



STEVE  
MENNIE



# The Drawers - Headbones Gallery

*Contemporary Drawing, Sculpture and Works on Paper*

Steve Mennie  
Handliness

May 11 - June 22, 2013

HEADBONES GALLERY

Artist Catalog: Steve Mennie - Handliness  
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This catalog was created for the exhibition of Jen Dyck and Steve Mennie  
at Headbones Gallery, Vernon, BC Canada, May 11 - June 22, 2013

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*Mennie's Many Flips* commentary by Julie Oakes  
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[www.headbonesgallery.com](http://www.headbonesgallery.com)

Front Cover: *Papered Over* - 2012, Mixed media on canvas, 48x36 inches  
Back Cover: *Foreground With Background* - 2012, Acrylic on wood panel, 24x18 inches

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RICH FOG



Micro Publishing  
Vernon Canada

# Steve Mennie

## Handliness

Commentary by Julie Oakes



Steve Mennie exhibition at Headbones Gallery - 2013



## Steve Mennie

### *Mennie's Many Flips*

Steve Mennie is walking the walk these days. He had kept apace with the large format highway signs that showed at Headbones Gallery in 1995, also incorporating video and an installation format hanging, utilising real highway signs. These followed on landscapes that picture urban subject matter (like an expanse of parking lot or street lights with crows circling).

Before this, Mennie had produced a series of pointillist silk screens where he had managed to breakdown physical substances into layers of colour so that although they were screened colour by colour, the end result was a near super realism. Mennie has been walking-the-walk for a while.

Mennie has tended to work in series, concentrating on a field of study and then

expanding upon it and each time he does so he is in for the commitment. He doesn't "beat the horse", he *schools* the horse so that it works to perfection. There is a blending together of opposites like one who thrives in the big city yet appreciates the country. His work is both urbane and back-to-the-land. He stays in touch with the medium. He disguises paint and places it in the service of illusion when he wants realism. He works paint through scraping, dabbing, brushing and what-ever-it-needs to grant dimension and colour spectacles. The precision of the hard edge work on the shaped canvases of the highway signs or the abstract hard edge of *Sightlines* is as contemporary as it gets both for pure pop message and also for impact. He's a master print maker. He draws with a Da Vinci confidence.

Like Gerhard Richter, he seems able to master the nuances of a technique and then dance with aplomb, leading. In the



Steve Mennie exhibition at Headbones Gallery - 1995

latest body of work, he marries realism and abstraction. The resulting offspring is a new breed. Because he has produced significant bodies of adept work in both areas, the strain from each is strong so that the metaphor of a marriage, where each partner has a complimentary voice, is apt. When Mennie brings abstraction and realism together, they make music – it's a love affair where each style becomes more than in the individual states.

*Hand Jobs*, the new realistic series, grants the wealth of a deft hand from a gifted artist and lays his fine draftsmanship out for examination by blowing it up to larger than life scale. The hands are involved with tasks in some and in others seem to be erotic fixtures rather than “doing” hands. By choosing to focus in on the body part, the sense of the depiction becomes peculiar, as if

endowed through the intense inspection with an elevated status. Size monumentalises the subject. Both *Hand and Foot* and *Handliness* read curiously for the expanded size deconstructs an accustomed notion of the body parts. The originality of shape and form overtake the meaning so that a headier, immediate, visual impact can be perceived. Mennie has an able hand and *Hand Jobs* is a testament to his *own* hand.

The abstracts do the opposite. They are primarily modest in size although they usually have no border so they could have extended outwards in any direction. There is a temptation – evidently for it is oft indulged in contemporary art – when working with the abstract to use a great dimension to entice and overwhelm. Mennie encourages a more intimate confrontation. In *Circumstantial*



*Evidence* he goes even further and presents a grid of miniature paintings, each a world unto itself - engaging, a window onto a unique, non-objective space.

