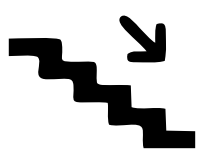




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July 22 - September 10, 2016
Headbones Gallery, Vernon, BC



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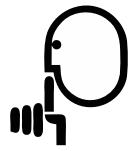
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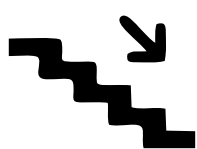
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Commentary by Julie Oakes





Headbones Gallery - 2016



Shh! Good Art Up and Down The Okanagan Valley

Julie Oakes, Vernon, BC, 2016

Artists historically have gravitated towards grand cities in order to have the excitement of a burgeoning creativity within the scope of conversation - Paris, London, New York, Madrid, Berlin and lately Beijing, Barcelona, New Delhi. In Canada it has been no different so that the art scene was most potent in the eastern cities - Montreal, Toronto and Ottawa (The National Gallery). In Canada, historically artists *have* stepped outside of the cities, some right into the wilderness like The Group of Seven or Emily Carr but they still reassembled in the city centres. Abstract artists like the "Painters Eleven" or the Automatistes were based in the eastern cities. "The Regina Five" opened an abstract art awareness on the prairies. In Winnipeg Bordercrossings magazine, Marcel Dzama and The Royal Art Lodge pulled in profile. Alberta came into focus when the wealthy oil industry enabled collectors in that 'frontierland' - artists and galleries flourished. Vancouver came into eminence with a wave of artists who came to significance – Jeff Wall, Douglas Copeland, Rodney Graham through international exhibitions and Biennales.

In the Okanagan valley there are also artists whose reputations exceed the local. The discourse is lively, varied and tales from jaunts further afield are numerous. The atmosphere is conducive to concentration but the air is kept refreshed with new enthusiasm. The 2016 list of Headbones Gallery's Okanagan exhibition bares testimony to this.

There are new artists added to the Headbones' slate. Patricia Kushner's work caught attention during her recent solo at the Penticton Art Gallery. Kushner's abstract paintings are informed by collage and there is an exhilarating pastiche as a result of the bizarre combinations of subject matter in her source material. There is the sense that this is a unique bringing-together of disparate elements that rings true with the contemporary condition.

Amy Modahl's exhibition at the Kelowna Art Gallery brought her work to light with her cool intellectual take on domestic interiors. In this new work, there is an architectonic formalism as if



reflecting the partitioning of perspectives that the growth of urbanization has forced upon us. The aesthetic is elegant and the handling of paint on board lends a sensuous overtone to the work yet Modahl still maintains a dignified, slightly objective stance.

This year Headbones Gallery is adding Herald Nix, who is also an accomplished musician, to the roster. He is a poet with his feet on earth, expressing the down and gritty with poignant refrains. Nix is a quintessential artist who works between the hand and mind with coolness yet ardour. The complexity of nature is not so much tamed as adhered to so that although the landscape has been contained within the picture plane, the wildness of nature is still transmitted.

(AKA) Samuel Adhi presents a visual alter ego from the unique perspective of a committed meditative practice. Geometrically stated, he brings light and colour to dance within the beauty of simplicity. His finely wrought works are glimpses into serenity and because this is a noisy



world, the works possess a universal appeal.

John Hall tames the stubbornness of matter. He combines disparate elements lifting them into an alluring game that forms relationships where once there was only chaos or ordinariness. The weightiness of a stone, the dullness of a rock is heightened to brilliance so that the once plebeian object shines with an aristocratic allure.

Joice M. Hall's skies need no back-story or innuendo other than magnificence. Any sky that becomes an event has done so backed by an action be it the shifting of the shape of clouds pushed by wind, the opening in cloud cover that lets the sun's rays through, the stress of a storm or the smoky scrim caused by a fire. Joice Hall manages to stop this fluid flow of change and initialises the spectacle.

Diane Feught is showing two very different subjects though both are women. Rendered with



her impeccably meticulous manner of using gouache, Diane Feught brings an elevated visual philosophy to the fore as the psychological character of her female subjects cast the mood. A two dimensional Wonder Woman defies bondage while *Her Majesty* escapes positive identification behind her layered sumptuous veil despite the cry of statesmanship upon her head.

Glenn Clark, whose hockey exhibition *Wackem-Sackem* brought in a whole new audience, may catch the car buffs as he shows a painting of a car rusting its way into the past. The near photographic sharpness, evened out by afternoon light, underlines the exceptionality of the quotidian and the grandeur of everyday.

Abstraction is large, invested and bright with new work by Robert Dmytruk and Heidi Thompson. Dmytruk has become playful and multifarious. Thompson veers closer to an equitable peace as she offers an expansive oneness.



Abstraction connects with the earth. The interpretive landscape references of David Alexander with a grouping of smaller works shows his versatility as he historically moves around a variety of mediums. He stretches a base medium with the lino-block turned painting of 1992, *Fan Mountain*, authorizing the ruggedness of the surface with his refreshed image. Carin Covin's work seems to be splicing the patterning that she has established in the past as if opening a rare specimen. Her excited, colourful marks are as rich as a medieval fabric. Anne Kipling brings forward a velvety, sparse-for-Kipling, pastel paper piece. Each mark, be it broad and encompassing or distant and scratchy, exists upon the page with a maturity that commands respect.

