



The Drawers - Headbones Gallery

Contemporary Drawing, Sculpture and Works on Paper

Robert Bigelow

Abstract (Colour)

October 6 - November 1, 2007

Commentaries by Julie Oakes

Artist Catalog, Robert Bigelow, Abstract (Colour)
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at Headbones Gallery, The Drawers, Toronto, Canada, October 6 - November 1, 2007

Commentary by Julie Oakes
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RICH FOG



Micro Publishing
Toronto Canada

“My work is internalized and because of that I've never been able to reconcile contemporary theory with my inner journey. Motherwell once said " the vocabulary of contemporary art is nearly complete with the exception of an occasional footnote"and of course he included himself as one of those who completed the vocabulary. I agreed with his assessment which meant that there was little or nothing for me to add.

I've always taken the position that the physical world involved evolution and spiritual world involution or moving into the depths of consciousness and that these two alien worlds never meet. I accept that as a consequence, I have become a lone traveler but not lonely. Everyone contributes in their own way and that is what adds variety to life. I'm comfortable with that arrangement and content to be a part of it.

Robert Bigelow

Robert Bigelow - Abstract (Colour)

The term 'classic' does not necessarily reside in the same sentence as 'abstraction' but when considering Robert Bigelow's work, they are aptly applied. He has adhered to a standard of methodology that he has consistently employed, a record keeping from his mind to the page. His art making is derived from impulses conceived apart from any reference to concrete realities. The quality or characteristics that he expresses have the 'classic' qualities of enduring interest first awakened during the beginnings of modernism - the reference to the materials, mark making, and the page as a ground upon which to place the gestures of an artist rather than as a window through which to observe a depiction. His work brings to mind the painterly giants of yore Kandinsky, Klee, Dubuffet and even the contortions of Guston.

Since, as humans, we exist within a physical world but possess an awareness of a spiritual, the channel between the two is, for Bigelow, ART. If art and religion are similar, there would have to be a practice to support this association, an artistic practice similar to the devotions of a priest in order to tune into the spiritual state. The process is "abstract automatism". Robert Bigelow's hand is the channel from which his awareness of spiritual visual realms is brought into this physical world. Each art piece is a visual record of a mind state.

The work that results from his practice gives back to the viewer a rich and complex positivism. It sets up a map of visual freedom that grants permission to wander the spirals, color fields, dizzy depths and convoluted space with an independent mind. I can interpret a Bigelow to suit myself. I can converse with his page, talk back to the premises that he has set up and become a part of the conversation that he has begun. A Bigelow, once outside of the mind of Robert Bigelow allows me to be alive as well, to bring my spiritual understanding to bear on the visual world that he has set before me. He allows me to revisit the reasons why abstraction is so visually conducive to personal interpretation and in doing so, allows a receptive participation in the creative process.

Julie Oakes



Untitled - 20 x 15 inches - acrylic on paper - 2007



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Untitled - 20 x 15 inches - acrylic on paper - 2007



Untitled - 13 x 20 inches - acrylic on paper - 2007



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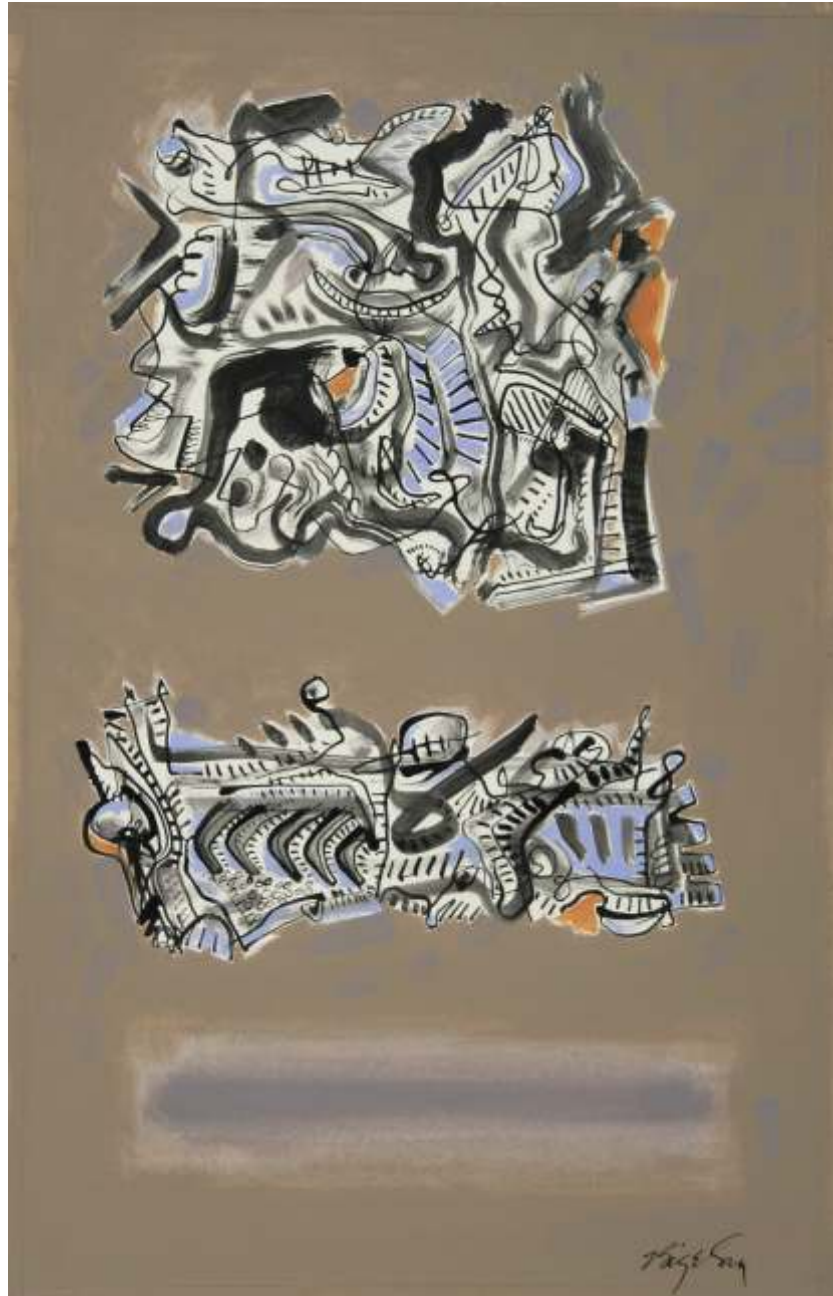
Untitled - 20 x 13 inches - acrylic on paper - 2007