There is an obsessive bent to Mennie's art work. Veering between finely crafted figurative work and painterly psychological abstracts, each piece is both created and conceived, a product of nature and nurture. Then just as he could rest safely within his virtuosity, Mennie whirls like a dervish - about face! - and the next painting is a convoluted abstract that weaves in upon itself in multiple layers of colour. Figurative work

and abstraction are two ends of the line and attempts to meld the two could, with less insight, appear noncommittal - but not in a Mennie. When the two styles are used within the same frame, as in *Papered Over*, the painting of a giant hand rolling an abstract pattern onto a wall; the balance is as exciting as witnessing a tightrope walker negotiate the high wire. Mennie's visual acrobatics overcome the desire to understand process as he overwhelms any disbelief with a brilliant slight of hand.

Julie Oakes, 2013

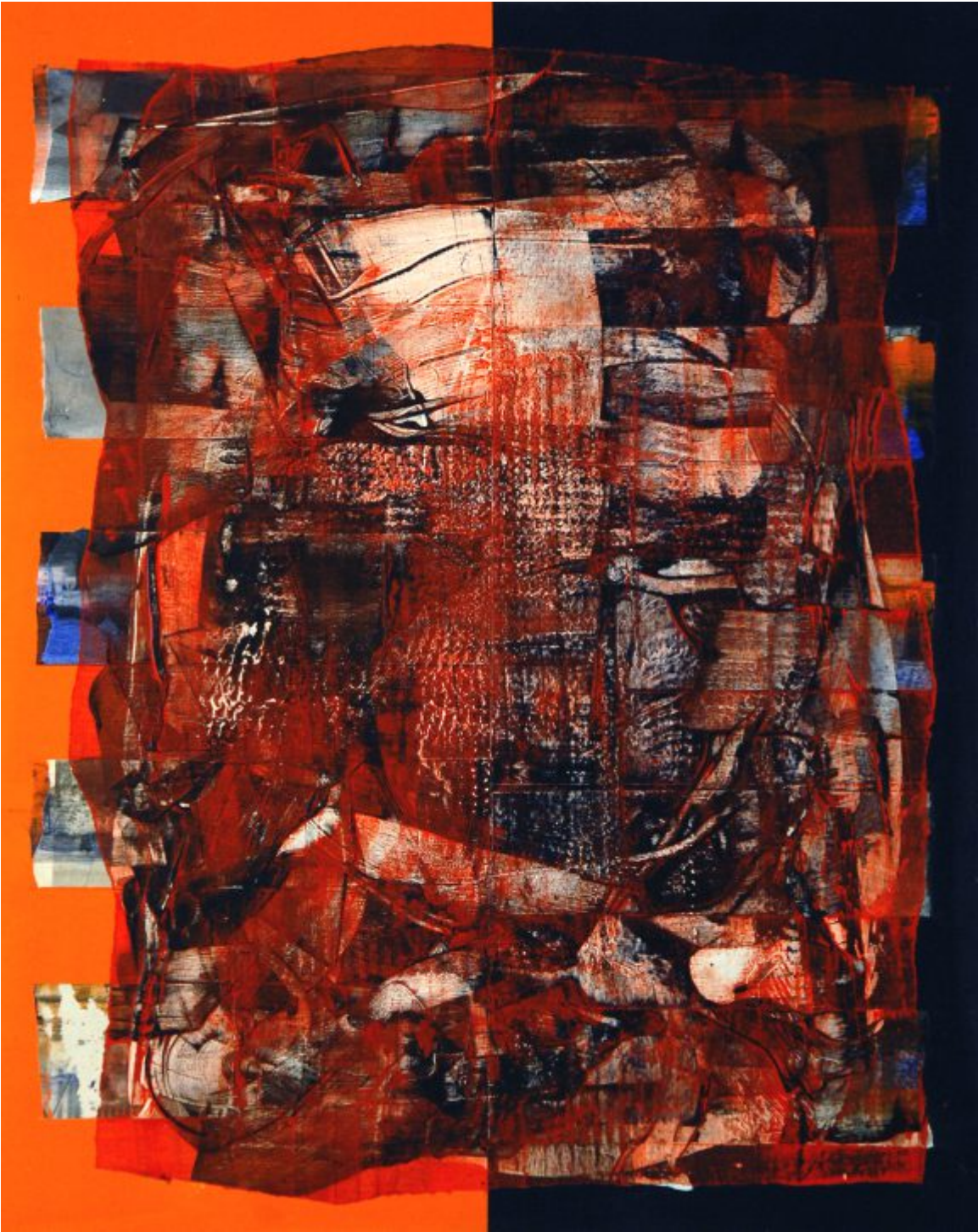


*Hand and Foot* - 2012, Charcoal on canvas, 30x40 inches

*Handliness* - 2013  
Pastel on Canvas 40x30 inches



*Mixed Message* - 2013  
Mixed media on panel, 20x16 inches



*Transubstantiation* - 2013  
Mixed media on panel, 24x18 inches



*Viewpoint - 2012*

Mixed media on panel, 24x18 inches





*Pinstripe* - 2013

India ink and acrylic on paper, 13x11 inches



*Guilt Edged* - 2013

India ink and acrylic on paper, 13x11 inches



*Back to Back - 2012*  
Mixed media on panel, 24x20 inches



*Strange Manifestation* - 2013  
Mixed media on panel, 18x24 inches





*Framed Energy* - 2013

India ink and acrylic on paper, 14x11 inches

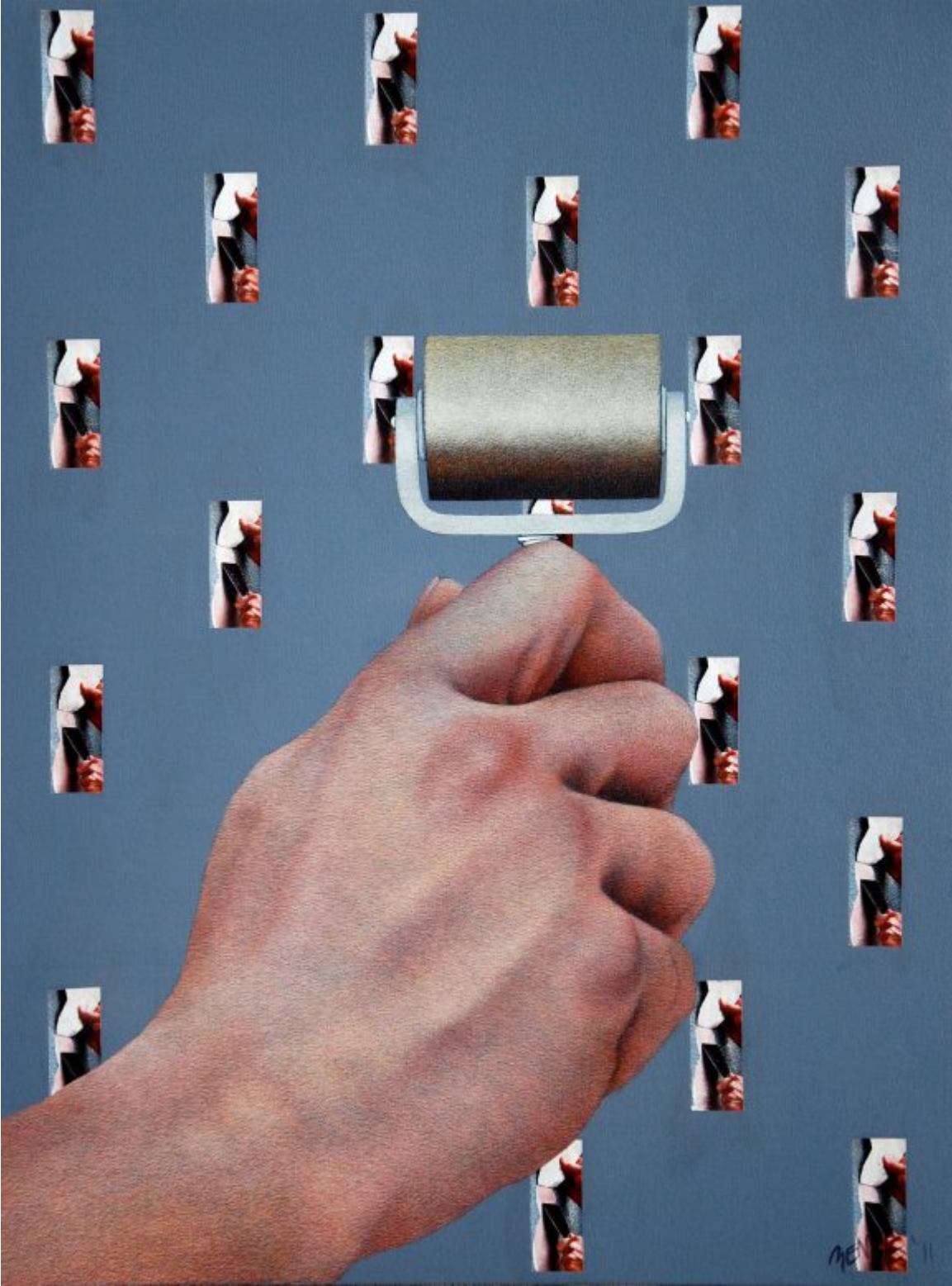


*Hand Done - 2013*

Mixed media on panel, 20x16 inches



*Papered Over* - 2012  
