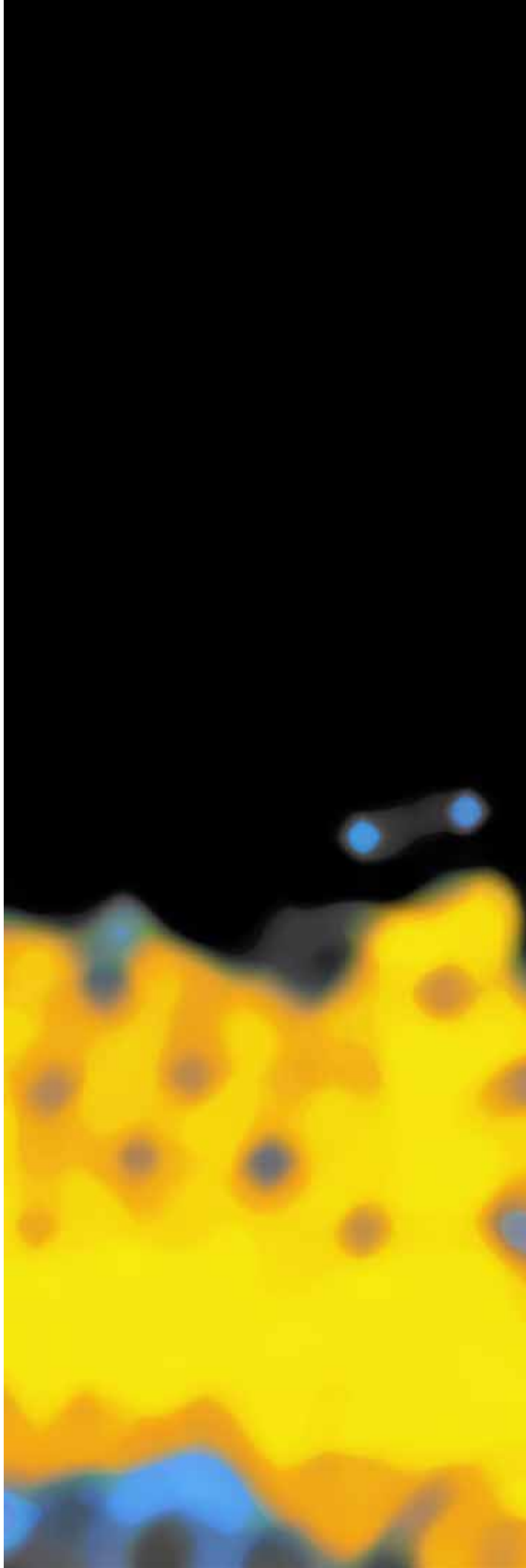
Artist's Biography

Born in Vernon, British Columbia, Hawkshaw has lived most of her childhood, and her adult life, in Kelowna. She earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, with Distinction, from the University of Victoria at Okanagan University College (Kelowna) in 1996. At graduation she was chosen for a Helen Pitt Award–Runner-Up. She has exhibited in group exhibitions at the Kelowna Art Gallery, the Alternator Gallery, Galerie Verticale, in Laval, Quebec, and Artropolis in Vancouver. She had her first solo show at the Vernon Public Art Gallery in 2011. She has also spent time writing art reviews that have been published in the Canadian art magazines Artichoke and Espace, as well as several essays for exhibition catalogues. Previous professional experience has included employment at the Kelowna Art Gallery teaching children, as well her employment at Opus Kelowna. Hawkshaw is currently adding to her creative toolbox by happily immersing herself in expanding her artistic skills through various avenues of online learning.

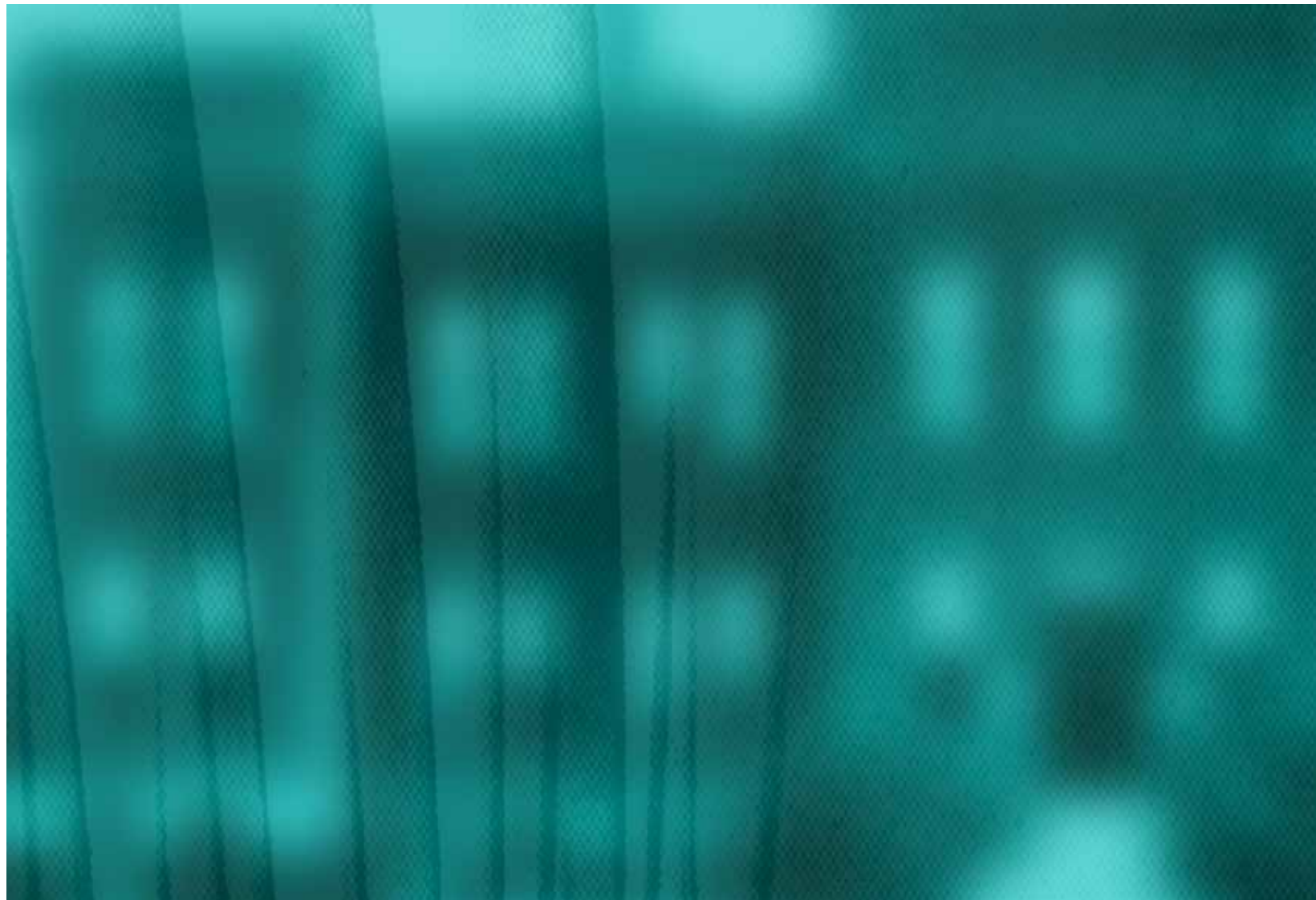


Heather Hawkshaw, *Upstairs Outside*, 2011, digital print on canvas, 20 x 16 in.

Heather Hawkshaw



Heather Hawkshaw, *Work*, 2007,
digital print, 12 x 36 in.



Heather Hawkshaw, *Distraction via Thesaurus*, facemount digital print, 11 x 16 in.

Heather Leier

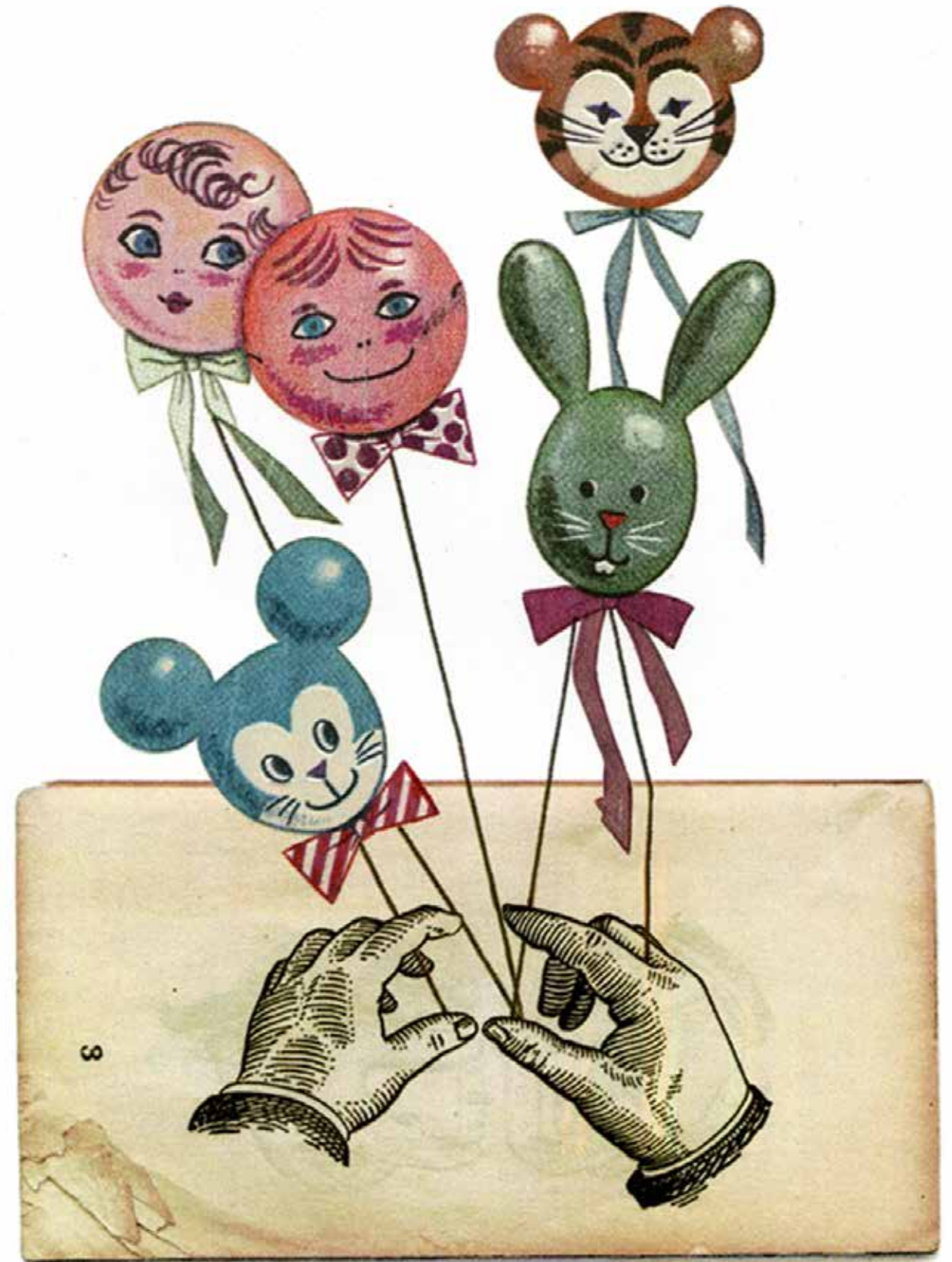
Artist's Statement

I am interested in memory, childhood, anxiety, and collecting. In my current work I am seeking to visually construct the complexities of childhood, drawing on my memories as well as found ephemera to address questions of childhood normalcy and innocence.

I worked with a great crew at Opus during 2012 and 2013, and learned a ton about art supplies, but even more about people.