There are few untouched parts of this vast globe. Rhonda Neufeld and Rodney Konopaki acknowledge it all, man and nature, while physically moving through the space they have determined to address recording the things that bump their attention into drawing like a



phonograph needle making the sounds from the grooves. Mary Smith McCulloch chose the landscape that has been ordered by man to a utilitarian purpose, orchards and vineyards of the Okanagan from which she has sourced her imagery, drawing on site and then reinterpreting her first impressions through the controlled manipulations of mono prints. David Wilson whose work is informed by his indigenous roots applies his signature abstract/pop dynamic painting style to the landscape in *Spotted Lake*. A master at uniting the geometric with the biomorphic through pictographs, circles, dots, and amoebic forms, his small and precise rendering of an owl beams clarity.

The oil on canvas scrolls of witches sink into black at the nexus of each female while shimmering an electrical aura. The conical shapes of the hats accentuated the long dark skirts while the gestures seem performed in a silence that sets the viewer up somewhere between voyeur and spy. Crystal Przybille is both artist, subject and - as if examining her own makeup – observer.



Johann Feught is a good painter. He uses the medium as a wand to expose complex relationships between his subject and the imagery. *Inspiration Butterfly* contains recognizable features yet each area is an abstract miniature painting exhibiting obsessive detailing. There is a cast of transformation as if a presence has been drawn from 'the other side', a visitation both beautiful and kaleidoscopic.

That the man-of-heavy-metal, Doug Alcock, can achieve such delicacy from shaped tines and cupped spoons is a testament to his artistry. The small bird's head is as detailed with a few strokes of metal and shadow as the most practiced illustrator. The little bird's soft attraction is secure yet the ecclesiastic buttressing strength of *Gallagher's Gold* shows another side of Alcock's oeuvre.

From a more industrial cast, Byron Johnson brings in a *Chair for a Town Councillor* – a seat that is impossible to rest upon. *Homage to an Orchardist* casts a halo of copper light when sun



beams illuminate the tube of apples – imprisoned and golden-handcuffed in a slender, regal glass tower. Each apple is milky with wax as if slightly embarrassed that they have been conscripted for art.

It's all about patina when age adds the lustre of rusts, when rips and rents open to another world like *vacanzi*, the filigree lines in a well applied gold leaf. Leonard Cohen's quotable light-through-cracks are the treasures that Angelika Jaeger mines in her nests installation where rocks and corals nestle as naturally as a cluster of eggs. It is a statement of adaptability, from detritus to art while the natural world evolves as habitat and changes in the wake of progress.

Leonard Epp's *Zig Zag* is as endearing as a grandchild in its pinkness. Bulbous and sprouting it balances on a gold encrusted mount. Descending diminutive buds protrude conspicuously forward, nubile, like the vulnerability of flesh encased by skin. Epp wrings qualities from clay that defy the inertness of the medium. He adds that desired 'soul' that figurative works



historically strove to accomplish with as much fervour as the pursuit of the philosopher's stone. Gary Pearson brings the ambiguity of city grit to the OK with his expressionist paper works. The text is familiar but the point unclear, the figures generalised yet individual to the extent that they feel caressed into being. Pearson, with his attentive translation reveals the shadiness of the middle path while in that shadow, intrigue lies waiting.

Jen Dyck uses narrative ambiguity as clues to a set of circumstances that exist because they have been snipped together. *Notes from the Underground* is the title of Dostoevsky's 1864 novel of existentialist unrest and exclusion. Dyck's characters are rattled, their actions unpredictable, the environment barely stable and coming up from a manhole is Elvis (who plays notes and, here, is underground). Dyck creates an opera within each picture frame.

Oakes' *Red Dot* is between a wince and a wink. With just enough visual information to set a stage, the nebulous indigo ground sets up the haunt to Dylan's words - "you end up peeking



through a keyhole down upon your knees”.

Briar Craig's print using the word-clip *Do It Just* keeps the urban beat going. Steven Lee Scott's ink coloured drawings have the tint of tattoo and more than a hint of an alternative culture creating the pulse. Both Scott and Craig are tuned into the significance of stains, scrapes and the potential for messaging from surfaces. Words become visuals and the etching of a tattoo needle tells a story.

