



Dianna Musgrave (Canadian | canadienne, b. | née 1983), Mahler - Das Lied von der Erde (The Song of the Earth) | Mahler - Das Lied von der Erde (Le chant de la terre), 2007, acrylic on canvas | acrylique sur toile, 114,3 x 228,6. Purchased with funds from Greenarm Management Ltd | acheté avec des fonds de Greenarm Management.

off the
grio

commerce avec succès, le galeriste aura des liens avec des entreprises, des institutions publiques, des fondations et des agences gouvernementales et devra avoir établi une solide clientèle de base toujours grandissante. De nombreux galeristes, par peur d'avoir à fermer leurs portes, choisissent de ne pas prendre de risque et de fournir à leurs clients le même genre d'esthétique d'une année à l'autre. Un jeune couple est un jour venu nous voir, ils avaient reçu à leur mariage trois aquarelles originales presque identiques représentant plus ou moins le même bouquet de fleurs rosâtres, disposé dans un petit vase en verre flottant dans l'espace. En les regardant de plus près, nous voyions clairement que l'une des pièces avait été peinte par un enseignant de cours d'art et les deux autres, par deux personnes différentes. Le jeune couple qui voulait commencer à collectionner l'art voulait montrer les pièces comme triptyque et les faire encadrer ensemble. Depuis, au moins une demi-douzaine d'exemples de ce genre ont été vus dans différents endroits dans la ville. Il est évident que ces aquarelles sont facilement négociables et recherchées depuis des années. De nombreux collectionneurs n'aiment pas sortir des sentiers battus.

Deanna Musgrave, jeune peintre abstraite connaissant un grand succès, a commencé sa carrière professionnelle dans la série

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who must know what he is doing at every stage in the growth of a painting. He prefers, in fact to develop four or five paintings on a similar theme at once, allowing one to help the other, until one or two are judged satisfactory. Yet despite his hard self-discipline and reluctance to free-paint, he has roamed from realism to abstraction and back again at will, and has demonstrated, in addition to an expert technical skill, that he possesses a highly intellectual approach to painting."⁴⁶

Harris was instrumental in bringing to Sackville the Canadian Group of Painters exhibition in 1948, which at that time included both abstract and semi-abstract works. He also helped to bring to the Canadian Abstract Exhibition, the first national survey of Canadian abstract painting, which was organized in 1952 by former eleven member Alexandra Luke. His commitment to abstraction is expressed in his own words: "Being a relatively unbounded and unlimited field of creative expression, [abstraction] is the most stimulating; it yields unexpected pleasure in the techniques, and at the same time demands a greater degree of discipline."⁴⁷

Although the Fine Art Department at Mount Allison University was often associated with Maritime Realism through the work of students like Colville, Christopher Pratt, Mary Pratt, and Tom Pratt, its program has long attempted to nurture in its students understanding and appreciation of the pluralism of contemporary art of the day. It has also produced alumni like Don Pentz, Nancy Stevens, and other artists who could be considered abstract painters. After Harris's tenure, an engagement with abstraction and other diverse contemporary art practices was reinforced by the new head of the department, Department faculty member John Asimakos, and Harold Feist, who was in charge from 1975 to 1979, who brought 1970s colour field painting to Mount Allison. In addition, over the years visiting artists

included Doug Haynes, William Ronald, Marcel Barbeau, and various other prominent Canadian abstract painters.

Deanna Musgrave, who graduated from Mount Allison University in 2005, notes that it was during her third year of the bachelor of fine arts program when she made her first abstract painting. Her interests had been leaning more towards the qualities of light in 19th century romantic landscape painting than in abstract painting, until she was given an assignment by her professor. As she recalls: "The assignment was to create a painting of visual music, a genre I was already interested in, but had only explored in a representational way up to that point. In the process of this work, I fell in love with abstraction and the non-objective, realizing that what attracted me to strong representational paintings, were the same elements or qualities of the paint that could be present in abstract work. In looking at my favourite virtuoso landscape painters, I realized that it was those more abstract areas in their paintings that I most enjoyed, which are often textural areas that embody light. During this assignment, it became clear that the visual music genre was better suited to abstraction and the non-objective, as music is a very abstract art form itself."⁴⁸

Fredericton artist Fritz Brandtner (1896-1969) played a leading role in the abstract movement in Canada. He made some of the earliest non-objective paintings in the country in the 1930s and was the first artist to exhibit abstract work in Montreal in 1936. He introduced the New Brunswick community to European modernism when artist Lucy Jarvis hired him to be the director of the Summer School at the Observatory Art Centre at the University of New Brunswick between 1949 and 1953. Jarvis, who had met Brandtner at the Kingston Conference in 1941, described him as "almost shockingly stimulating".⁴⁹ Brandtner declared that "all creative great art is of an experimental nature; the only art work of

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bright and colourful paintings looked in their traditional home.
 "We love them," they explained, and began to tell us what they were seeing on the canvas and how good it was making them feel. Knowing that money was not an issue, I asked why they weren't keeping at least one of the works. "Because," the woman replied, "the neighbours, our kids, everyone will think that we have lost our minds."