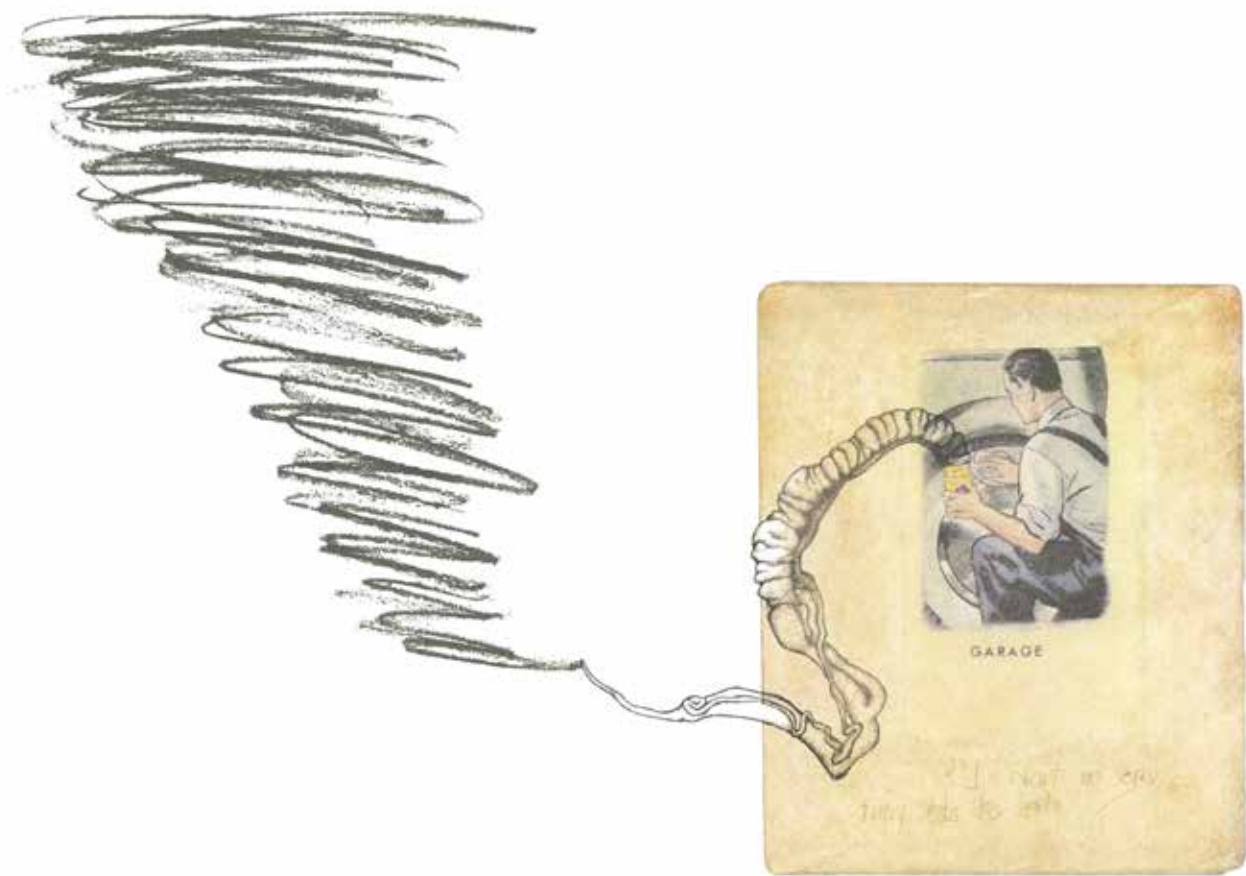
Artist's Biography

Heather Leier was born and raised in Kelowna, attending UBC Okanagan, where she completed her BFA in 2012. Leier was greatly involved in the Okanagan art community before recently moving to Edmonton to pursue a Master's of Fine Arts degree in printmaking at the University of Alberta.



Heather Leier, *Their Screams All Sound the Same*, UV Silkscreen, 24 x 20 in.

Heather Leier



Heather Leier, *Pops*, UV Silkscreen, 19 x 25 in.



Heather Leier, *Infant Avis*, UV Silkscreen, 30 x 30 in.

Artist’s Statement

My art is an Inventory of things that I love – images that fascinate and inspire me. I’ve always loved beautiful things, and surrounding myself with colour, images, and symbols of things that are important to me. These are the things on which I reflect in my art. My work is whimsical, feminine, botanical and lush. I often express my spirituality in my work and my interest in religious symbols. This can includes Greek gods, sacred druidic trees, alchemy symbols, Catholic saints, stained glass, flowers, tarot card imagery, kabbalistic diagrams, and much more.

As with many of the subjects that inspire me, my art often unfolds in a natural organic manner. When I’m painting I almost never know how the finished product is going to look until I am there, I love this aspect of the process, breathing life into a new piece of art and not knowing which direction it will take. My drawing process tends to rely on a more solid concept and create a simpler end product, but it’s no less fun to see exactly how that turns out. For my piece *Birth Flower*, I drew sweet peas because they are a flower associated with my birth month, April. The sweet peas are growing from a conch shell, and any seashells remind me of my childhood and the beach where I spent many summer holidays. As for the background, I have been using a lot of woody and tea-stained textures. To me these feel aged, warm, and inviting.

The wonderful thing about art is that these images hold different meanings for each viewer. They create different feelings and memories for everyone. For me it’s about creating an atmosphere, evoking a thought or emotion.

I worked at Opus from the fall of 2007 to spring of 2008. I found the experience to be invaluable. For the first time I could be an artist all the time! I could spend all day talking to customers about their process, supplies, or experiments gone wrong. I learned so much about the quality of materials, canvas, and framing. It was an education and I was extremely artistically productive during this time because new products in the store gave me new ideas every day. Since then I have run a gallery, curated many small art shows in Kelowna, managed a tattoo shop, and become a profession tattoo artist myself. In this next year I am gearing up to start the Fine Arts Diploma program at Langara College in Vancouver.

Artist’s Biography

Rachel Lige works in a variety of media from collage, drawing and painting, to tattooing. Mostly self taught, she admittedly has a short attention span, always wanting to try a new technique, style or tool. She is heavily motivated by things that she loves and that stimulate her curiosity and spirituality.

Lige was always making things as a child, molding plasticine, drawing with markers, cutting construction paper. Scissors were a problem actually, she liked cutting things she wasn’t supposed to, including her hair. Her creativity continued into her teens and young adulthood, when she painted on pizza boxes when she was too poor to buy proper supplies. Lige was inspired by her mother Sara Lige, who quit her job in her late thirties to pursue a BFA at UBCO.

In 2008 Rachel Lige was offered a tattoo apprenticeship, which she gladly accepted. She worked at Shinobi Studios in Kelowna, during which time she learned the craft

of tattooing and continued to round out her drawing skills, as well as acting as a shop manager. She also organized and curated a number of art shows, with fun themes such as “pirates and pin ups,” “monsters and robots,” “star wars,” and “skateboards deck art.”

By 2012 Lige felt that her time in Kelowna had come to an end, so she moved to Vancouver. Since 2012 she has worked at Penny Black Tattoo and Art. Becoming a professional tattoo artist has not only allowed her to support herself financially but it has also presented her with new and different challenges through client’s personal requests. People from all different walks of life come into a tattoo shop looking to get inked for various reasons. Lige’s favorite styles are Art Nouveau, Art Deco, and realism. Wanting to expand on her artistic abilities and knowledge, Lige has enrolled in the fine arts program at Langara College for 2014.



Rachel Lige, *Dryad*, pen, pencil crayon and Photoshop

Rachel Lige



Rachel Lige, *Birth Flower*, pen, pencil crayon and Photoshop, 10 x 8 in.



Rachel Lige, *Buddha's Hand*, pen, pencil crayon and Photoshop

Artist's Statement

100 Drawings to Contemplate series, 2011-2013

When I was about nine years old my brother found my diary and read it. OMG! It was horrific ... I didn't know what to do. Embarrassed, I wanted to slip away into nothingness. My diary-writing days were officially over, but my need to record and decipher the world around me was still strong and relentless. And so I decided to draw. These early drawings were abstract, unrecognizable scribbles that only I could decode; a perfect way to fulfill my need to chronicle my life and the world around me. I continued this practice through my teens, into art school and on through my twenties. In 2001 I stopped drawing pictures about my musings on life and took on a documentary role, using the people and events in my community as subject. An interaction at the cafe, a conversation at the soccer field, a quick hello in a parking lot, are taken back to the studio and used as a premise for a new work. My drawings are not about me, my drawings are about you. I draw every day, almost obsessively. And chances are, if you and I meet, however briefly, I will make a drawing about it.

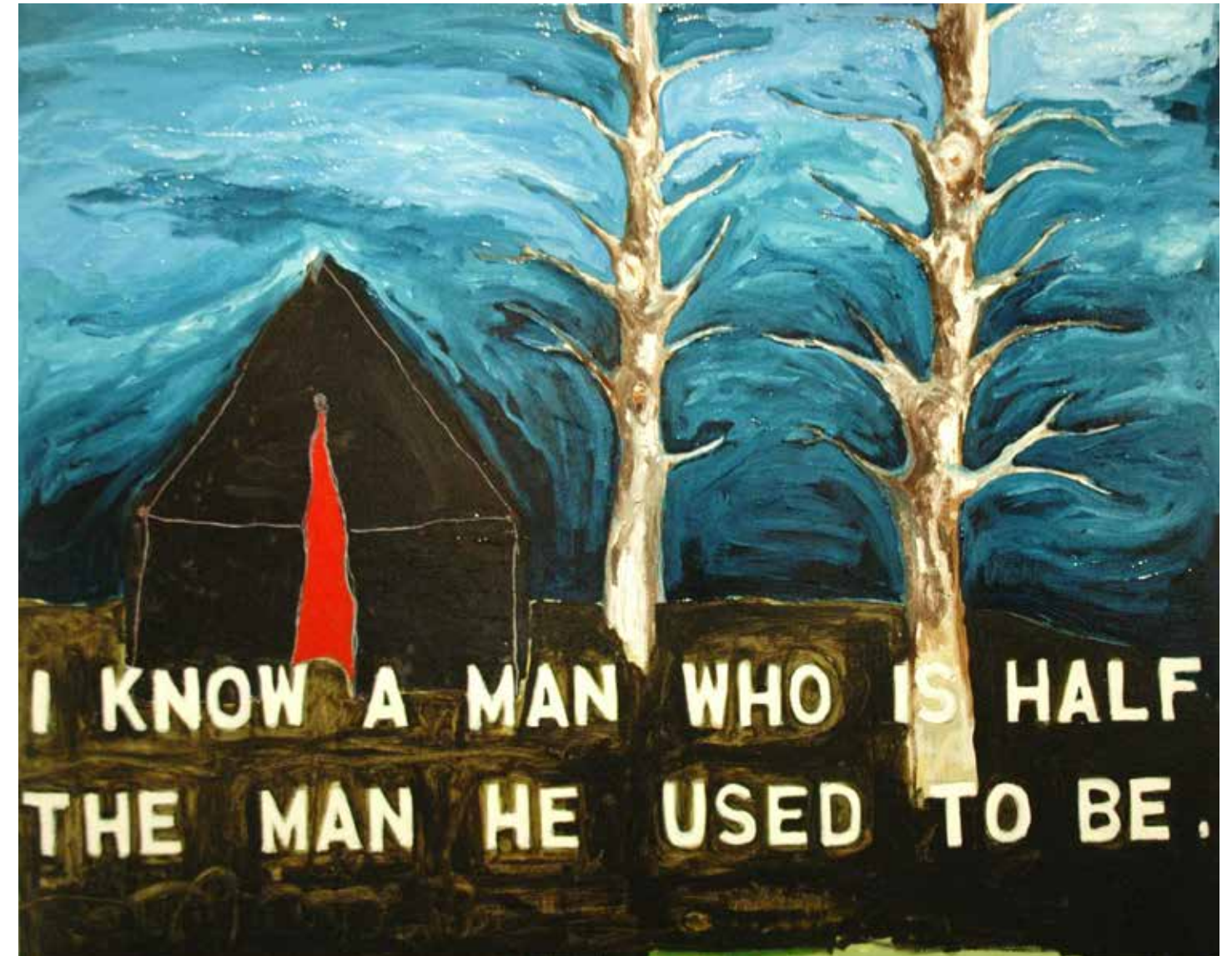
I was at Opus Framing and Art Supplies from 1994 to 2006. The relationships that began at Opus have continued and evolved and are an important part of my art practice.

Artist's Biography

According to her significant other, Wanda watches too many coming-of-age movies. She is also known to play Pearl Jam and some Stone Temple Pilots while working in her studio. She is not sure what her fondness of grunge music and teenage angst movies have in common with her current body of work, but she is convinced that all will become clear in good time.