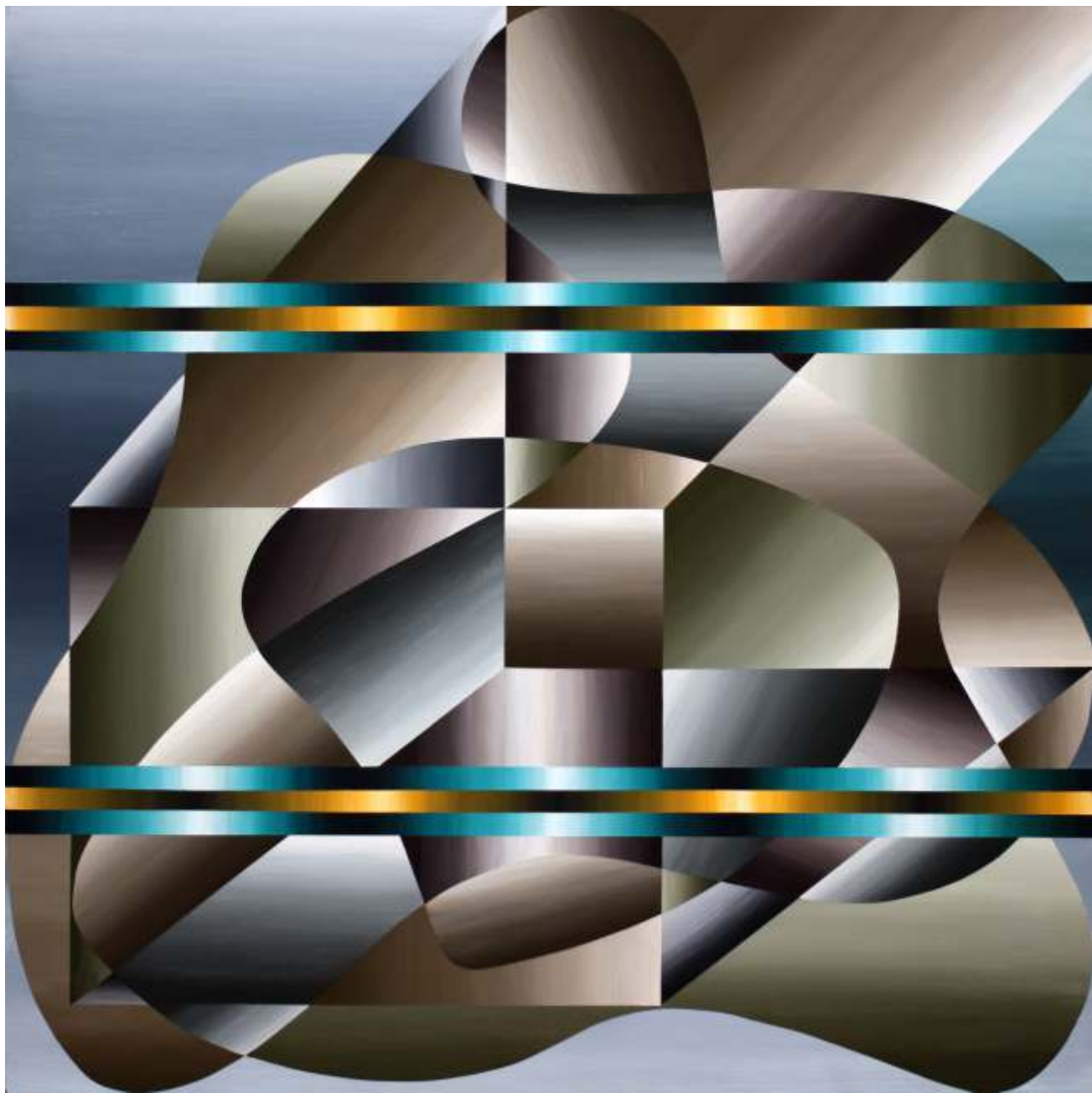
Fern Helfand sophisticates her subjects with her practiced lens and broad intellectual scope as is evident in the curatorial pairing of *Logpile* from 2002 and *Duel # 1, Broken Island Group*, 2013. Her subject research encompasses both hard core implications and the romance inherent in the rainforest. Helfand shows facts without didacticism by framing the self-evident in the material.



Steve Mennie deals in illusion with contrivances born of both pop culture and the iconoclastic. He continues to twist both object and means to serve more than one end. In *Rough Outline* masking tape (which is not tape but paint) blocks out pencil lines that describe a head and shoulders and with graphic simplicity paired with an exquisite ability to depict, man's identity is reduced to an essential - or even obliterated when a man roller-paints himself out in *Roller Derby*. In *Slinky* the surface vacillates between reflection and background, form and textured bands.

Headbones' Okanagan show is an exhibition when works are brought forth from the seclusion of studios and presented to the community, an important connection made from the roots. For the artist, this location fosters concentration and authenticity during the time of creation. *Shhh Good art up and Down the Okanagan Valley* cautions that there is something to sneak up upon, something cool to see. Destination museums, galleries and residencies have become a viable option when real estate values soar for spaces can be had that show the work to better advantage - and viewing audiences come because the word has spread that there is something to see that makes it worth taking the trip.