One of the most important roles of the gallerist is not only to sell art, but to introduce "new" art and to teach the public to "see". As illustrated by the previous dealer-client dialogue, it is difficult to educate, present, and invite viewers who are comfortable with a system of art that invalidates discoveries because they have not yet been validated by others.

The gallerist whose space provides a public presence is a primary retailer of art and an agent to artists. If it is operating successfully, the gallery will be linked to corporations, public institutions, foundations, and government agencies, and will have developed a solid, growing client base. Many gallerists, for fear of having to close, opt to play it safe and supply their clients with much the same aesthetic for years and years. We were once approached for framing by a young couple who had received for their wedding three original, almost indistinguishable, watercolours depicting a similar bouquet of pinky flowers, arranged in a little glass vase floating in space. It came to light that one had been painted by the teacher of an art course and the other two were by two different individuals. The young couple who planned to begin collecting art, wanted the three works to be shown and framed together as a triptych. Since then, at least half a dozen other examples of this ilk have been sighted at different locations around town. Obviously, these watercolours are very marketable and have remained in demand for years. The comfort zone is home to many a collector of fine art.

Deanna Musgrave, a young and very successful abstract painter, began her professional career as part of the Emerging Artist



Wayne Boucher (Canadian) Canadian, b. [n. 1942], *Fandango*, 2006, oil on canvas | *huile sur toile*, 102,6 x 131,8 cm. CR of the artist | don de l'artiste

Series that we have been presenting since 2003 in conjunction with Chris and Debbie Black at the Blue Door Restaurant. Prior to the exhibition, Deanna's work had won the attention of arts writer Karen Ruet, who was so intrigued with her abstract paintings based on musical scores and messages that she wrote a two-page feature about the recent Mount Allison Fine Arts graduate titled "The Next Best Thing" for the Salon Section of Saint John's Telegraph Journal. Deanna's work is excellent and laden with depth and meaning. She is intelligent, well-read, a visionary, ambitious, and hard-working. We met with her shortly after she had arrived in Fredericton and had immediately offered her a show and a place in our gallery. Because the paintings were good and reasonably priced, we knew that there would be real interest in them. What we did not know was that Deanna's show would be a sell-out and for the first time ever we would have a waiting list for an artist's work. There is no doubt in my mind that Deanna would have been successful without us. However, I do question whether her start would have been as positive had she not been heralded in the local press.

I have been surprised over and over again that the National Gallery of Canada's purchase of Barnett Newman's *Voice of Fire* in 1991 has never ceased to cause irritation. During a Wayne Boucher exhibition, a self-proclaimed art expert became so angry and volatile that he had to be escorted out of the gallery and banned

from ever entering our space again. To so-called "expert" had mistaken Wayne those of Barnett Newman. Our pricing only idiots worked at the National Gall Canadian tax payer had been royally rj had done nothing other than buy a bus over a canvas.

I have lived and worked in New Br moment, I cannot imagine living anyw having had the privilege of growing up and seventies. It was a time of upheaval time when the commercial and public a art that was far removed from the Group traditional Roberts Gallery on Yonge Str paintings by the young Jack Bush. Inde that ensued were heated and rife with a was too young to understand fully what thing I did know for certain was that, af party, my mother was very serious when announced that opinions on art, like poi were best left unsaid in social settings. I

In conclusion, I can only repeat wh Non-representational painting was one e inventions of the 20th century and even being created by a second, third, and fou continues to play a major role in the visu the new are interesting only as they emb other. That is how survival and continuu we are intelligent and are able to see mor The domino effect of one painting falling its predecessors suggests a simplicity of n us. Regardless of what we see or believe, who, intentionally or not, continuously th

Canadian audiences are known to be day, abstract art is often seen as "bad" and it is uncharted territory and will have to b over again. Art plays a key role in every so climate where everything grows a little sic creativity to flourish while a greater part a struggling to survive.