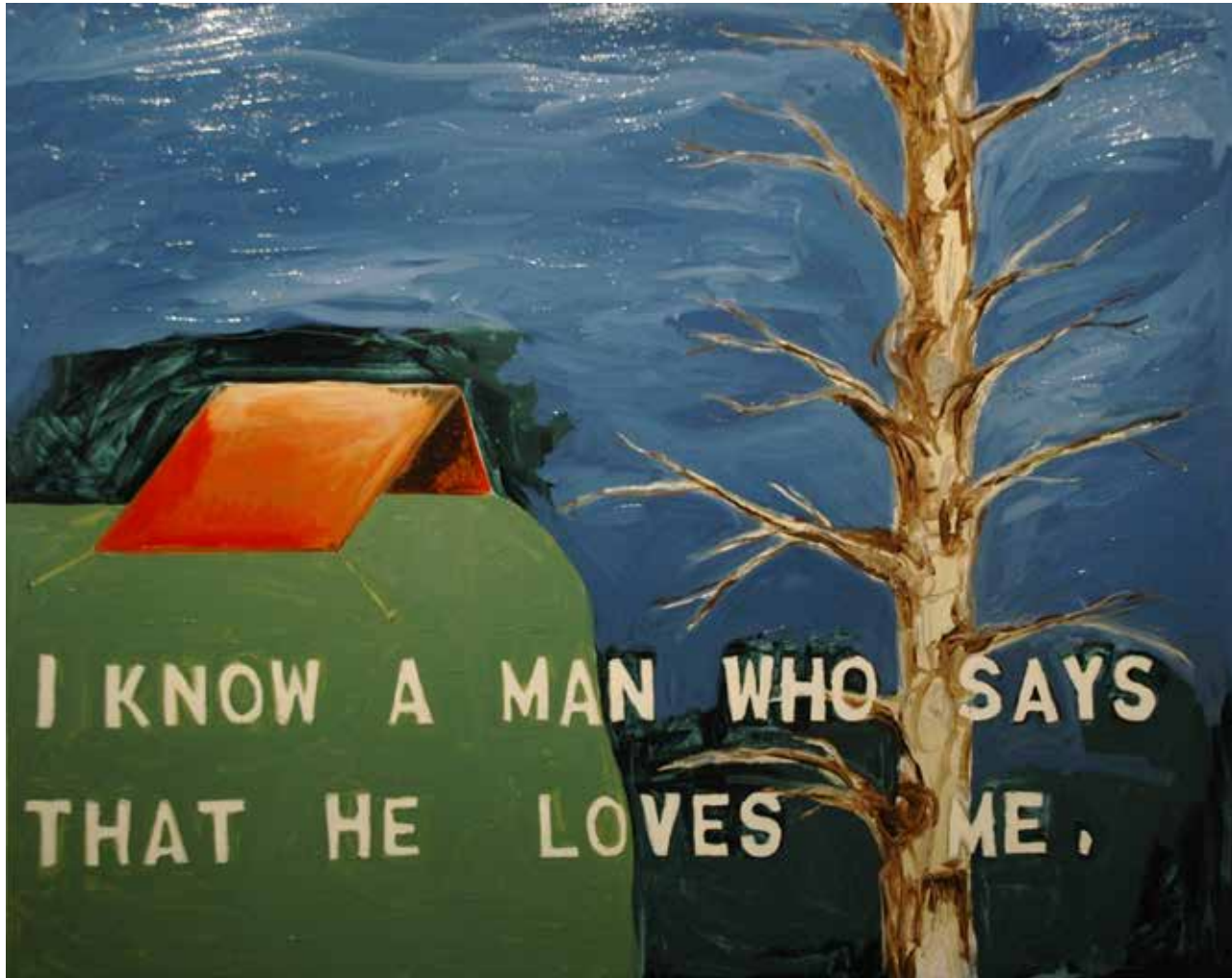
Lock was born in Oliver, British Columbia, in 1969. In 1989 she studied at Okanagan College, before transferring to Emily Carr College of Art and Design, where she graduated in 1992 with a studio major in painting. Lock returned to the Okanagan in 1992, and since then she has numerous critically acclaimed exhibitions including, *Tall Tale*, at the St Albert Art Gallery in 2013, *Flying Machines and Poems Sung by Strangers*, at the Kelowna Art Gallery's Satellite Gallery at the Kelowna International Airport, in 2013, *It came from the sky*, at Elevation Gallery, Canmore, Alberta, in 2010, *Pitching Tents*, at the Vernon Public Art Gallery in 2009 and *Stacks and Piles*, at the Kelowna Art Gallery in 2008.

Lock's work can be found in numerous public and private collections across Canada, and is represented by Elevation Gallery in Canmore, Alberta, and locally through Headbones Gallery in Vernon, www.headbonesgallery.com and online through the Gallery Project www.gallery-project.com.



Wanda Lock, *Camping at night: Wedged in Tight*, oil on canvas, 48 x 60 in.

Wanda Lock



Wanda Lock, *Camping at night: Perched on the edge*, oil on canvas, 48 x 60 in.



Wanda Lock, *Camping at night: Stuck in a tree*, oil on canvas, 48 x 60 in.

Jolene Mackie

Artist's Statement

My employment at Opus had a huge influence on my pursuit of fine art as a career. Not only did it give me the opportunity to learn an ample amount about supplies, it also introduced me to the participants in the art community here in Kelowna. I was employed for about a year in 2010, and have nothing but fond memories from it.

The current series of paintings I am working on are based on interpretations of the night sky. The title of the series, *Stardust*, refers to the elements of which we humans are composed, and that connection among us, our world, and the universe.

There is something both humbling and enlightening about staring at the stars and trying to imagine the distance away and size that these beautiful specks of light actually are. The elements of all material on earth are composed of the same molecules as the stars we see at night. It is fascinating to imagine being so connected to things that seem so distant and unreachable.

One element of the night sky that I personally find fascinating and beautiful is the aurora borealis. I have had the pleasure of viewing an amazing display many years ago, which clearly had an impact on me. This work is my attempt to capture some of that beauty on a painted surface. The aurora is a natural light display in the sky caused by the collision of charged particles with atoms in the atmosphere. Solar winds stream away from the sun at speeds of about one million miles per hour. When they reach the earth, they follow the lines of magnetic force generated by the earth's core. As the electrons enter the earth's upper atmosphere, they will encounter atoms of oxygen and nitrogen. The colour of the aurora depends on which atom is struck, and the altitude of the meeting.

Artist's Biography

Jolene Mackie is a local artist, illustrator, and designer, born and raised right here in the sunny Okanagan. Her current work bridges her fascination in both the intricacies of paint as a medium, as well as the vast unknowns, such as the sea and the sky.

Trained in both painting and graphic design, Mackie has sold and exhibited work in Vancouver, Melbourne, and Edinburgh. She was a director, and founding member of an artist-run centre 221A in Vancouver, and is currently thrilled to be a resident artist at the new heART school in downtown Kelowna.



Brandy Masch

Artist's Statement

I create each of my paintings by using multiple layers of references and ideas. I refer to this as Frankensteining. I start with an idea in mind, and then let other ideas take shape intuitively onto the canvas. I use an image within an image to compose a bigger image, and by allowing the picture to grow organically, I create ecosystems with the idea that our industrial activity is propped up by things that are alive.

I have worked part-time for Opus for six years, five at Granville Island and one year in Kelowna. Opus has played a big part in my life; it has been like an ongoing second education. My in-depth understanding of media and products and the knowledge I've gained about processes will continue to shape different possibilities in my art.

Artist's Biography

Brandy Masch is a Canadian artist and illustrator who received her BFA from Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design in Vancouver. Masch paints primarily in acrylic, gouache, ink, and watercolour, and draws her inspiration from our ecosystems, animals, and issues about bio diversity and their impact on the environment. Brandy is currently working towards her first solo show.

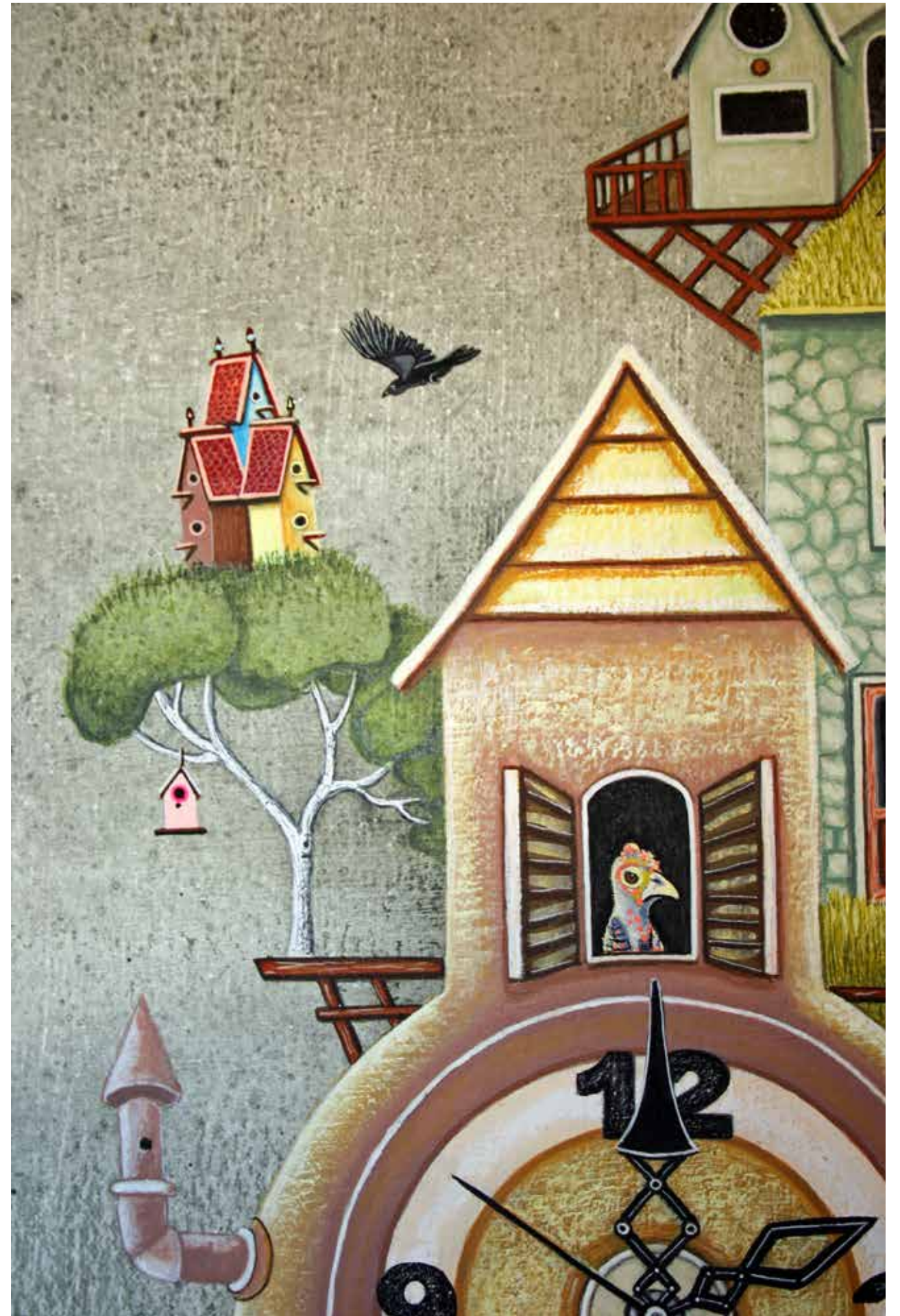
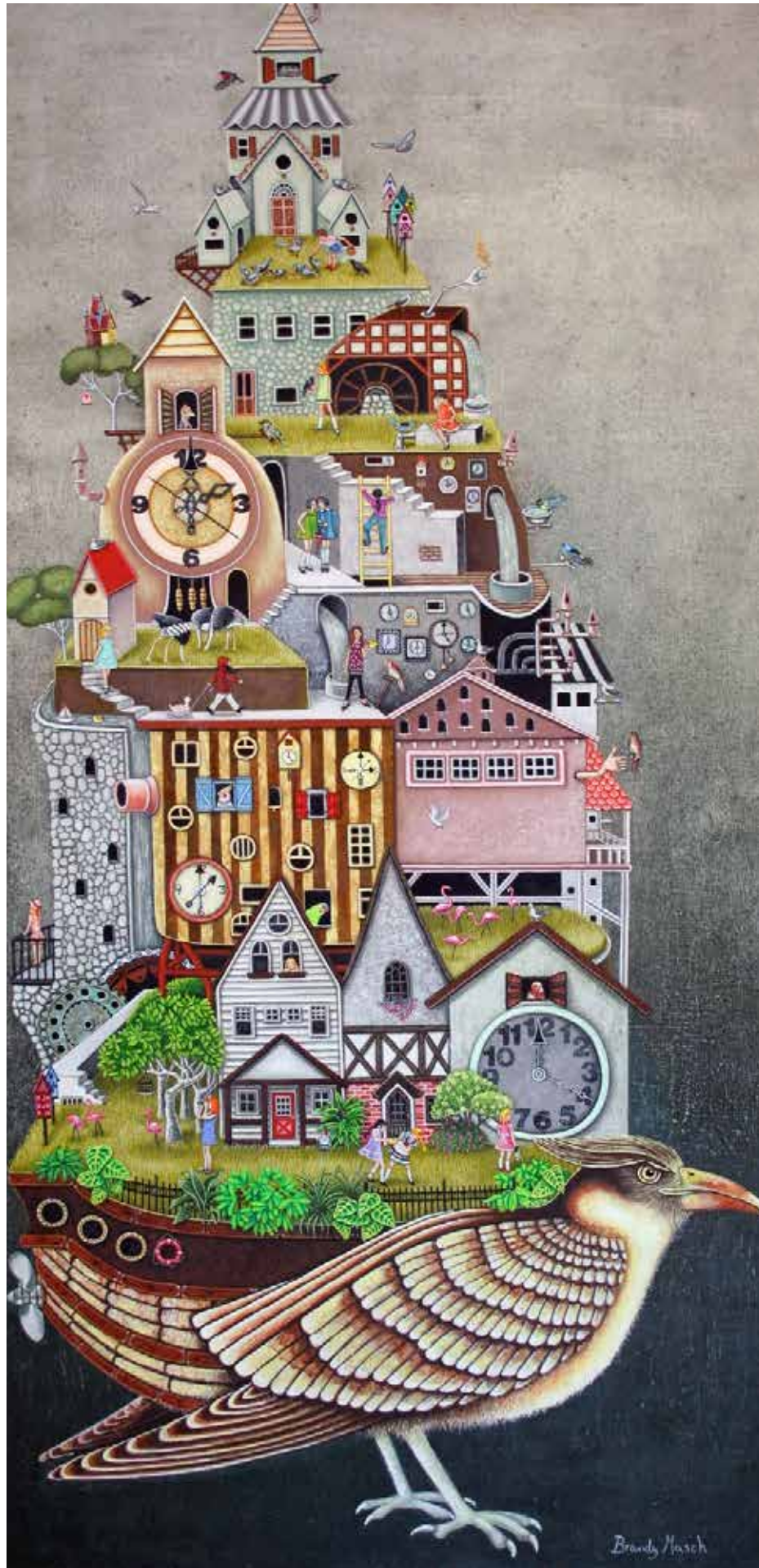
Brandy Masch, *Time to Fly*, detail, mixed media on canvas, 48 x 24 in.



Brandy Masch

Brandy Masch, *Time to Fly*,
mixed media on canvas,
48 x 24 in.

right: detail



Artist's Statement

Always exploring and experiencing new materials and ideas, I created this piece due to a long-time passion for expressing my personal, direct connection to 'home' among the stars. This piece is titled *Deneb*, which is the brightest star in the constellation Cygnus and one of the vertices of the Summer Triangle. It is the nineteenth-brightest star in the night sky. I hold an overwhelming feeling of love and expansiveness within my heart that I drew upon while creating this piece.

As a tribute to Opus, I included a yellow star and red super-giant to go with *Deneb* (blue-white super-giant), bringing together the company's colours into this piece.

Exploring Golden Open acrylics, I found they allowed me to attain blending and layering that I had been unable to achieve with regular acrylics. The Open paints work more similarly to oils but have a quicker drying time. Finishing off the piece with a resin pour achieved greater depth as well as protection.

For the past eight years, and currently, I manage the Opus Kelowna location. Previously I worked as sales staff for three years, during which time I met many incredible people and learned a lot about myself, others, art, and business. Opus cultivates passion, inspiration, knowledge, opportunity, friendships, and loves.

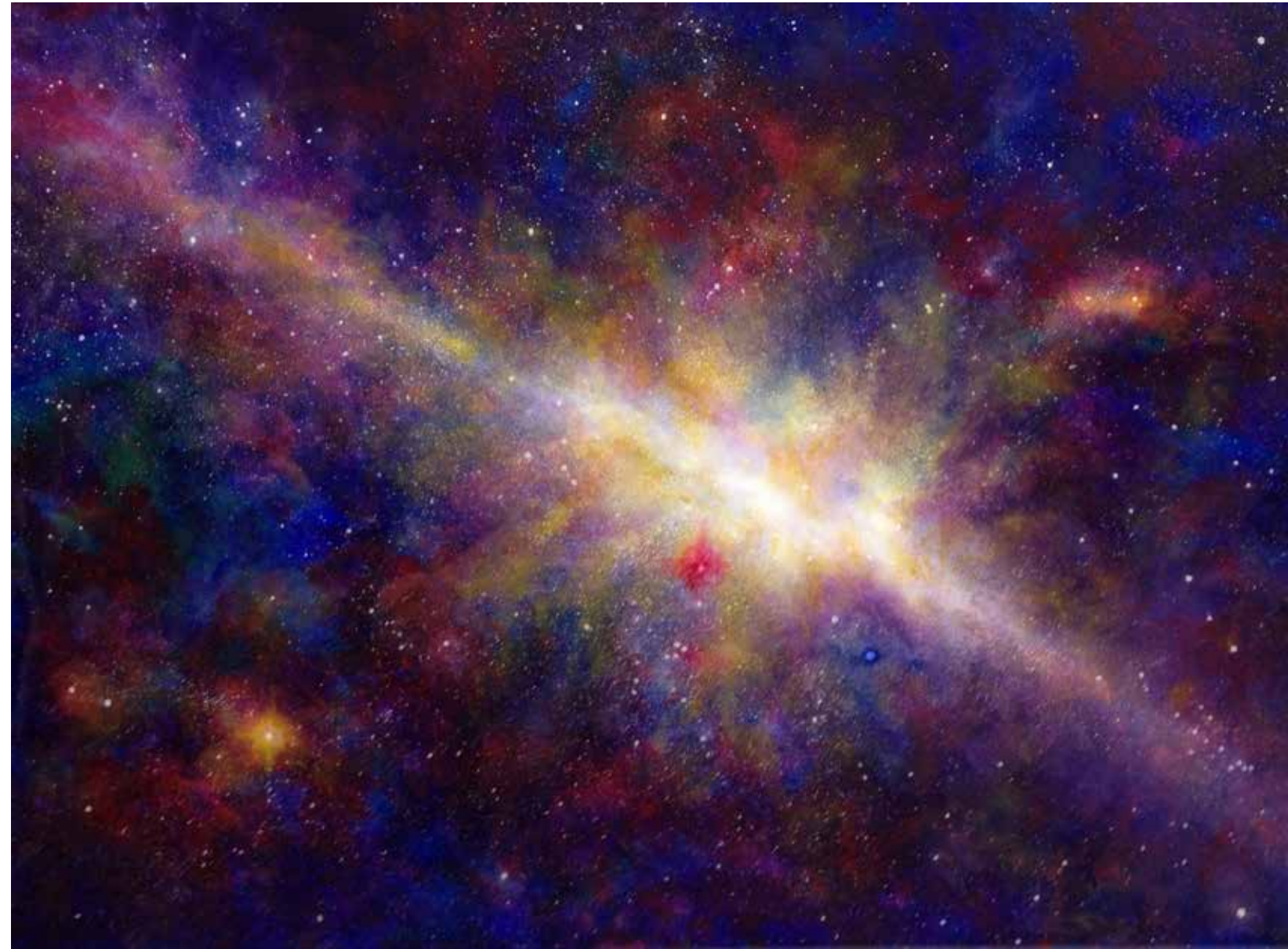
Artist's Biography

Aaron Metz grew up in Kelowna and at a very early age began experimenting with colour and images. His designs are striking through their effective use of colour and freedom. He works diligently at producing work that is appealing, both to the novice art viewer and the seasoned collector alike. His inspiration is derived from his life – the items he sees and the beauty that he experiences.

Having lived in the diverse and striking Okanagan, he finds an abundance of images and colour combinations to readily make use of in his work.

A past student of the Fine Arts program at Okanagan University College, Aaron found that life was of the greatest value and therefore chose to pursue his artistic direction. Using knowledge gained from working at Opus, he takes great pride in being able to offer archival quality in all of his work, which is created to please the viewer and stand up to the test of time.

His images tend toward literal expressions through abstract images, and to pure abstract expressionism. He feels that each person who sees his work will have a different interpretation, and, therefore, he titles each of his paintings with a less-than-literal name. Thus he is able to leave interpretation up to the different personal histories of those who are viewing his work.



Aaron Metz, *Deneb*, acrylic & resin, 36 x 24 in.

Artist's Statement

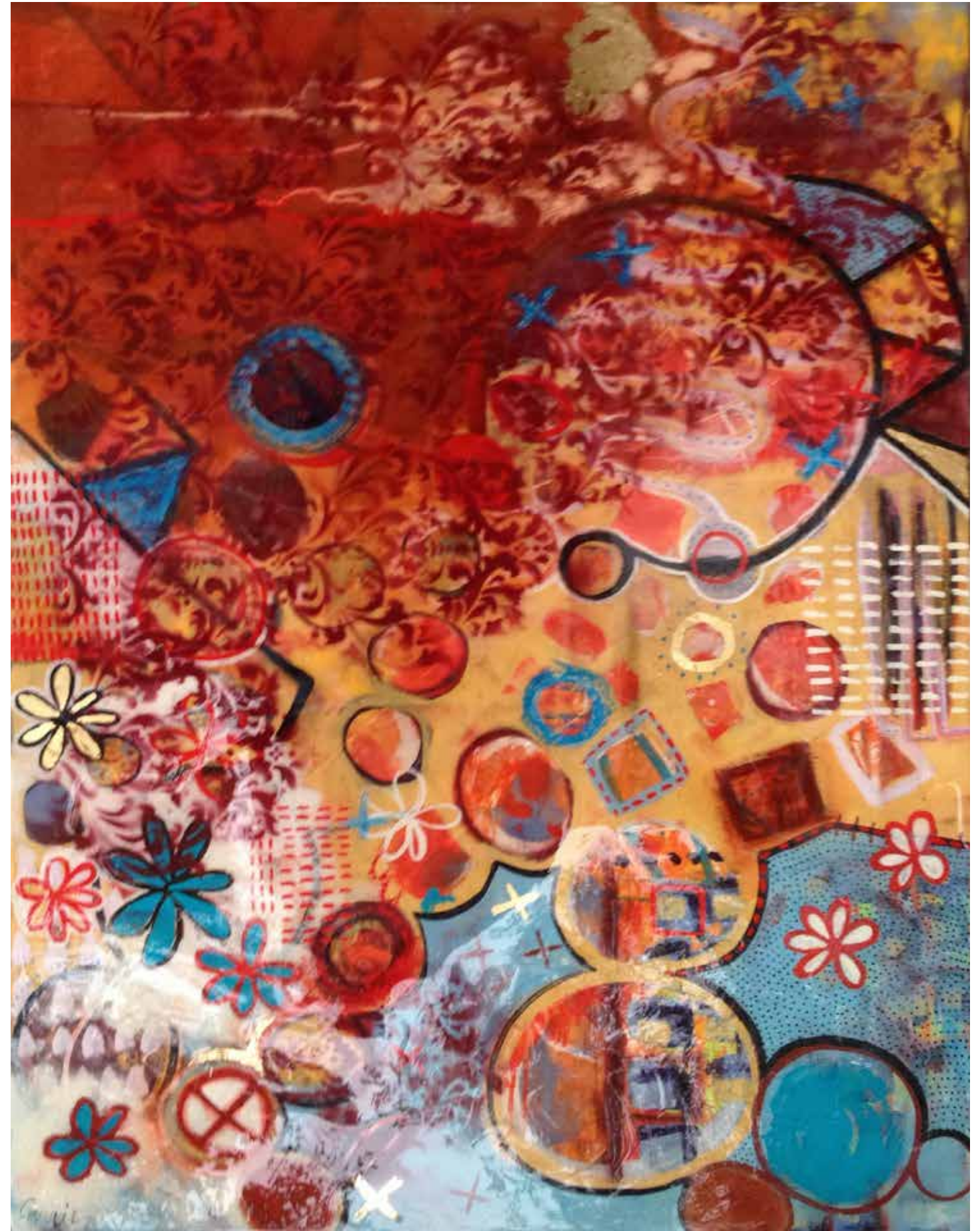
I made my *Celestial Bodies* series early in 2013 while renovating seven studios and a large art workshop space, thereby forming the collective heART school in Kelowna. My work is inspired by working with multi media, investigating colour theory, and the night sky. I lived on a six-acre farm in North Glenmore for twelve years until August of 2013. There, surrounded by horses, apple trees and quail while listening to crickets, frogs and coyotes, I soaked up the starry indigo canopy on many nights. There is little light pollution even though it is minutes from Kelowna and each clear night I would sit out alone and realize the vastness of the creation of something bigger than myself. The outcome of my experiences there, *Celestial Bodies*, consists of ten paintings to date, which have been the most cathartic works of art I have had the privilege of passing on from my source to the viewer. I've been told they "twinkle lively" and that "the layers invite you to see more each time you look at them." I often include text and found objects with the purpose of inviting and removing the high-art stigma that is sometimes found in galleries. My art is for everyone, I'm excited to hear you describe it!

At first, working at Opus Framing and Art Supplies in 2002 felt like a part time retail job surrounded by my favourite things. Opus as a company and team of people quickly became an essential puzzle piece in my career. I studied at Alberta College of Art until I had children, I've never achieved a degree. I often say, fondly, that the job was a better art education than the one I paid for. Opus Kelowna is still one of my favourite places.

Artist's Biography

Carrie Harper is a student of all things art and spirituality; in fact she believes that those things are one and the same. Carrie is inspired by Frida Kahlo, Georgia O'Keeffe, Somerset Studio, and her guardian angels. Most of all, she is amazed and inspired by her two children. Carrie Harper studied at the Alberta College of Art and Design in Calgary in the early 1990s, and through this experience she discovered a language of creativity. She appreciated learning a sense of self as well as technical skills. Art school fed right into her fascination with many creative modes and she immersed herself into any medium available; textiles, ceramics, photography, drawing, art history and more. As a painter, her childlike love of process shows up in her mixed-media work. Harper uses collage, paint and drawing materials, as well as other unexpected media. With each she discovers another facet of art making. For Harper art is the experience of expression rather than slotting into specific medium or subject. Harper believes good art is not necessarily pretty or appealing, and the purpose of art is not always to decorate or please. In our world it is art that gives life to culture, community and the hum of how we live. Art is never a finished work, whether a painting, poem, or play. Art is the story of human connection and the way we come together.

Recently, Harper has built a cultural hub called heART school on Bernard Avenue in Kelowna (conveniently located above Starbucks). There are seven artists working in the space and numerous musicians, poets and dancers who visit and inspire. heART school runs workshops, cultural events, and listening nights. The year 2013 has been an astounding one for growth in the arts, and heART school is proud to be a part of it all.



Carrie Mitchell-Harper, *Indian*, mixed-media on wood panel (resin), 48 x 36 in.

Artist's Statement

From February, 1993 to May, 1998 I worked for Opus Art Supplies, Vancouver, in a marketing and sales capacity. From the beginning it was a special place to connect with artists, ideas, and charitable giving. From February to April in 1994 my presence was requested to begin a new Opus. The store would be in Kelowna and would teach many of us about art as transformation, leadership, and vision. It was both an honour and a privilege to share this experience. It was a rewarding time spent with people who inspire me to this day.

Given just two weeks to build the store's artful presence, I somehow found the free time to begin and finish this painting in my Kelowna hotel room. *Presence* is a painting about shared wisdom. Here my older self is guiding a younger me. I feel now as I did then, that I am in the process of becoming the artist I now am. The creation of this painting began in Kelowna and now it has returned. Some day the artist will as well, as she was born there also.

Looking back, this was an exciting time for designing products, inventory, visual merchandise, display, and training the team. When our first customers walked through the door, filled with enthusiasm, we knew a dream had become a reality. Day to day we grew and became part of their customer experience. I will always remember the friendships that developed from inspiring people to learn and create through art and community.

Artist's Biography

Growing up in the Okanagan with a father who was a jazz musician and a mother who was a sculptor and photographer, Monod was destined to be in the arts. Her love of art began while she was very young and watching an artist paint a theatrical backdrop for the Kelowna Community Theatre. From that day on it never took long to fill a sketchbook or complete a painting. Monod went on to study visual arts at University of Victoria. After graduating with an honours BFA degree, she explored a career in marketing and design. Flexible with all media, Monod is best known for painting in oils, watercolour, and acrylics. She has also made her mark with illustration, animation, artist's workshops, glass sculpture, print graphics, and web design. In terms of expression and technique, her work has included a range of commissioned portrait paintings, murals, abstract compositions, and landscapes.

Although Monod designs for print, mobile, and web, her time is evenly split between painting and design. One process conditions another, in both she creates. Monod loves taking photographs and uses these in both her digital and acrylic paintings. Her work connects places and personalities, history trails and landmarks. Every painting she produces is a story, mirrored in realism. Travel and dog walks are what inspire Tina most in her current home in Ontario.



Tina Monod, *Presence*, acrylic on canvas panel, 12 x 9 in.

Ixara Neilson

Artist's Statement

Ixara Neilson is a painter who works in acrylic and other media. He loves shiny things. He might be part crow, or part raccoon. Eventually he will become an old man. He will still paint then. Neilson worked at Opus for a year and a half, and learned a lot about colour and colour relationships. He also learned about effective ways to market art. This will forever have an impact on his work.

Artist's Biography

Neilson was born in Red Deer, Alberta, and currently lives in Oyama. He is 27 years old, an Aquarian, and has a beard. He dropped out of high school and enrolled in the school of work. His passions are painting, and screen printing.



Ixara Neilson, *My side of the mountain*, acrylic and pencil on cradle panel, 18 x 24 in.

Ixara Neilson



Ixara Neilson, *Golden Decline*, giclee, acrylic, on canvas, 9 x 12 in.



Ixara Neilson, *Imperfect*, acrylic on cotton, 9 x 12 in.

Artist's Statement

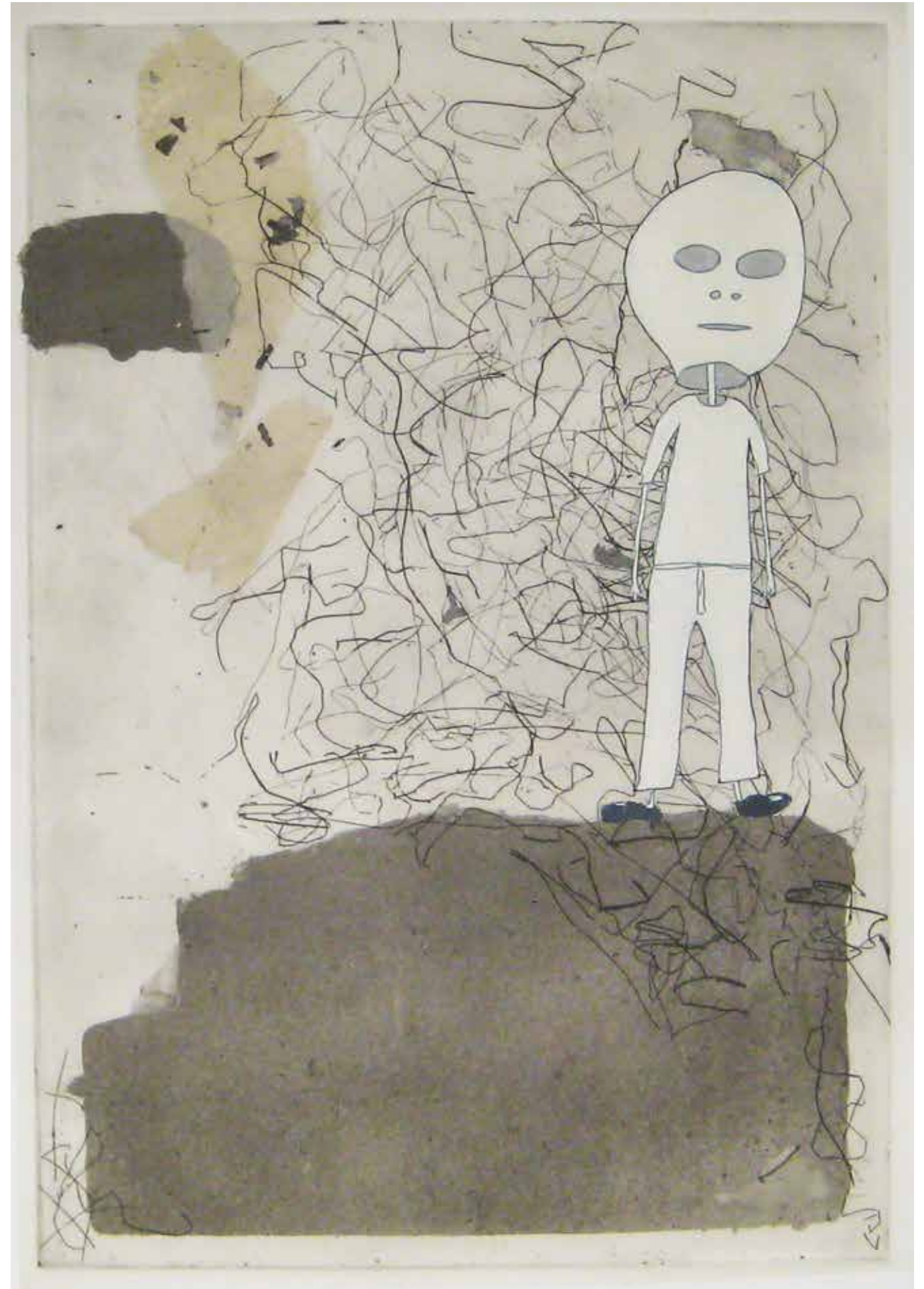
My work affixes a subtextual narrative to a common object or idea in order to provoke a response. My work is subversive in nature, containing deranged visuals and a schizophrenic sense of humour, appropriating from our childhood desires and patterns of thought. The achieving of our present status is contingent upon the reach of dominance, the compliancy of others, and our desire to submit in order to move forward without effort.

My current body of work is a series of drawings entitled Hidden. These depict a figure wearing different masks. I am intrigued with masks and what they signify. Masks allow us to hide our real selves and allow you to appear as though you are someone else, or something else. This work allows for a commentary on the existing interaction between the self and the reach of control.

I was an employee at Opus Framing and Art Supplies from 1998 to 2005. Working there allowed me to be able to keep up my art practice. The environment there was stimulating in that there was room for discussion of art; all of the artists working there were supportive of one another and what we were doing with our art. There were even times when we worked on projects together. It was a great place to make connections, some of which have turned into lasting friendships.

Artist's Biography

Shauna Oddleifson graduated from University of British Columbia Okanagan in 1998 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, with distinction. Since then she has been involved with the arts community in Kelowna, working in galleries as well as volunteering with various organizations and special events. Shauna has a studio practice, both art and craft-based, and has exhibited work throughout the Okanagan, as well as in various artist-run centres and galleries across Canada. Her work can be viewed on her web site, www.shauna-o-designs.com.

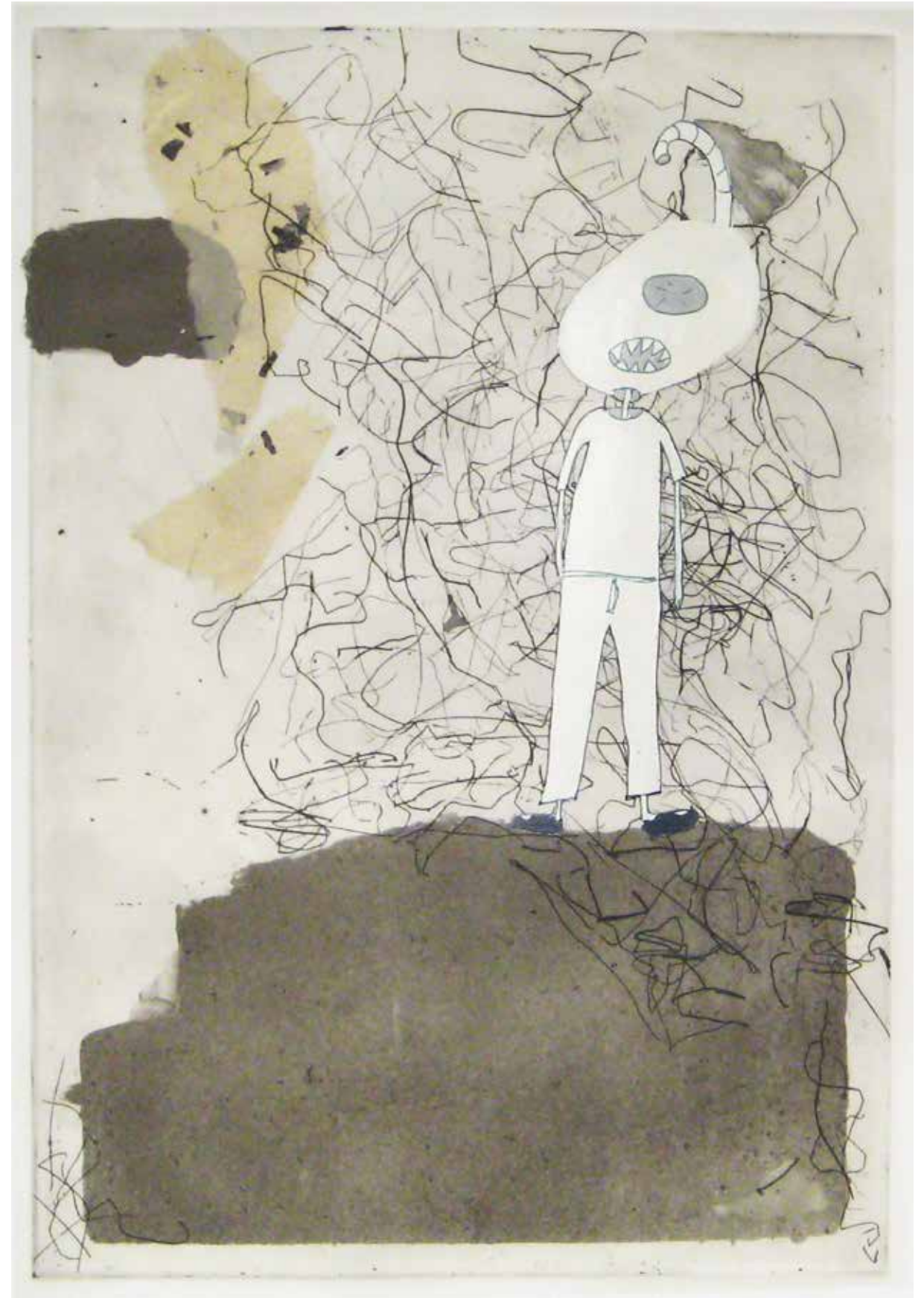


Shauna Oddleifson, *Hidden #1*, digital print, acrylic and ink on paper, 11.5 x 16.5 in.

Shauna Oddleifson



Shauna Oddleifson, *Hidden #2*, digital print, acrylic and ink on paper, 11.5 x 16.5 in.



Shauna Oddleifson, *Hidden #3*, digital print, acrylic and ink on paper, 11.5 x 16.5 in.

Les Porter

Artist's Statement

Les Porter was born and raised in Quesnel, B.C., and now works as a finishing carpenter in Calgary. His passion for the things he loves has taken him on many creative journeys, including running his own skateboard manufacturing company from 2000 to the present. He has worked in design on a multitude of platforms and media.

Porter focuses on graphic and web design, plus video and sound production, but still remains passionate about print design and traditional painting. He is also involved in music, urban and skate scenes, and enjoys communicating and connecting with others to achieve the best overall outcome of any project. With a powerful understanding of the angles of business and creative development, Porter is able to jump right into any creative project and manage it efficiently to push it to its maximum potential.

Artist's Biography

I worked at Opus in the mid to late 90s. It was a positive and convenient way for a young father to learn about media and techniques, particularly, for me, airbrushing.

Skateboarding was a big influence on my earlier life. It introduced me to a lot of creative outlets and attitudes. It also gave me a strong sense of confidence and independence back then. In fact, these are the first five skateboard decks I ever tried to make. Sometimes I use Biblical references as seen here, simply because they are recognizable in North-American culture. I don't believe in imaginary friends in the clouds. Now I'm a single dad and I work as a finishing carpenter and make skateboards with my son in Calgary.



Les Porter, *Jenny Spain*, vector drawing done in Adobe Illustrator, 9 x 6 in.

Les Porter



Les Porter, *Pusher*, vector drawing done in Adobe Illustrator, 9 x 7 in.