SAMUEL ADHI
Salmon Arm, BC



Samuel Adhi: *Untitled 1* - 2011, Acrylic on wood panel, 24 x 24 inches

DOUG ALCOCK
Vernon, BC

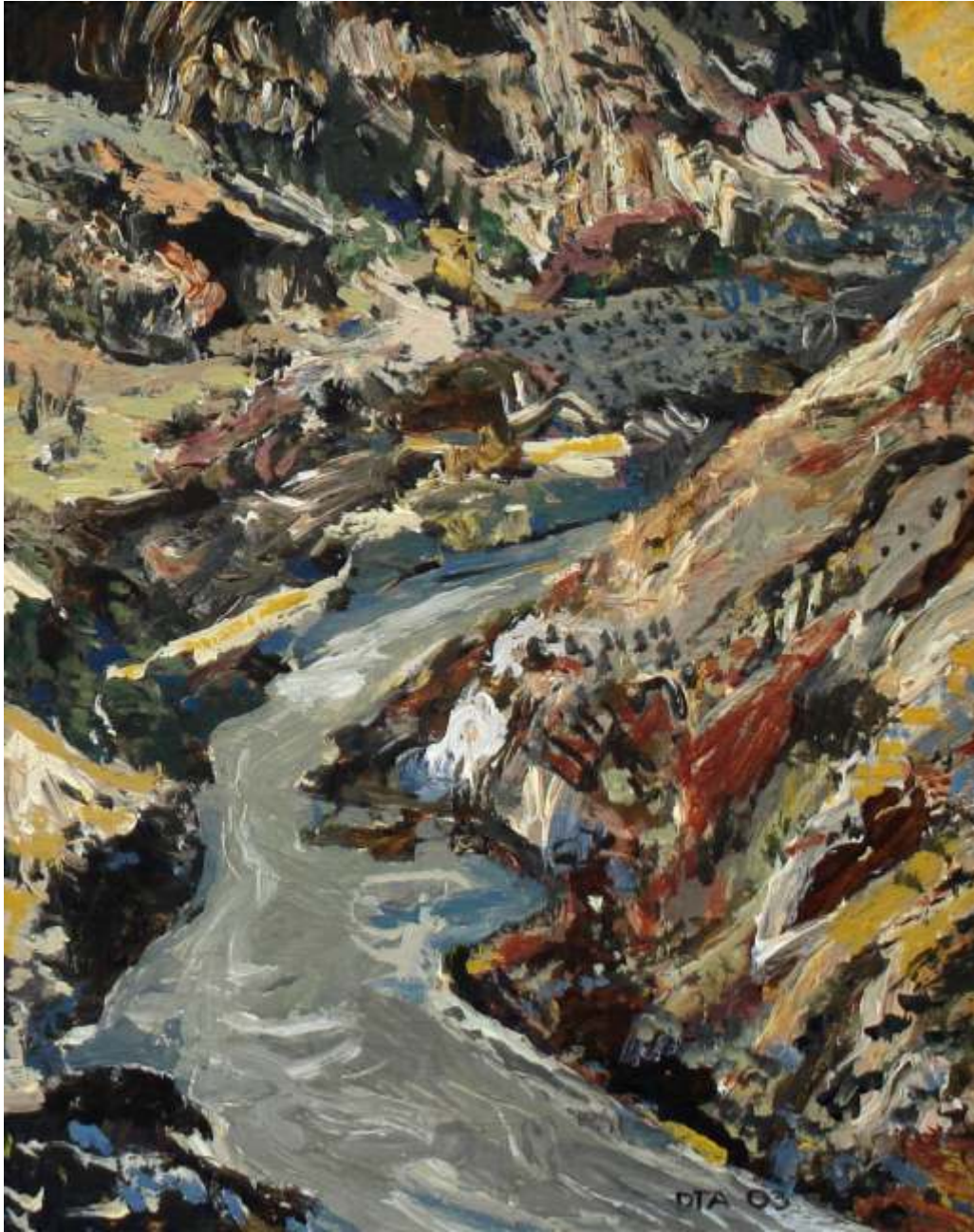




Doug Alcock: *Bower Bird* - 2016, Found, forged and fabricated stainless steel, glass, 7"H x 10"L x 6"D

DAVID T. ALEXANDER
Lake Country, BC





David T. Alexander: *The Mighty Fraser* - 2003, Acrylic on wood panel, 16 x 12 inches

GLENN CLARK
Penticton, BC





Glenn Clark: 1969 Chevy - 2015, Oil and acrylic on Mahogany panel, 36 x 48 inches

CARIN COVIN
Vernon, BC





Carin Covin: *Delta At Solstice* - 2014, Oil on canvas, 43 x 56 inches

BRIAR CRAIG
Kelowna, BC





Briar Craig: *DOIT JUST* - 2015, Screen-print on paper, 34 x 22 inches

ROBERT DMYTRUK
Summerland, BC





Robert Dmytruk: *Untitled 31/05/16 - 2016*, Oil & acrylic on canvas, 48 x 58 inches

