

RAG

RICHMOND ART GALLERY

*Close Listening*

Eli Bornowsky, Jeremy Hof, Monique Mouton, Jinny Yu

January 31 – March 29, 2015



Jeremy Hof, *Untitled (Mother & Child)*, 2014, Acrylic on plywood

School Art Program Teacher's Guide

*Richmond Art Gallery School Art Program*

7700 Minoru Gate, Richmond, BC, V6Y 1R9 Phone: 604-247-8300 Fax: 604-247-8301

[www.richmondartgallery.org](http://www.richmondartgallery.org)

## About the Exhibition

Organized and circulated by the Ottawa Art Gallery, and curated by Ola Wlusek, OAG's Curator of Contemporary Art, *Close Listening* brings together the works of four painters who are reconsidering the possibilities of abstraction with inventive approaches to their material. Collectively, they explore the medium of paint through non-traditional techniques, including assemblage, sculpture, video and installation, while challenging the definition of the act of painting.



L-R: Jeremy Hof, *Fluorescent Ring on Purple*, 2014, acrylic on panel, and *Bronze Cube*, 2014, ed 1/3, bronze

Jeremy Hof employs a playful process of applying acrylic paint onto flat and three dimensional surfaces until it builds up enough of a thickness to create the opportunity to carve into the layers to reveal the colours beneath. His work is labour intensive and takes place over a long period of time, and the layers upon layers of paint transform the object he is painting as the edges become uneven and ragged. The colours he chooses are applied in a system, designed to gradually shift colour or lightness, or to create layers of contrasting colours. When all the layers are built up, Hof then picks up a sheet of sandpaper and gently, slowly, patiently rubs down into the paint until the various layers and colours are exposed. Recently, in order to preserve the sculptural qualities of the painted works, Hof has branched out into bronze casting. After painting a cube for many months, prior to carving into it he created a mold from it and made a copy of the cube in bronze, thus preserving its puffy, marshmallow-like form as a **sculpture**.



Jinny Yu, *Studio Work No. 37*, 2013, ink, glass, tape, aluminum, mirror

Jinny Yu also incorporates **sculpture** in her painting practice. She applies paint and black ink to a variety of different surfaces, such as glass, mirrors, and folded aluminum pieces, and then assembles the different parts together to create a composition. She arranges the artwork in the gallery space in such a way as to respond to the shape of the room, and to create reflections and relationships between the different pieces, creating an art **installation**. In addition, Yu appeals to the other senses by using sound and video, enhancing the interactive quality of viewing the work. By including sculpture, installation, video and sound elements to her painting practice, Jinny Yu is asking us to expand our definition of what a painting is or can be.



Eli Bornowsky, *Yoni*, 2013,  
oil on wood, screws

Working on flat surfaces, Eli Bornowsky creates paintings within which three-dimensional objects, such as spheres, interact with each other. In others, he explores doodles, taking inspiration from the hundreds of drawings in his notebooks. These pages of squiggles, signs, and symbols are translated into large sized paintings, and the untamed quality of line and brushstroke is contrasted with precise, geometric shapes. Without a picture or a story to ponder in these paintings, we instead look at what IS there, and can consider instead the brushstroke, the movement of the hand holding the brush, and the interaction of the shapes, objects, and colours.



L-R: Monique Mouton, *Untitled*, 2013, oil on panel, and *Pacific*, 2013, oil on panel

Monique Mouton experiments with the shape of her paintings, creating paintings that are asymmetrical, round, trapezoidal, and wavy. There are even parts missing, as in *Untitled* (shown above) where the cut out oval becomes an element of the picture. Mouton is interested in the idea of the painting being like a fragment of something bigger, a clue to a greater whole, like when you see a shard of pottery at a museum, we must use our imagination to picture the vase and fill in the blanks ourselves. She has more recently drawn out the sculptural quality of her paintings by placing works on the floor and leaning them against walls.

Communicating together, these works are an invitation for us to use our imaginations, to delight in the interactions of pure colours and shapes, and to reconsider the possibilities of what paintings are and what paintings can be. Through slow looking, moving quietly from one work to another, meditating, and then starting over again, something special can be discovered.

## About the Artists

Born in Alberta Canada, **Eli Bornowsky** received his BFA in Visual Arts from the Emily Carr Institute in Vancouver (2005) and is an MFA candidate at Bard College, New York. He has had considerable exposure in Vancouver, where he currently resides. In 2007, his paintings were shown in the group exhibition *Gasoline Rainbows* at the Contemporary Art Gallery and he began working with Blanket Contemporary Art, Inc. where he was given solo exhibitions in 2007, 2008, and 2011. In 2009, his work was included in the exhibition *Enacting Abstraction* at the Vancouver Art Gallery, and in 2010 he exhibited *Walking Square Cylinder Plane*, a solo exhibition at the Western Front. The label Rundownsun has released a limited edition cassette of his experimental audio projects.