Les Porter, *Shady apples pt2*. 2012, acrylic on the first 5 handmade skateboard decks I made in 2000

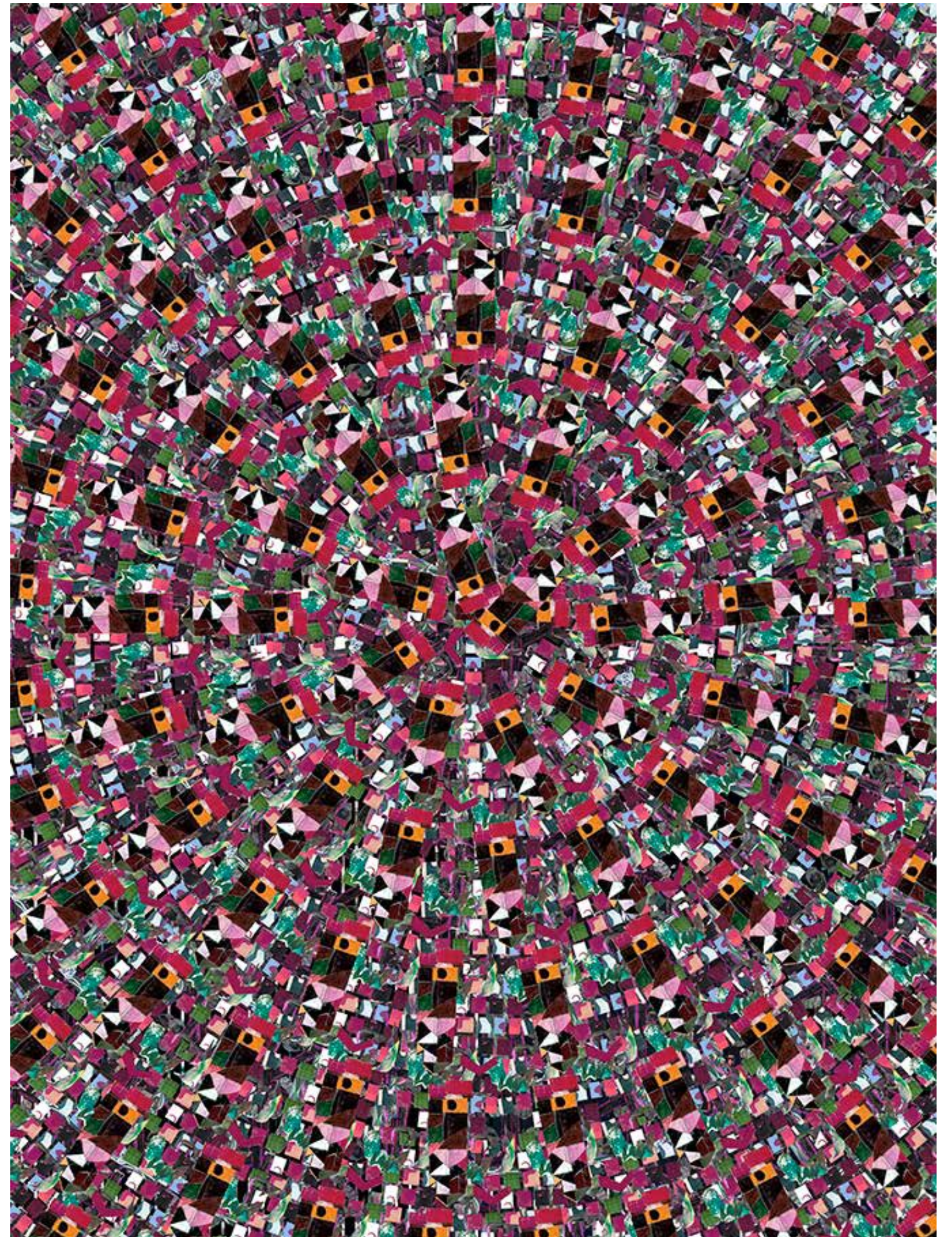
David Ross

Artist's Statement

My work is created within the context of a flood of information, in particular in the digital realm. Images, opinions, text, and video invade our visual space to the point where they can become abstract masses of pixels. To produce my work I use a mix of analogue and digital sources as raw material. Layering, collecting, generating compositions by using (and misusing) the software, embracing glitches as a medium-specific quality, etc. By scripting and repeating image editing and transformations with Photoshop, I can create layered and complex patterns that are then printed on paper.

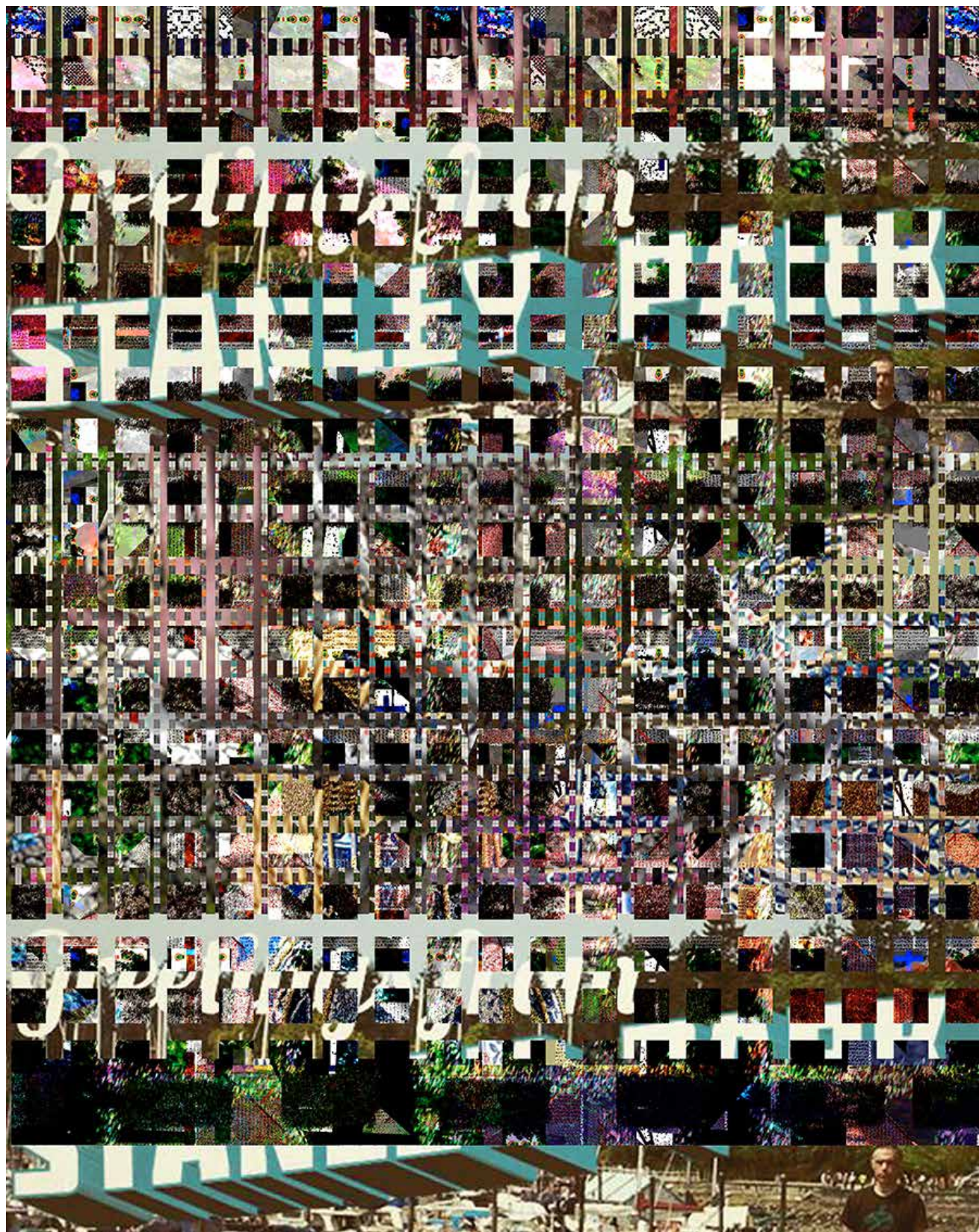
Artist's Biography

David Ross is an artist from Québec. He lived in Kelowna and worked for Opus between 2005 and 2007. At the Kelowna Opus store he worked with fellow artists, meeting many co-workers who inspired his art practice and one in particular who inspired him to travel to Japan. After spending four years in Japan, Ross is back in his home province teaching art and design.



David Ross, *Pattern_10*, 2013, digital print on Hahnemühle paper, 70 x 48 in.

David Ross



David Ross, *02_dross* (detail of the work *03_dross*), digital print on Hahnemühle paper, 70 x 48 in.

Evan Shandler

Artist's Statement

Currently I am concerned with the interplay between automatic mark-making techniques and found images. I am particularly interested in the destruction and subsequent recreation of images I find on the internet. To expedite my work flow, all of these pieces are conceived and completed entirely on a computer.

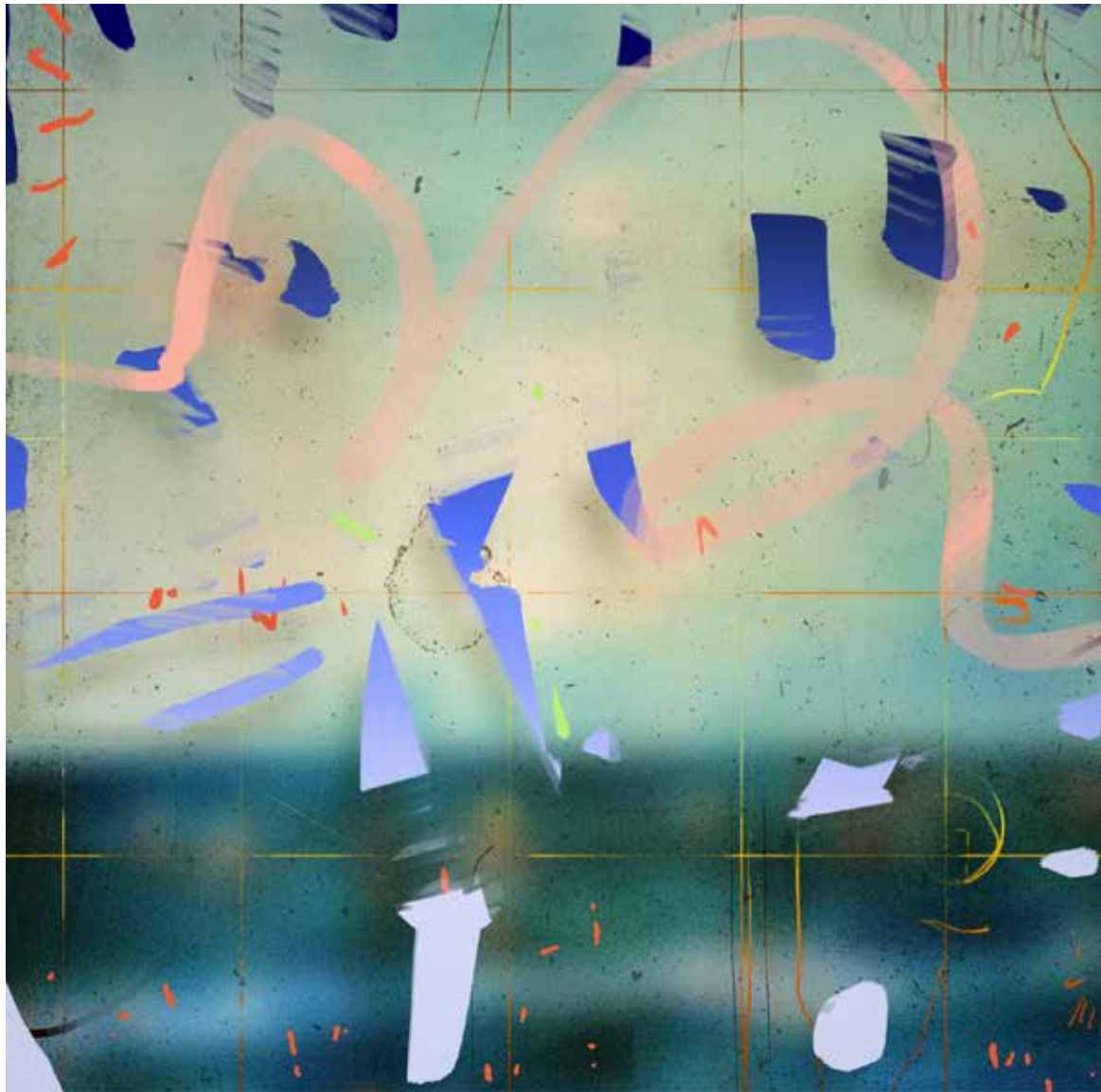
Artist's Biography

I worked at Opus from 2004 to 2006. During that time I learned a dizzying amount of information regarding the products sold within the store, however, more importantly, I also formulated my current concept of an artist.