JEN DYCK
Salmon Arm, BC





Jen Dyck: *Notes From The Underground* - 2015, Collage on panel, 20 x 20 inches

LEONARD EPP
Falkland, BC

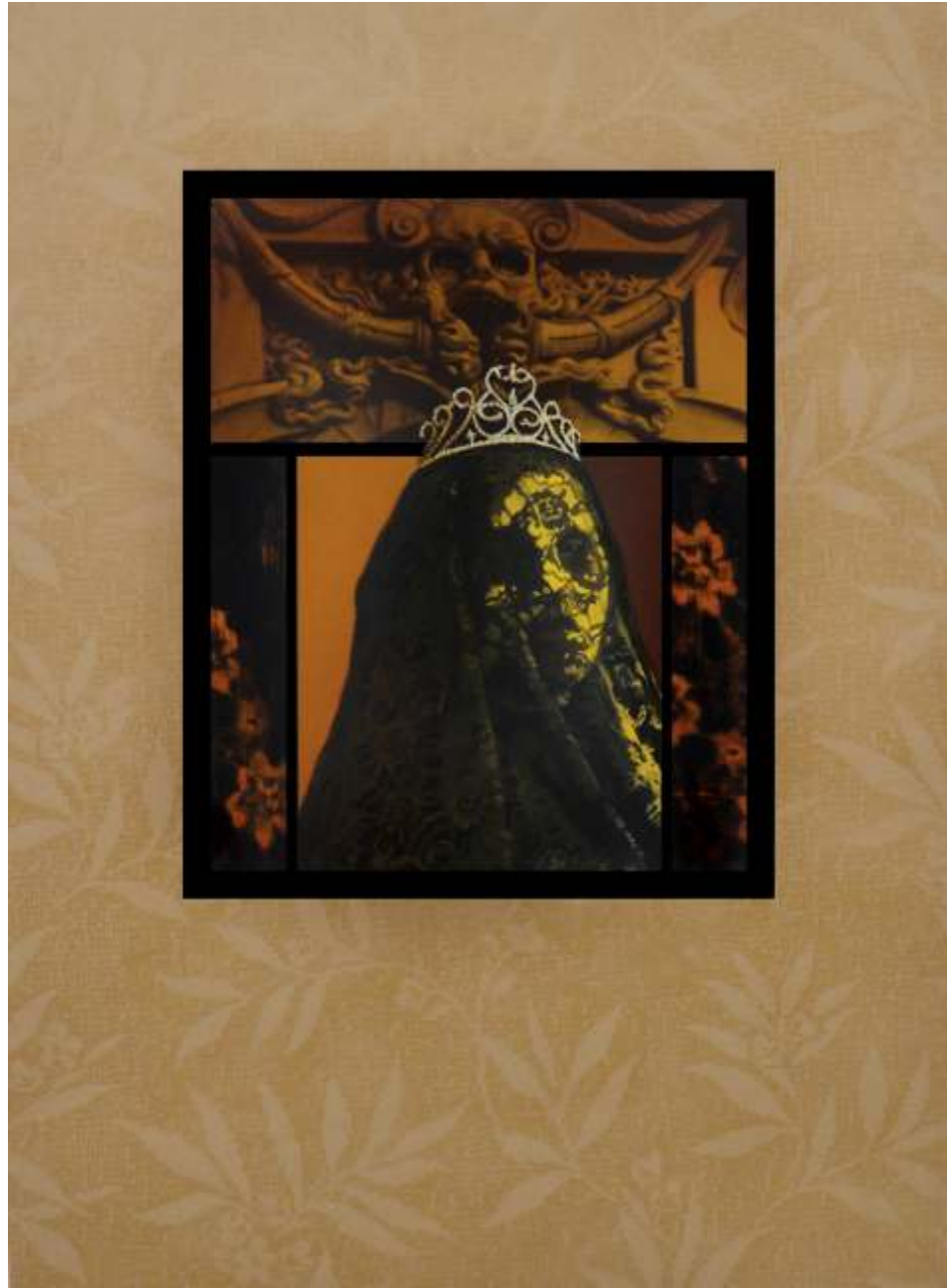




Leonard Epp: *Zig Zag* - 2016, Ceramic, acrylic & antique gold, 7 x 5 x 12 inches

DIANE FEUGHT
Kelowna, BC





Diane Feught: *Her Majesty* - 2016, Gouache & metal leaf on paper, 18 x 15 inches

JOHANN FEUGHT
Kelowna, BC





Johann Feught: *Inspiration Butterfly* - 2014, Oil & Ink on panel, 30 x 24 inches