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Untitled - 20 x13 inches - acrylic on paper - 2007



Untitled - 20 x13 inches - acrylic on paper - 2007

Robert Bigelow

EDUCATION

- 1995 Linnaea Ecological Gardening Program (Includes Permaculture Design)
- 1963, 1967 BFA (Major in Painting), Chouinard Art Institute. Los Angeles, California
- 1966 University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico

GRANTS

- 1987 CASA Grant
- 1970 Canada Council Grant Renewal
- 1969 Canada Council Grant
- 1966 Ford Foundation Grant, Tamarind Lithography Workshop

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 1999 Vernon Art Gallery, Vernon, B.C.
- 1997 Pengah Gallery, Vancouver, B.C.
- 1997 Headbones Gallery, Vernon, B.C.
- 1994 Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- 1993 Simon Fraser Gallery, Burnaby, B.C. (Two-person Show)
- 1987 Galeria de Arte "Domingo Ravenet," Havana, Cuba
- 1983 Galerie Don Stewart, Montreal, Quebec
- 1982 Don Stewart Gallery, Toronto, Ontario
- 1982 Sir George Williams Art Gallery, Montreal, Quebec
- 1981 Galerie Don Stewart, Montreal, Quebec
- 1971 Canadian Art Gallery, Calgary, Alberta
- 1969 The University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta
- 1968 Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C.
- 1966 Gallery 66, Los Angeles, California

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 1997/98/99 Headbones Gallery, Vernon, B.C.
1995 Hollyhock Summer Show, Cortes Island, B.C.
1994 San Diego Art Institute, 4th Annual Juried Exhibition, San Diego, California
1993 The Boston Printmakers' 44th North American Print Exhibition, Boston, Mass.
1993 "Collaborative Drawings," Malaspina Gallery, Vancouver, B.C.
1991 "The Works," Award "Jurors' Choice," Alberta Printmakers Society, Edmonton, Alta.
1991 The Boston Printmakers' 43rd North American Print Exhibition, Boston, Mass.
1991 Medicine Hat Print Show (Travelling Show), Medicine Hat, Alberta
1991 "25th Anniversary Exhibition," University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta
1983 "Acquisitions 82-83," The University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, N.B.
'79/81/85/88/90 Faculty Show, Concordia University Gallery, Montreal, Quebec
1980 Galerie Don Stewart, Montreal, Quebec
1975 "Prints and Drawings from the West Coast," Travelling Show, Canada
1974 "Six Faculty Otis Art Institute," Otis Art Institute Gallery, Los Angeles, California
1972 Print Show, Trent Polytechnic, Nottingham, England
1971 "Contemporary Prints and Drawings," Hartnell College Art Gallery, Salinas, CA
1970 "Contemporary American Prints," Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois
1969, 1970 Graphic Gallery, San Francisco, California
1967, 1969 Bau-Xi Gallery, Vancouver, B.C.
1968 The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C.
1967 Douglas Gallery, Vancouver, B.C.
1967 "Young Printmakers Exhibition" (Travelling Exhibition), Herron School of Art
Indiana University, Indianapolis
1965, 1966 Gallery 66, Los Angeles, California

PUBLICATIONS

- 1980 Reconciliation Elergy, Rizzoli International Publications, Inc.
1980 Painter and the Printer, The American Federation of Arts

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon
Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Bob Blackburn Collection, New York, New York
Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts
Los Angeles County Museum, Los Angeles, California
Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario
Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C.
Pasadena Art Museum, Pasadena, California
The Canada Council Art Bank
Bank of Montreal, Montreal, Quebec
Mercantile Bank, Montreal, Quebec
Shell Canada, Calgary, Alberta
Air Canada, Montreal, Quebec
Secal (Alcan), Montreal, Quebec
Steinberg Ltd., Montreal, Quebec
Nova Corp., Calgary, Alberta
Art Centre, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton

COLLABORATED WITH:

Josef Albers	Masuo Ikeda	Tony Onley
Anthony Benjamin	Alien Jones	George Ortman
Roy De Forest	Ellsworth Kelly	Joe Raffaele
Jim Dine	Frank Lubdell	Robert Rauschenberg
Sam Francis	Man-Ray	Ben Shan
Joe Goode	Robert Motherwell	Frank Stella
Richard Hamilton	Bruce Nauman	David Hockney
Claes Oldenburg		

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