Mixed media on canvas, 48x36 inches



*Sightlines* - 2012

Acrylic on canvas on panel, 40x31 inches

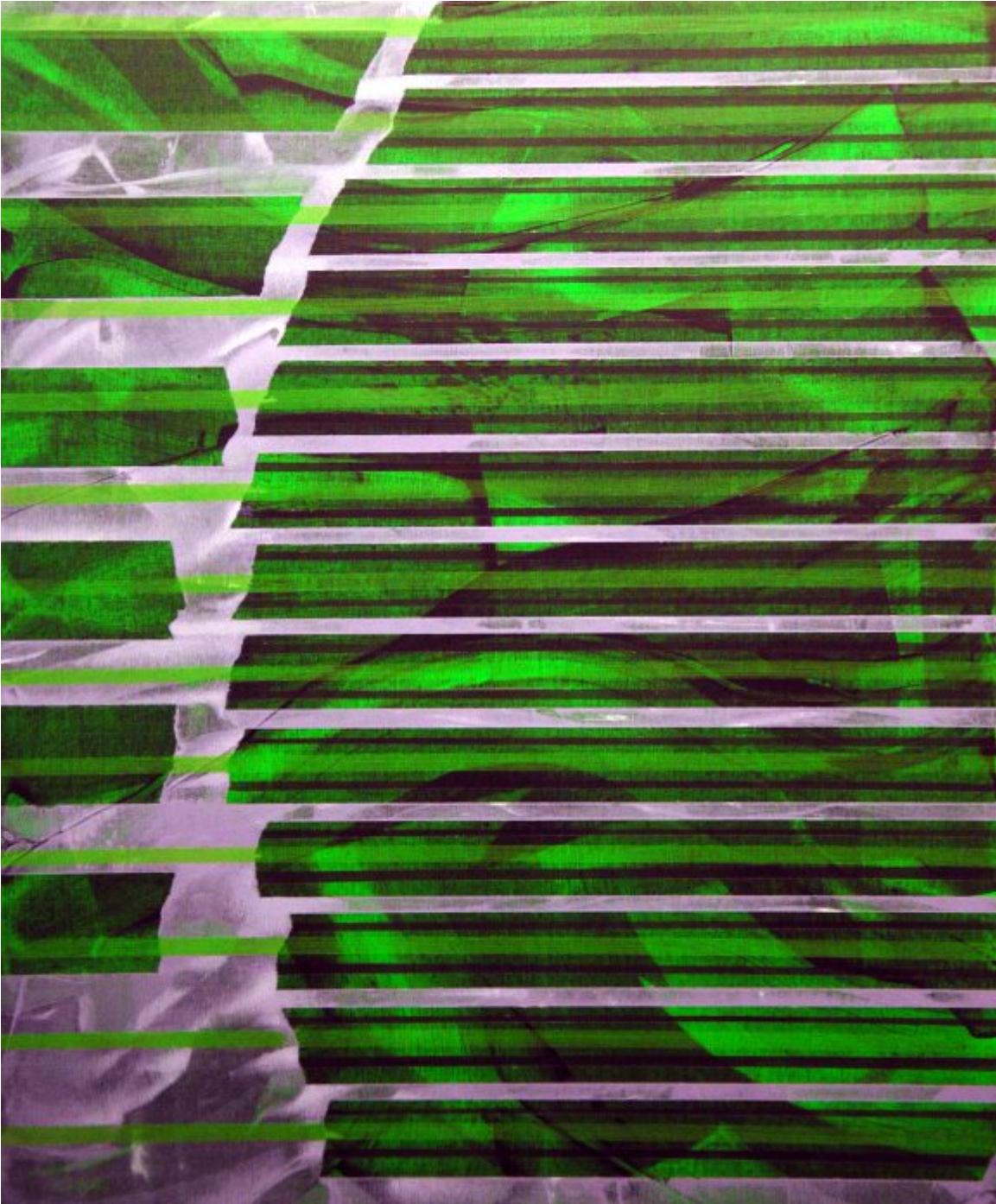




*Foreground With Background* - 2012  
Acrylic on wood panel, 24x18 inches



*Digital Estuary* - 2012  
Acrylic on wood panel, 24x20 inches



*Cloud Chamber* - 2013  
Acrylic on wood panel, 24x20 inches



*Waterborne* - 2012  
Acrylic on wood panel, 30x40 inches





*Ink Jet - 2013*  
Acrylic on wood panel, 36x36 inches



*Inside out* - 2013  
Acrylic on wood panel, 36x36 inches



*Dancing Bear Abstract* - 2013  
Acrylic on wood panel, 36x36 inches



*Royal Flush* - 2013  
Acrylic on wood panel, 30x40 inches





*Foliation* - 2013  
Acrylic on wood panel, 30x40 inches



*Shroud* - 2013  
Acrylic on paper, 13x12 inches



*Outer Limits* - 2013  
Acrylic on panel, 14x17 inches



*Untitled - 2006*

Mixed media on canvas, 33x41 inches





*Stretched Truth* - 2006  
Acrylic & collage on canvas, 33x41 inches



*Do Not Adjust Your Set* - 2003  
Acrylic & collage on canvas, 38x48 inches



*Abstract Light* - 2006  
Acrylic on canvas, 31x41 inches



*Untitled - 2008*

Acrylic on Masonite panel, 14x17 inches





*Circumstantial Evidence* - 2013  
Mixed media on panel, 36x36 inches





Steve Mennie with Jen Dyck - *Salmon Arm Studio*, 2013

## STEVE MENNIE

Born Revelstoke, British Columbia. 1945-  
1968 Ontario College of Art, Toronto Ontario

### COLLECTIONS

Weyerhaeuser Canada Ltd.  
B. C. Telephone  
B.C. Lottery Corporation  
Bronfman Collection, Montreal, QC  
Connor Clarke and Company, Toronto, ON  
Chaudhuri Collection  
Ernst and Young, Toronto, ON  
Burnaby Art Gallery, Burnaby BC  
Kamloops Art Gallery, Kamloops BC  
Edmonton Art Gallery, Edmonton, AB  
Westin Hotels, Whistler BC  
Prestige Inns, Salmon Arm BC