JOICE M. HALL
West Kelowna, BC

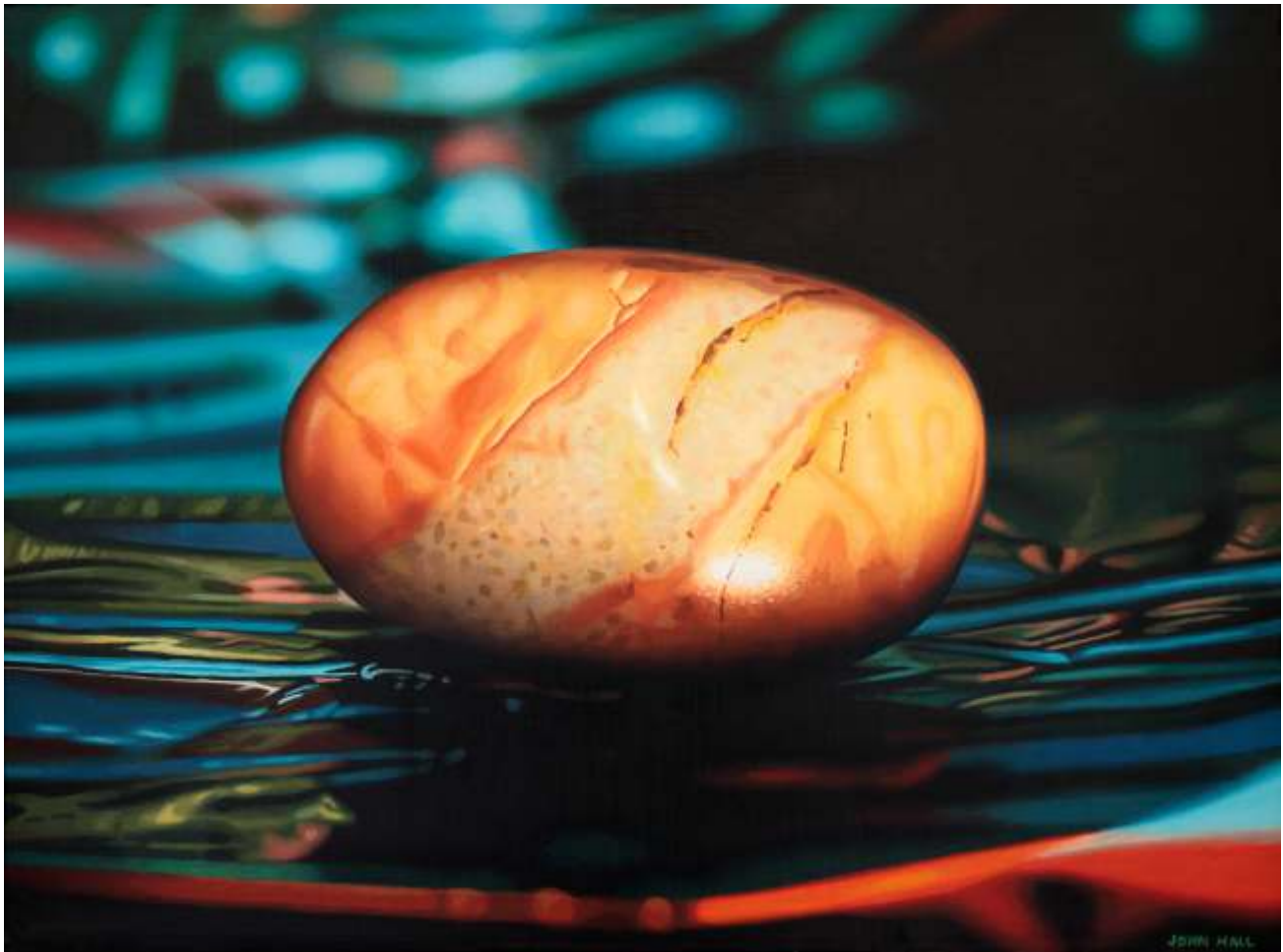




Joice M. Hall: *Sun Cloud* - 2016, Oil on canvas, 18 x 36 inches

JOHN HALL
West Kelowna, BC





John Hall: *Candela, Ochre / Jade* - 2012, Acrylic on canvas, 12 x 16 inches

FERN HELFAND
West Kelowna, BC





Fern Helfand: *Duel #1, Broken Island Group* - 2013, Photograph, 8.5 x 19 inches

ANGELIKA JAEGER
Vernon, BC





Angelika Jaeger: *Untitled Nests* - 2015, Acrylic, copper & mixed media on panel, 30 x 30 inches

BYRON JOHNSTON
Kelowna, BC





Byron Johnston: *Hommage To The Orchardists* - 2014, Copper, apples, steel, wood, 96 x 24 x 24 inches

ANN KIPLING
Falkland, BC





Ann Kipling: *Untitled* - 2002, Pastel on paper, 11 x 29 inches

PATRICIA KUSHNER
Penticton, BC





Patricia Kushner: *Illumination* - 2012, Acrylic on canvas, 48 x 36 inches

MARY SMITH McCULLOCH
Kelowna, BC





Mary Smith McCulloch: *Benvoulin Sentinal* - 2015, Oil on canvas, 20 x 16 inches

STEVE MENNIE
Salmon Arm, BC





Steve Mennie: *Rough Outline* - 2015, Acrylic and spray enamel on panel, 20 x 16 inches