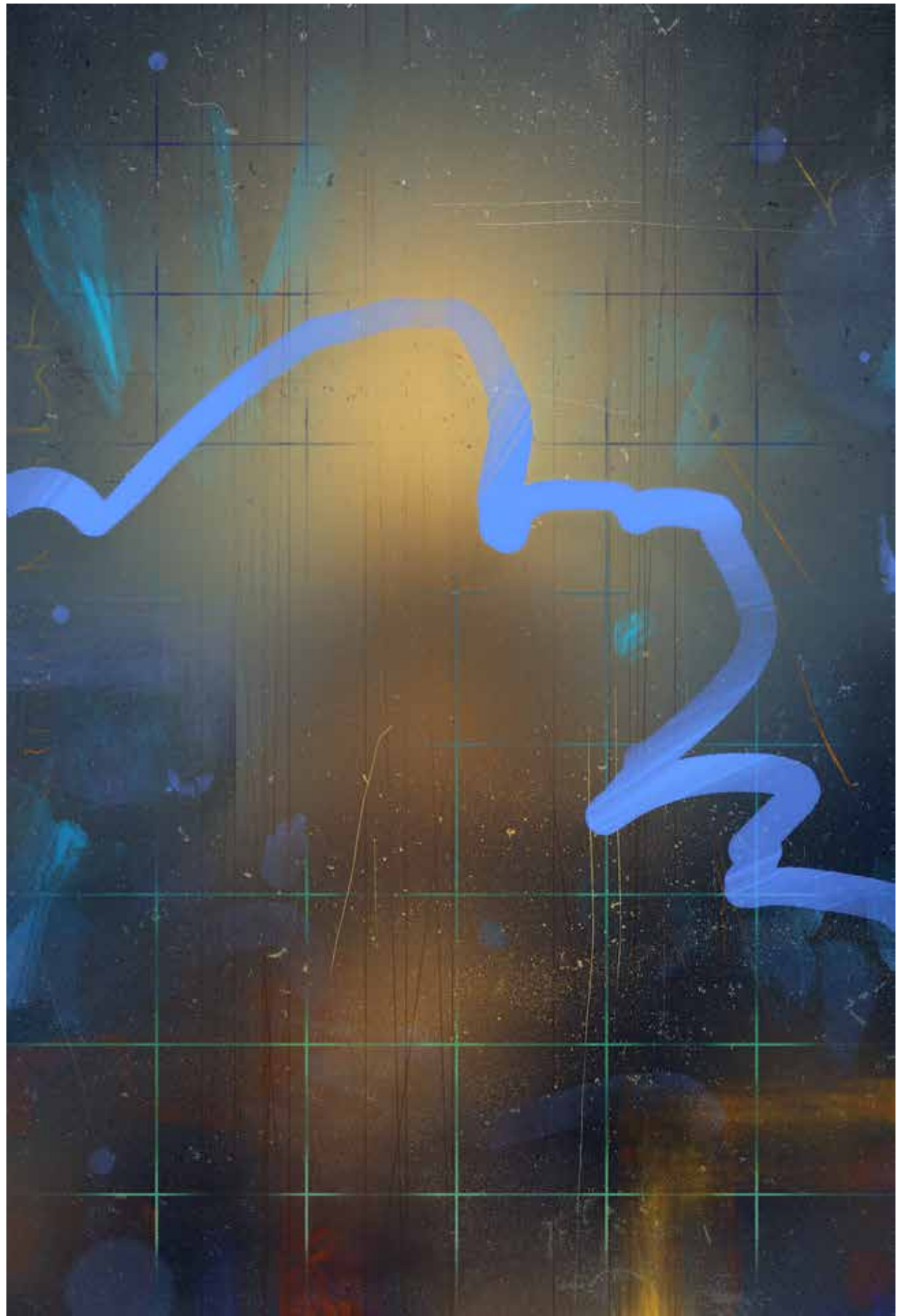


Evan Shandler, *Everything Was Beautiful and Nothing Hurt (sic)*, giclée, 30 x 20 in.

Evan Shandler



Evan Shandler, *Study #4*, giclée, 16 x 16 in.



Evan Shandler, *Study #7*, giclée, 21 x 14 in.

Artist's Statement

The grid has been a recurring motif in my work since art school. This triptych is largely constructed from my dissected etchings and lithographs. Going through past prints is like reading one's old diaries- each image evoking forgotten memories and emotions. I savour the process of printmaking but I was never particularly interested in making identical multiples of one image. This piece questions the perceived disparity between craft and "high art."

I worked at Opus from 1994 to 2000. The exposure to so many different mediums was invaluable. Serving customers at the store showed me the validity of all artistic pursuits no matter how great or small. Instructing product demonstrations and workshops at the store inspired me to go back to university to pursue a teaching career. At Opus I made life-long friends amongst the staff and customers.

Artist's Biography

Neena Sood was born and raised in southern Saskatchewan. She studied for one year in the Fine Art department of the University of Saskatchewan. She then completed a BFA in Printmaking at the Alberta College of Art and Design in Calgary.

After moving to Kelowna, Sood completed a B Ed from the University of Victoria via Okanagan University College. She taught elementary school on the Nisga'a Nation for three years before returning to the Okanagan to start a family. Sood believes experiencing other cultures is the best education and has traveled extensively through Canada, the United States, and Mexico. She has also visited England, Ireland, Greece and India.

Sood's work has been included in various group shows. She once co-created an installation at the Alternator Gallery in Kelowna. It was a construction of a church interior covered entirely with icing, chocolate, and candy called *Confections*. Sood currently teaches art part-time to individuals with developmental disabilities through the Cool Arts Society in Kelowna. She lives in Lake Country with her husband and two children.



Neena Sood, *An Iconophile's Garden of Verse [Part Deux]*, intaglio, lithograph, mixed-media on wood, Triptych - 12 x 12 in. panels

Neena Sood



Neena Sood, *An Iconophile's Garden of Verse [Part Deux]*, intaglio, lithograph, mixed-media on wood, Triptych - 12 x 12 in. panels



Neena Sood, *An Iconophile's Garden of Verse [Part Deux]*, intaglio, lithograph, mixed-media on wood, Triptych - 12 x 12 in. panels

Artist’s Statement

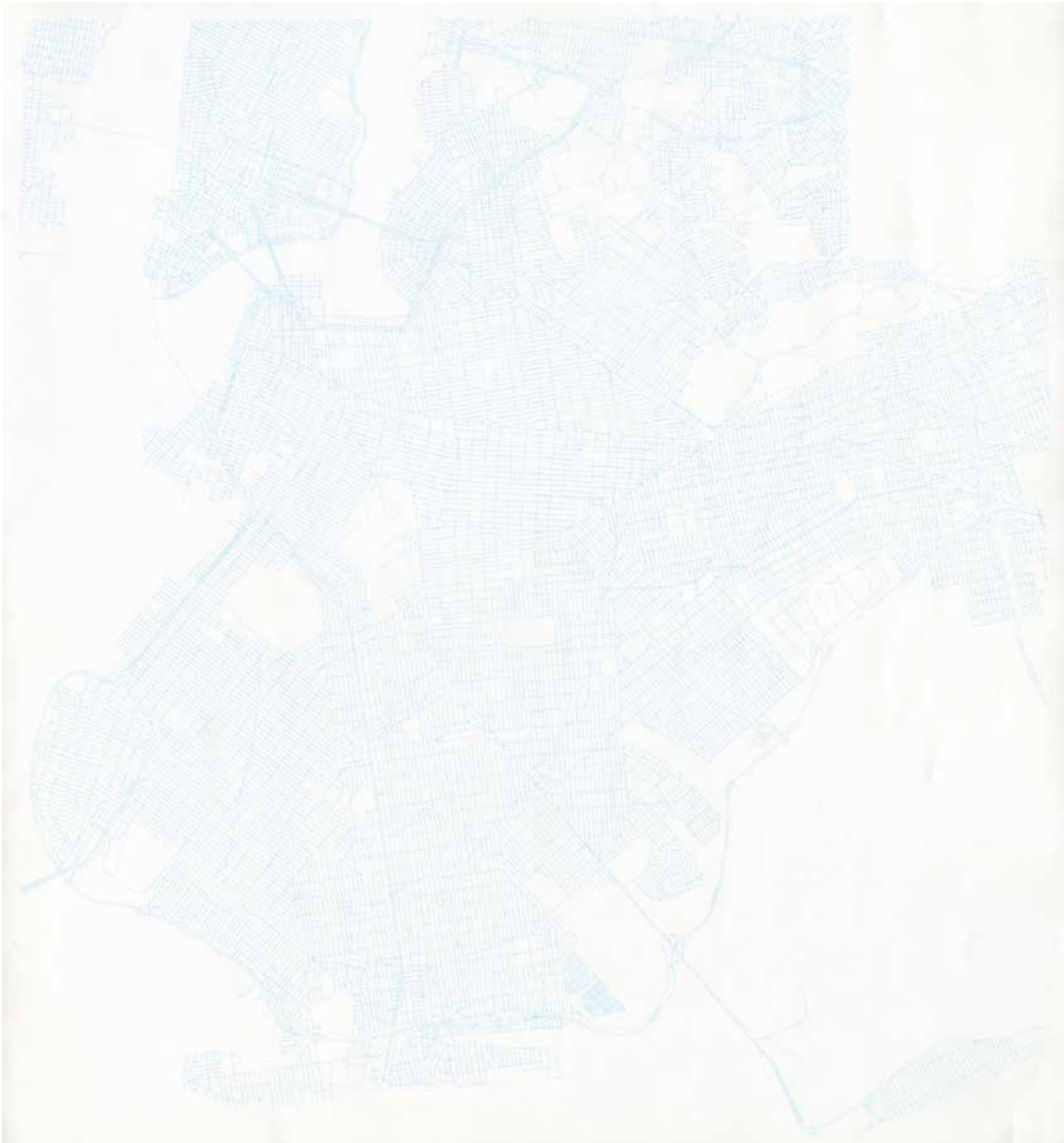
Freehand New York, my series in this show, was begun years ago while I was living in New York. My art practice at the time was focused on site-specific installation, mostly large in scale. I made changes to a space in order to heighten people’s awareness of some aspect of the place: the change in the quality of light from room to room, for example, or a hidden history of what a site used to be. Drawing the map of New York freehand was a slow meditation to heighten my own of understanding of the city, one street and intersection at a time.

The physical evolution of New York City has always fascinated me, particularly the Commissioner’s Plan of 1811 that overlaid the entire island of Manhattan with a grid. When I lived there, I began to look at maps of the Greater New York area with a new interest and then drew them over the next few years as a way of connecting myself to the history of the city’s development.

I worked at Opus Kelowna in the early 1990s, while attending Okanagan University College.

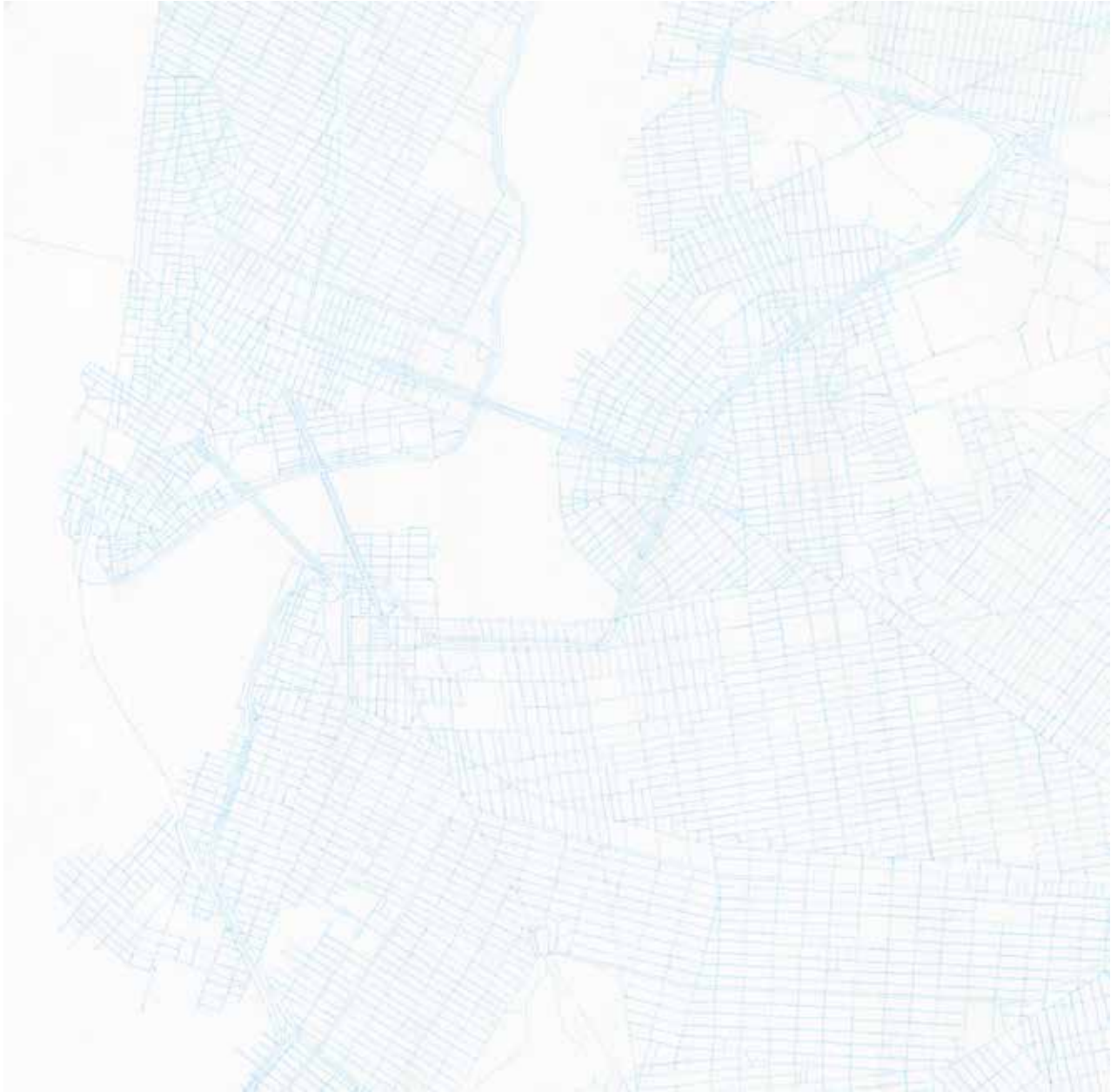
Artist’s Biography

Trevor Stafford is an artist and builder living in Berkeley, California. His work has been exhibited at Bloomberg LP’s New York City Headquarters, Smack Mellon Gallery in Brooklyn, New York, the Bronx Museum of the Arts in the Bronx, New York, Socrates Sculpture Park in Long Island City, New York, and the Kingston Sculpture Biennial in Kingston, New York, which was curated by the internationally acclaimed installation artist Judy Pfaff. He has been a resident artist at The Marie Walsh Sharpe Art Foundation in New York, New York, and participated in the Artist in the Marketplace Program at the Bronx Museum of the Arts in the Bronx, New York. In 2003, Trevor won an Emerging Artist Fellowship from Socrates Sculpture Park in Long Island City, New York.



Trevor Stafford, *Freehand Brooklyn*, blue mechanical pencil, 18 x 17 in.

Trevor Stafford



Trevor Stafford, *Freehand Brooklyn*, detail, blue mechanical pencil, 18 x 17 in.

Margot Stolz

Artist's Statement

I enjoy conceptualizing/writing/creating installations, macro-photography, and working with various mixed media. I often combine my drawings/paintings/photos and collected ephemera with beeswax (encaustic). My mark-making process is influenced by the philosophy of the transcendentalists, and members of Der Blaue Reiter. My reverence for nature, mark making and spirituality are closely linked – one cannot exist without the others. Thus, mark making is a spiritual expression for me. The piece titled *Healing Journey* is a personal and spiritual story about my recovery journey from PTSD.

I worked part-time at OPUS Kelowna while studying full-time for my Fine Arts Degree at Okanagan University College. I was the first employee hired for the new Kelowna store (the old location on Pandosy) back in 1994/95. It was a fun job and I have many fond memories of my time there. The store manager Richard, who sadly passed away, was lots of fun to work with, the music was good, and the employee discount was a saving grace for a starving art student. But most of all I learned so much about art supplies and I'm still applying that knowledge today. My experience at OPUS certainly influenced me to become a mixed-media artist.

Artist's Biography

Stolz works in encaustic, mixed media, and installation. Her studio is open to the public for workshops and visits, at the Summerland Art Gallery, where she is the Artist-in-Residence until October, 2014. A member of the Summerland Studio Tour (studiotour.wordpress.com), a BC-certified secondary school art teacher, Stolz volunteers her time on the Board of Directors at the Penticton Art Gallery. Contact her through her website www.margotstudio.ca and on fb/ Margot Stolz Art.



Margot Stolz, *Healing Journey (series)*, encaustic mixed media on canvas, 6 x 6 in.

Margot Stolz



Margot Stolz, *Healing Journey (series)*, detail, encaustic mixed media on canvas, 6 x 6 in.



Margot Stolz, *Healing Journey (series)*, detail, encaustic mixed media on canvas, 6 x 6 in.

Amy Van Dongen

Artist's Statement

My work explores inner turmoil and its connection to psychology. Two psychological terms I explore are self-handicapping and self-fulfilling prophecy. More specifically, my work explores how personal fears can block or hinder people from living life to their fullest. I examine the results and impairments of fear, and investigate our potential to surpass fear as an obstacle. My work thus far has focused on inner turmoil. More specifically, I use art as an outlet to solve and surpass these obstacles. My ultimate goal is for the viewer to connect with my pieces and convey an inner likeness between us all. I am inspired by works like Richard Serra's, *Tilted Arc*. It is very important to me for the viewer to walk away from a piece feeling conscious about their body or their thoughts.

Artist's Biography

I am a recent graduate from the BA program at the University of Waterloo in Ontario. I have been working at the Kelowna Opus store for about three months. Being surrounded by art every day is very inspirational. Working at Opus has been a true addition to my education, and I feel it is a great learning experience. It truly feels like a graduate degree, and will benefit me for a lifetime.



Amy Van Dongen, *Function Impaired*, found chair, card stock, embroidery floss, 32 x 13.5 x 13.5 in.

Amy Van Dongen



Amy Van Dongen, *Beset*, detail, embroidery floss, body bag, 88 x 37 in.



Amy Van Dongen, *Function Impaired 2*, found spoon, crochet, 1.5 x 8.5 in.

Artist's Statement

I worked at Opus Kelowna briefly during the mid to late '90s while finishing off my BFA at the then Okanagan University College. I never realized that the colleagues I met at Opus would become lifelong friends and inspirations in my pursuit of a career in the visual arts.

This work is a “one-off” based on my current employment as an elementary art teacher in Alberta. I left a career in graphic design to pursue teaching, thinking I would have more time to create my own work. Ironically it has taken me more than a decade to acclimatize to the stresses of this second profession and I am just starting to get back to drawing (with few expectations). Even though people warned me, I had no idea how mentally taxing elementary teaching is. This piece evolved as an attempt to capture the chaos of a day. That said, I am privileged to work with some lovely, energetic minds and through watching them create, I am gradually learning to loosen my own process up – imperfections and all. If I could just find a solution for mass pencil sharpening on a shoestring, my life would be fairly close to perfect.

Artist's Biography

Barbara Wanhill currently lives in Calgary, Alberta, with her husband, two cats and an ever-expanding perennial garden. She has a BFA and B. Ed. from the University of Victoria. Four days a week she teaches art to over 300 elementary students. Follow her on Twitter: @2catsandapencil.



Barbara Wanhill (née Forbes), *Partitions*, mixed media on wood, 12 x 5 in.

Barbara Wanhill (née Forbes)



Barbara Wanhill (née Forbes), *Partitions*, detail, mixed media on wood, 12 x 5 in.



Rena Warren

Artist's Statement

I've never finished a painting. Every work I've ever submitted or sold is an unfinished tale.

I love a good story – especially epic tales with intricately woven bits of mythology and devotion; fiercely brave characters, magical landscapes, secret codes, and passionate marriages between nature and geometry; all of this sensually wrapped in witty, colourful language with the power to transport the reader. If I could possibly paint a narrative like that then I could say my work is finished.

My years of working at Opus afforded me the opportunity to gain extensive knowledge about the properties and nature of pigments. Often in tutorial sessions I like to share stories about the histories of various pigments. I feel as though these stories somehow become part of the undercurrents or subtext in a painted work. While painting a group portrait of Dalits whom I met in India, I was careful to use pigments such as iron-oxide red, indigo, and Indian yellow.

Artist's Biography

Rena Warren is an Okanagan-based artist, art educator, world traveler, and single mother. She moved to the Okanagan in 1991 to attend Okanagan University College, where she received her Bachelor of Fine Arts. While raising her daughter and earning a post-graduate degree in Education at the University of Victoria, Warren worked on and off at Opus between 1996 and 2003. It was here where she gained her knowledge of materials and colour. After seven years of teaching art in the private school system, Rena embarked on an independent teaching career and more focused art practice. Currently she teaches at the Kelowna Art Gallery, the Canadian Mental Health Association, and Okanagan College, and has held the position of Executive Director at Cool Arts Society for the past three years. In her private practice, Warren specializes in large-scale oil portraiture and original block-print designs, often fusing her subjects with archetypal and mythological references. Her extensive travels throughout India (four journeys made between 2006 and 2009) form a large part of her inspiration, general aesthetic and subject matter.



Rena Warren, *Sugar Skull Persuasion*, acrylic and oil on canvas, 36 x 24 in.

Rena Warren



Rena Warren, *Sasha*, acrylic and oil on canvas



Rena Warren, *Sasha*, detail, acrylic and oil on canvas

Artist's Statement

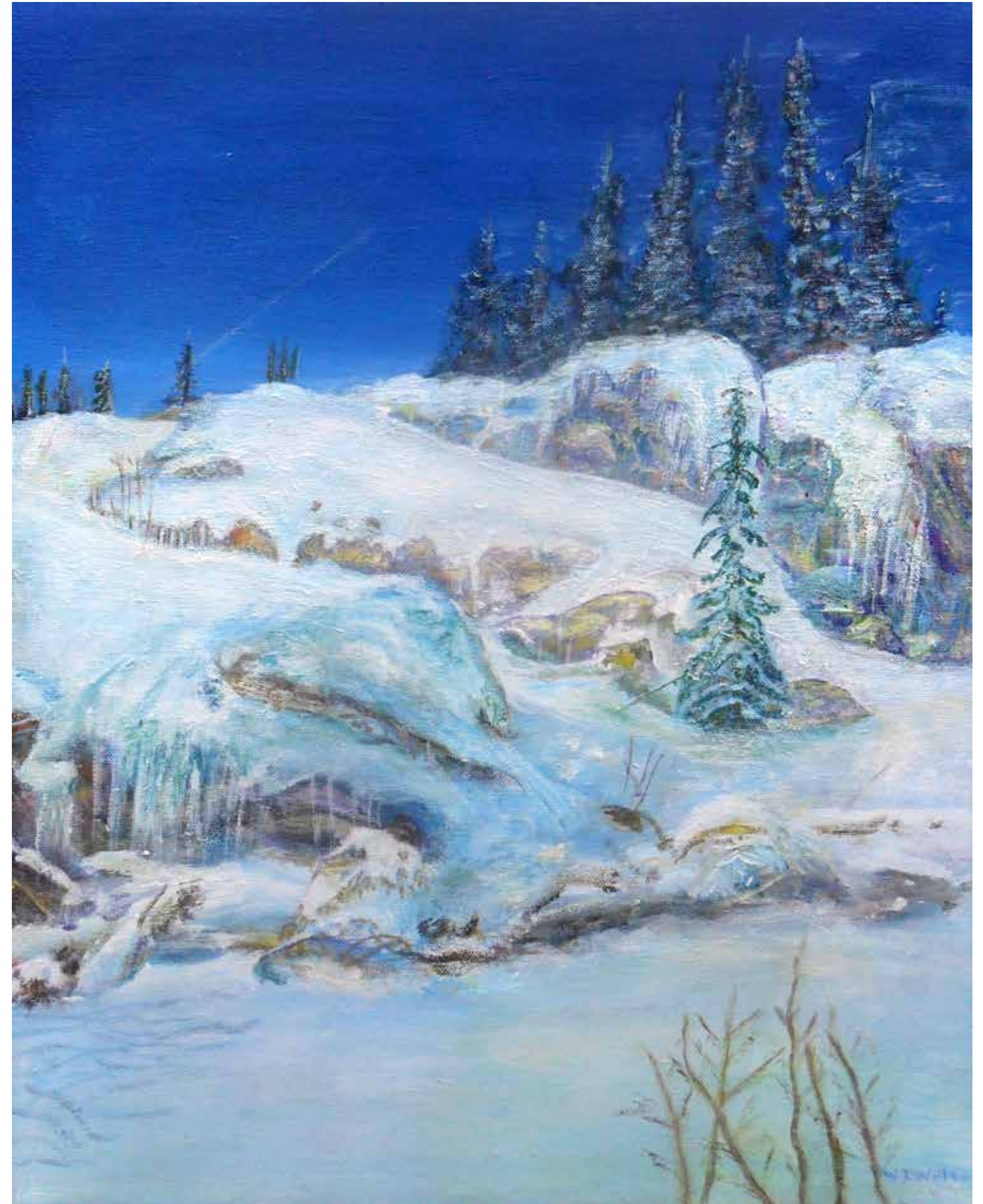
I worked at Opus from 2002 to 2003. I think of my time at Opus with fondness. I was quite proud of the quality of the artist supplies and professionalism that was present during my sojourn there. In addition, I very much enjoyed teaching workshops whenever I had the chance. It gave me a chance to demonstrate various art methods that I did not do on my own. Furthermore, Opus gave me a chance to meet and to help practicing artists. Being around artists always made me approach my own art with keenness.

My favourite media are acrylic, oils, and the 3B pencil. I like them all equally, and no matter what material I use, I work with the strengths of the particular material. I like acrylics for their fast drying time, yet I like oils for their slow drying time, and texture. I like drawing with both a 3B pencil and kneaded eraser, both equally important in creating a drawing.

The piece I have submitted for this show is an acrylic painting of the Granite Mountain cliff band during the ski season. A fresh snowfall covers the ski tracks.

Artist's Biography

I currently live in the Kootenays, just outside of Trail. I draw my inspiration from the mountains where I live. I currently work on my craft with a large number of paintings that grace my website when I am not playing or teaching bridge. I received a Diploma of Fine Arts from Okanagan University College in 2001. I also completed a third-year painting course at Queen's University. My original degrees were a BASc in Engineering Physics and MASc in Aerospace Engineering. Before I started a diploma, I would just pack my pastels in to the Musée du Beaux Arts in Montréal and sit in front of a painting and just draw. There were not a lot of aerodynamic engineers doing this. Engineering gave my some financial freedom to study art, but I consider my Diploma in Fine Arts my most valuable piece of paper.



Warren Watson, *Granite Cliff*, acrylic on canvas, 20 x 16 in.

Warren Watson



Warren Watson, *Johnstone Creek Provincial Park*, pencil drawing, 9 x 12 in.



Warren Watson, *Tulip Creek*, pencil drawing, 12 X 9 in.



KELOWNA  GALLERY

January 18 to March 2, 2014