LANDON MACKENZIE
CROSSING OVER, WHY CLOUD THE WHITES

September 19 – October 30, 2011
Opening reception Thursday September 15, 2011

Richmond Art Gallery
#180–7700 Minoru Gate
Richmond, BC  V6Y 1R9
604.247.8300

www.richmondartgallery.org

Essay: Glen Lowry
Design: Mary Castellanes
Photo credits: Scott Massey

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We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the
City of Richmond, the British Columbia Arts Council and
the Province of British Columbia.

BIOGRAPHIES

Landon Mackenzie is an acclaimed Vancouver artist and passionate
educator. Originally from Toronto, she has been an exhibiting painter
for thirty years. As Professor in Visual Arts at the Emily Carr Univer-
sity of Art + Design, she has been instrumental in dialogues about
painting in Canada. At 17, Mackenzie was a student of Conceptual
Art at Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD 1972–76). After
completing an MFA at Concordia University in Montreal, she turned
to painting in the late seventies. Her work has been extensively
written about and she has received numerous grants and awards,
including a Canada Council Grant in 1982, a Canada Council Grant
for Visual Arts in 1990, and a Canada Council Grant for Visual Arts in
1992. She has exhibited in a number of solo and group shows and has
been the subject of numerous articles, reviews and interviews. Her
work has been included in a number of group exhibitions and has
been the subject of one-person shows that have travelled across
Canada. Mackenzie has an important role in helping to shape the
courageous and iconoclastic spirit of contemporary art in the
province.

Glen Lowry is a writer, educator and editor who specializes in
creative critical collaboration and practice-based research. A senior
researcher in Emily Carr’s NSERC-funded Social and Interactive Media
Research Centre, Lowry focuses on new media platforms linking
scholars, artists, and audiences across cultural and geographical dis-
tances. Current projects include the Maraya project, a public artwork
linking urban waterfronts in Vancouver and Dubai, UAE; a qualitative
study of the outcomes and impacts of SSHRC’s Research Creations
grants; and an applied research project on the utility of Deqq, social
software developed for the entertainment industry by Work@Play in
education. Lowry received his PhD in English from Simon Fraser
University in 2005. He is a co-editor of West Coast Line, a
culture and politics (photography, film, and television). Since 2002, he has
co-edited the online journal Informed, and has published books, articles,
and reviews in Canada and internationally.

SAILSCAPE
2006
Detail. 228.6cm × 312.4cm. Synthetic polymer on linen.
Courtesy Art45. Photographed by Scott Massey.
Crossing Over, Why Cloud the Whites

Mackenzie’s paintings guide viewers through an abstract topography that stretches from one panel to the next, tracing a network of sightlines that entwine me in the work. I realized that Mackenzie’s “crossing over” works a desire to look beyond the immediate, to see the painting as a transformative social medium.

If Goya’s tapestry cartoons might be read as blueprints for a contemporary art capable of activating new viewers and enriching our read-Mackenzie’s-art practice.

Hearing I would travel to Madrid, Mackenzie encouraged me to see the “light Goyas upstairs in the Prado.” At the Prado, breaking away from the horde to make my way to the second floor, I wondered how I might relate Fran- cisco de Goya’s work to paintings I had seen in Mackenzie’s studios a few years earlier. What could his pictorialism have to do with her large abstract paintings? I had seen Goya’s famous Disasters of War (Los Desastres de la Guerra) and Black Paintings (Pinturas Negras) and wondered what the artist who gave us The Third of May 1808 might have to offer in relation to Mackenzie’s work. Goya’s drive to find ways that might speak to contemporary political concerns and issues of social justice is inspiring, and drawn into a discussion of Mackenzie’s conceptual works might, arguably, suggest a compelling addition to debate around the political efficacy of abstract painting. However, this seemed equal to the grandiose exteriors of our empty towers. I was struck by the idea that the connection to Mackenzie’s work might not be through technique, palette or figurative vocabulary. Instead, it might have to do with how we experience the space around paintings. Mackenzie’s Circle of World and World of Knots and Troubles (Spin) Otis and Ash and World of Knots and Troubles (Spin) Otis and Ash. For example, (San) Otis and Ash references the Icelandic ash cloud that surrounded flights in and out of Europe for six days in 2010, and suggests visual links between medical imagery and subway maps, code and city as interconnecting networks.

After Goya, her paintings provide another way of seeing this vastness, suggesting an entire world that is here, its city, its aerial perspective of the human body. Following Goya’s dogs have evolved to negotiate human society and thrive in the man-made environment, they emerge in Mackenzie’s paintings to suggest a compelling addition to debate around the political efficacy of abstract painting. However, this seemed equal to the grandiose exteriors of our empty towers. I was struck by the idea that the connection to Mackenzie’s work might not be through technique, palette or figurative vocabulary. Instead, it might have to do with how we experience the space around paintings. Mackenzie’s Circle of World and World of Knots and Troubles (Spin) Otis and Ash. For example, (San) Otis and Ash references the Icelandic ash cloud that surrounded flights in and out of Europe for six days in 2010, and suggests visual links between medical imagery and subway maps, code and city as interconnecting networks.

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