AMY MODAHL
Salmon Arm, BC

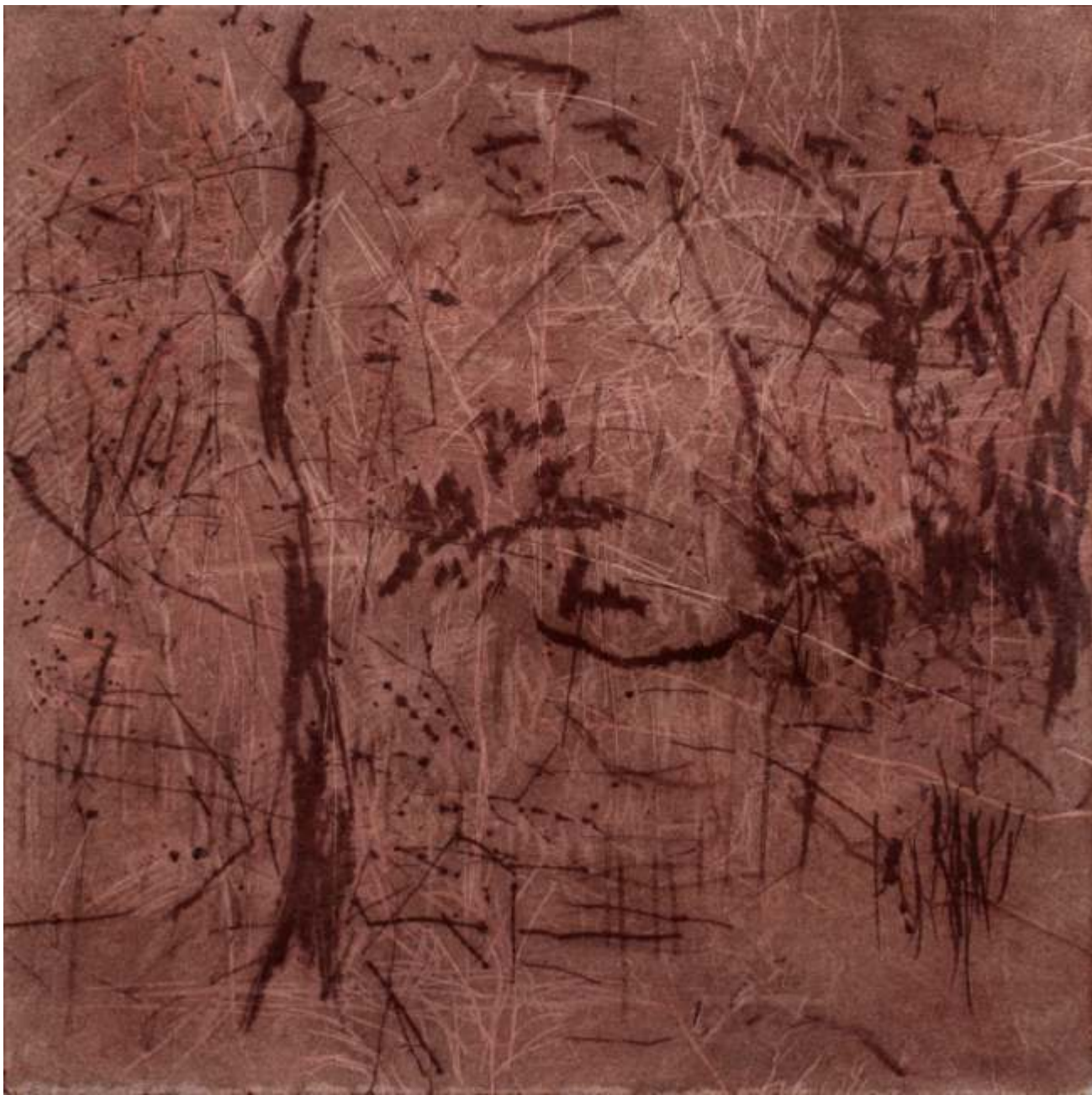




Amy Modahl: *In The Heat Of Winter* - 2008, Oil on panel, 10.5 x 8.5 inches

RODNEY KONOPAKI and RHONDA NEUFELD
Vancouver and Spallumcheen, BC





Rodney Konopaki & Rhonda Neufeld: *Chatham Scratch Drawing* - 2013, Watercolour on paper, 15 x 15 inches

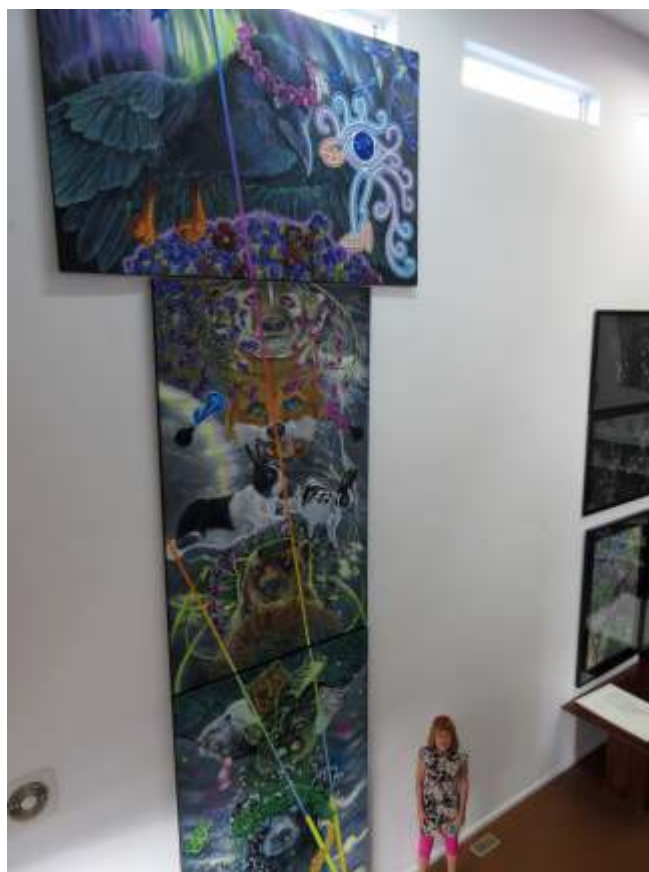
HERALD NIX
Salmon Arm, BC





Herald Nix: *Untitled* - 2011, Oil on panel, 32 x 38 inches

JULIE OAKES
Vernon, BC





Julie Oakes: *Red Dot, For A Female Artist* - 2016, Oil on canvas, 57 x 57 inches

GARY PEARSON
Kelowna, BC





Gary Pearson: *One More Time Around Might Do It* - 2012, Copper plate engraving on paper, 30 x 22 inches