**Jeremy Hof** is a multidisciplinary, Vancouver-based artist whose practice encompasses painting, drawing, sculpture and installation. Hof studied fine arts at Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design and was the 2008 winner of the RBC Canadian Painting Competition. Hof has exhibited across Canada in solo and group exhibitions at the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, ON; Musee d'art contemporain de Montreal, Montreal, QC; UQAM Gallery, Montreal, QC; Jessica Bradley Gallery, Toronto, ON; Power Plant, Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art (MOCCA), Toronto, ON, Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver Art Gallery, Blanket Contemporary Art, Inc., Vancouver, BC; The Rooms, St John's NL; Museum London, London, ON; Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, SK; and Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton, AB.

Born in Fort Collins, CO, **Monique Mouton** is a painter based in New York. She received her MFA from the Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts at Bard College in 2014 and her BFA from Emily Carr Institute in Vancouver in 2006. Mouton's work was recently presented in solo exhibitions at Fourteen30 Contemporary in Portland, OR, and Blanket Contemporary Art, Inc., Vancouver, BC. Recent group exhibitions include *Snail Salon* at Regina Rex, Queens, NY; *The Thick of It* at Mercer Union, Toronto, ON; and *Romancing the Stone* at Fourteen30 Contemporary, Portland, OR. Her work has also been featured in exhibitions in Vancouver at the Vancouver Art Gallery, Or Gallery, and CSA Space, and in Toronto at Diaz Contemporary among others. In 2012 Mouton led the inaugural thematic residency for Soi Fischer at Artscape Gibraltar Point, Toronto Islands, titled *The Portable Hole*.

**Jinny Yu** was born in Seoul, Republic of Korea, and is based in Ottawa, ON. Her work has been shown widely, including exhibitions in New York at the ISCP Gallery, Pulse New York, and Scope New York. She has also exhibited at the Bevilacqua La Masa Foundation, Venice Gallery, Sotheby's, London, UK; Carleton University Art Gallery, Ottawa, ON; the Confederation Centre Art Gallery, Charlottetown, PEI; and the McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton, ON. Yu, who is an Associate Professor of Painting at the University of Ottawa, was awarded the Mid-Career Artist Award by Council for the Arts in Ottawa in 2013; Laura Ciruls Painting Award from Ontario Arts Foundation in 2013; and was a finalist for the Pulse Prize New York 2011. She has received grants from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council and le Conseil des Arts et des Lettres du Quebec. She is represented by Galerie Art Mur in Montreal, QC and General Hardware Contemporary in Toronto, ON.

# BEFORE YOUR VISIT

## Discussion: Abstract Art

Historically, artwork typically portrayed a recognizable subject. Whether it was cave paintings showing animals, portraits of kings and queens, a vase of flowers, or a beautiful landscape, artwork depicted people, places, and things. But starting in the early 20th century, artists started to question what art could be and what art could show, and artists experimented with depicting dreams, emotions, and ideas in art. One type of art that emerged from all this experimentation was **abstract art**. Abstract art is artwork that does not depict a person, place, or thing in the natural world, but instead the subject of the work is based on what you see in the artwork itself, for example:

- Colours
- Shapes
- Lines
- Brushstrokes
- The process of making the art (splatter, brushstroke, stipple, etc.)

## Activity

Introduce the concept of abstract art, and look at some examples of abstract painting. Discuss the artwork as a group. Some suggestions:

- Describe what you see (lines, colours, shapes, etc.)
- How does the artwork make you feel?
- What do you see in the artwork that makes you feel that?
- How was the artwork made? Are the brushstrokes careful and precise, or loose and free? Can you imagine the hand of the artist making the marks?
- Is there a sense of movement?
- Using your imagination, what does the work make you think of?

Some examples of abstract art:

Vasily Kandinsky - <http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/collections/collection-online/artwork/1867>

Piet Mondrian - <http://www.piet-mondrian.org/composition-with-red-yellow-and-blue.jsp>

Mark Rothko - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:White\\_Center\\_\(Yellow,\\_Pink\\_and\\_Lavender\\_on\\_Rose\).jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:White_Center_(Yellow,_Pink_and_Lavender_on_Rose).jpg)

Jackson Pollock - <http://www.jackson-pollock.org/convergence.jsp>

## After Your Visit

Many abstract paintings evoke the idea of movement. Eli Bornowsky listens to music as he paints, and tries to capture the repetition and beats of the music in his paintings. Making art to music is an excellent way to connect with the ways that artists capture movements in their artwork.