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2013 Headbones Gallery, Vernon BC, "Jen Dyck & Steve Mennie" - catalogue  
2011 Salmon Arm Art Gallery, Salmon Arm BC, "The Mechanics of Abstraction"  
2000 John Ramsay Gallery, Vancouver BC, "Recent Work Porch Furniture Series"  
1999 John Ramsay Gallery, Vancouver BC, "Recent Work"  
Vernon Art Gallery, Vernon, BC, "Domestic Exotica"  
1998 Salmon Arm Art Gallery, Salmon Arm, BC  
Headbones Gallery, Vernon, BC, "New Paintings"  
1997 Oasis Gallery, Kamloops, BC, "Isolated Incidence"  
1996 Langham Cultural Centre, Kaslo, BC, (serigraphic exhibition)  
Kamloops Public Art Gallery, Kamloops, BC, "Fish Princess"  
1995 Headbones Gallery, Vernon, BC, "Following Directions"  
1994 Centre d'Exposition du Vieux Palais, St. Jerome, QC, "Following Directions"  
1993 Amelia Douglas College Gallery, New Westminster, BC, "Following Directions"  
Smash Gallery, Vancouver, BC, "Following Directions"  
1992 Kamloops Public Art Gallery, Kamloops, BC, "Following Directions"  
1987 Grace Gallery, Vancouver, BC  
1986 Bonnie Kagan Gallery, Toronto, ON  
1984 Burnaby Art Gallery, Burnaby, BC  
1983 Graffiti Gallery, Vancouver, BC  
1980 Hett Gallery, Edmonton, AB  
1979 Devooght Galleries, Vancouver, BC

## **GROUP EXHIBITIONS**

- 2013 Wallace Gallery, Calgary, AB, "Six Artists Exploring Abstraction"
- 2012 Headbones Gallery, Vernon, BC, "Okanicon Iconagan"  
Salmon Arm Art Gallery, Salmon Arm BC, "Peak Year"
- 2011 Headbones Gallery, Vernon, BC, "Okanagan Eyes Okanagan Wise Okanagan-ise"  
SAGA Public Art Gallery, Salmon Arm, BC, "The Mechanics of Abstraction"
- 2010 Wallace Gallery, Calgary, AB  
Headbones Gallery, Toronto, ON, "Pulled (A Print Show)"
- 2002 Art Ark Gallery, Kelowna, BC, (duo exhibition) "Abstract and Metal"  
Agnes Bugera Gallery, Edmonton, AB
- 2001 Salmon Arm Art Gallery, Salmon Arm, BC, (duo exhibition) "Co-Incidence"
- 1999 Edmonton Art Gallery, Edmonton, AB, (group show) "  
The Future Ain't What It Used to Be: The Victoria School Exhibition Project"
- 1998 Kamloops Art Gallery, Kamloops, BC, "Home Base"  
Vernon Public Art Gallery, Vernon, BC, "Hockey Night in Canada"
- 1997 Headbones Gallery, Vernon, BC (duo exhibition with Jim Tanner)
- 1996 Surrey Art Gallery, Surrey, BC, "The Grass Menagerie"
- 1993 New Works Gallery, University of Illinois at Chicago, "Visible Language"
- 1991 Oasis Gallery, Kamloops BC, "Little Picture Show"
- 1988 Kamloops Public Art Gallery, Kamloops BC
- 1984 Kamloops Public Art Gallery, Kamloops, BC, "A Fish Story"
- 1980 Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, BC, "Stolen Moments"  
2nd Biannual Canadian Print and Drawing Council
- 1979 Burnaby Art Gallery, Burnaby, BC, "Kids and Cows"

HEADBONES GALLERY

*Presents*

***Jen Dyck***  
***& Steve Mennie***

Exhibition

May 11 - June 22, 2013

Opening Reception 6-9 pm

Saturday, May 9, 2013

6700 Old Kamloops Rd., Vernon, BC V1H 1P8

Tel: 250-542-8987

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**Hours: Tue-Sat 12-6pm**

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