CRYSTAL PRZYBILLE
Kelowna, BC

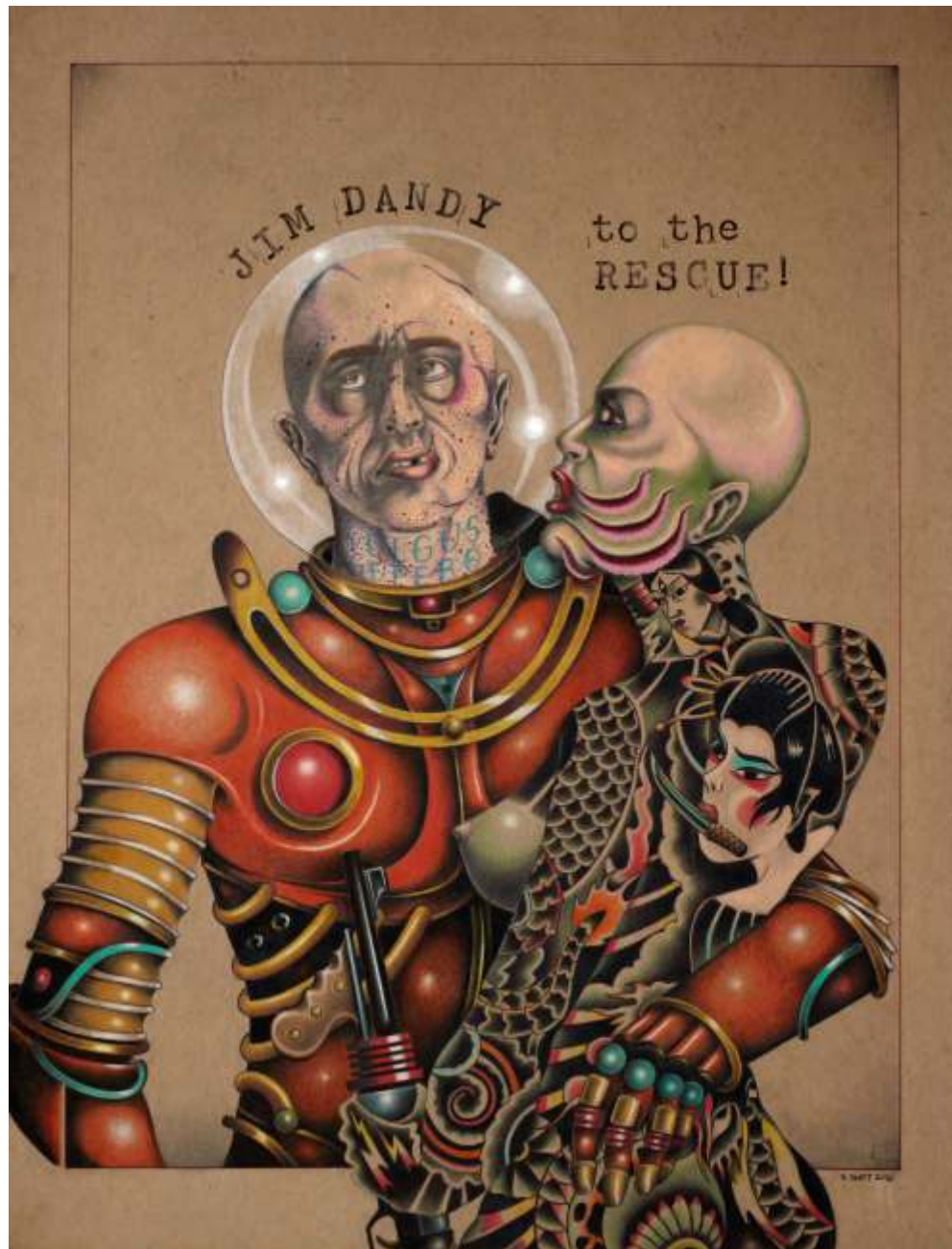




Crystal Przybille: *Portal III*, Oil on canvas, 94 x 27 inches & *Portal V*, Oil on canvas, 87 x 27 inches, 2003

STEPHEN LEE SCOTT
Kelowna, BC





Stephen Lee Scott: *Jim Dandy To The Rescue* - 2016, Ink & pencil on paper, 29 x 22 inches

HEIDI THOMPSON
Vernon, BC





Heidi Thompson: *Expanding Infinity* - 2016, Acrylic on canvas, 60 x 48 inches

DAVID WILSON
Vernon, BC





David Wilson: *Spotted Lake* - 2016, Acrylic on canvas, 66 x 66 inches

FEATURING OKANAGAN ARTISTS

Samuel Adhi
Doug Alcock
David Alexander
Glenn Clark
Carin Covin
Briar Craig
Robert Dmytruk
Jen Dyck
Leonard Epp
Johann Feught
Diane Feught
John Hall
Joice M. Hall
Fern Helfand
Angelika Jaeger
Byron Johnston
Ann Kipling
Patricia Kushner
Mary Smith McCulloch
Steve Mennie
Amy Modahl
Rhonda Neufeld and Rodney Konopaki
Herald Nix
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HEADBONES GALLERY