### Movement Artwork

#### Materials

Large sheets of paper

Soft drawing materials such as crayon, pastel, or charcoal

Variety of music

Listen carefully to the music and think about how the music moves. Does it make big swooshing shapes? Does it make small, quiet movements or is it jerky and repetitive? Is it a single, long, looping line, or many tiny marks like raindrops, or a dramatic zig zag? After some initial warm ups by “drawing” in the air, students capture their response to different pieces of music on large sheets of paper. Choose a few drawings to look at and discuss after the exercise.

- Is there a focal point where the movement starts or ends?
- Does it go across the page, or into the page, or out of the page?
- Is it fast or slow? Could you describe it with an emotion?
- Which way does it go? In a circle, line, spiral, or zig zag?
- Can they tell which song was playing when the different marks were made?
- How did it feel to draw this way?



Eli Bornowsky, *Walking* (detail), 2010, oil on canvas

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# VOCABULARY

<b>Abstract Art</b>	Artwork that does not represent something from the world, such as a person, place, or thing. Abstract art can be about shapes, lines, colours, textures, emotions, movement, or process.
<b>Analogous Colours</b>	A colour family containing the same hue, (e.g. blue, blue-green, and blue-violet) which are adjacent on the colour wheel.
<b>Complementary Colours</b>	Three sets of colours opposite each other on the colour wheel – red/green, yellow/purple, and orange/blue. When placed side by side, they produce a strong visual contrast.
<b>Contemporary Art</b>	Artwork that is produced in this current time, generally considered to be artworks made from 1970 to the present. Contemporary art is a very broad term, including artworks made in almost any medium and incorporating many different themes and ideas.
<b>Installation Art</b>	Art that has been arranged in a place by the artist or as specified by the artist. Installation art may be made from almost any medium, and considers where the art will be located to create an experience in a particular environment.
<b>Intensity or Saturation</b>	A pure colour is called a high-intensity colour or a colour that is fully saturated. When you mix a colour with its opposite on the colour wheel (for example adding green to red) you create a de-saturated or less intense version of that colour. If you keep adding the opposite colour you eventually end up with grey, which has a saturation of zero.
<b>Medium</b>	The material or technique used by the artist to make an artwork. For example, paint is the medium used in a painting.
<b>Sculpture</b>	A sculpture is a three-dimensional work of art. Sculptures may be a carved, modeled, constructed or cast object that can be made of many different art materials.
<b>Tints and shades</b>	A tint is a colour with white added to it, a shade is a colour with black added to it.
<b>Value</b>	The relative lightness or darkness of a colour, related to the amount of light a colour reflects. Not all hues of the spectrum have the same value.

## Upcoming Events

### **Abstract Painting Workshop with Jeremy Hof**

**Saturday, February 21, 1:00-3:00pm**

Explore working with abstraction and colour to complete a finished acrylic painting in this one day workshop. All skill levels welcome. For ages 16+, \$15/person, all materials provided.

Pre-registration required.

Register at [www.richmond.ca/guide](http://www.richmond.ca/guide) or 604-276-4300 and ask for Course # 918458

### **ART+TEA+TALK**

**Plus free film screening**

**Wednesday, February 25, 10:30-11:30am**

Join us for a screening of the short documentary *Driven to Abstraction: Canadian Abstract Art and the Turbulent '50s*, followed by a discussion of how the historical works in the film relate to the contemporary works in *Close Listening*. Admission by donation, includes light refreshments.

### **Painting Workshop: Understanding Colour**

**Thursday, March 12, 6:30-8:30pm**

RAG Instructor Melanie Devoy leads a hands-on workshop on colour fundamentals. View how the artists in *Close Listening* use colour, then mix your own paint to learn about greyscale, value, tones, saturation, and more. For ages 16+, \$15/person, all materials provided.

Pre-registration required.

Register at [www.richmond.ca/guide](http://www.richmond.ca/guide) or 604-276-4300 and ask for Course # 917558

## Gallery Programs

### **Family Sunday**

**Drop-in 1:00 – 4:00 pm, Free**

Families are invited to participate in various exhibition-related art projects and activities on the fourth Sunday of each month. Stories, music, art...activities vary from month to month! It's free, thanks to the RBC Foundation.

**2015 Schedule:** Jan 25 • Feb 22 • Mar 22 • Apr 26 • May 24 • June 28 • July 26 • Aug 23 • Sept 27 • Oct 25 • Nov 22

### **Drop-in Drawing for Adults**

**Drop-in 6:00 – 9:00 pm, Free**

Drop-in the Art Gallery and draw inspiration from original works of art! Drop-in Drawing for Adults is a program designed to bring out the social side of sketching. Materials provided, but you are welcome to bring your own sketchbooks. No previous drawing experience required! For ages 16+

**2015 Schedule:** Feb 5 • Mar 5 • May 7 • June 4 • Aug 6 • Oct 1 • Nov 5 • Dec 3

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*We acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia*