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CLINT BURNHAM
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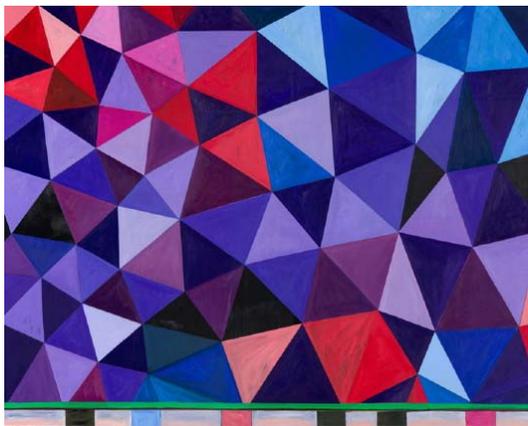
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Paint is a very good - and very important - Vancouver art exhibition. Crammed onto one floor of the **Vancouver Art Gallery** (it really should have taken up two or three floors), *Paint* surveys local painting since the 1960s, offers mid-career retrospectives for Peter Schuyff and Jessica Stockholder, and presents a new generation of seven young artists. The gallery suggests you start by looking at the survey, but I'll focus here on the young and mid-career artists - it's so much more fun to see what's happening now.



Holger Kalberg, *Structure with Track*, 2006, oil on canvas

The first artist is Etienne Zack, who won the RBC painting prize in 2005 and is here represented by a room of packed-to-the-roof studio paintings in which the details of junk and the paint's surface vie for your attention. Next up, Arabella Campbell deals with the material structure of painting itself in representations of the back of a canvas or of painter's tape. Campbell's cool paintings are a momentary relief between the hurly-burly of Zack and the next artist, Charlie Roberts. Roberts' paintings, a kind of hedonistic response to post-9/11 trauma, are chock-a-block with small figures on large structures. What follows are Tim Gardner's photorealist watercolours of snapshots, which, for all their delicate detail (including a nice painting of a guy in Gore-Tex car camping), suffer from their slipshod hanging. Small as they are, they need more room. Around the corner from Gardner's paintings is a large room with two Jessica Stockholder installations, including one she did for PS1 earlier in 2006. Stockholder's works are suspended with bungee cords and feature a pubic or Medusa-like tangle of orange extension cords. She turns the material conditions of the work itself into a sculptural mess.



Elizabeth McIntosh, *Untitled (Red, Blue and Purple)*, 2005-2006, oil on canvas

Following Stockholder is Holger Kalberg, whose paintings of mashed-up architectural details I enjoyed last summer, but here they suffer somewhat, in particular for their underworked backgrounds. Matthew Brown, too, while offering nice images of distorted portraits that he's done some computer finagling on, has work that is better seen from afar than up close. Not so with Elizabeth McIntosh, whose geodesic paintings are both Buckminster Fuller trippy from a distance and rewarding to the eye when viewed intimately. The same can be said of Peter Schuyff's paintings, some of which are from the 1980s, particularly a wall of vertical paintings that are faux 3-D and make the eye more skittish than a breakdancer on crack.



Mina Totino, *Square 1*, 2006, oil on canvas

Mina Totino is a Vancouver painter with a canvas in *Paint's* survey component. She also has a new show opening this Saturday at **Tracey Lawrence Gallery** and it looks to be a bawura return for this respected artist who first broke in the 80s. I did a studio visit with Totino a few weeks ago and saw the six – mostly large – canvases that she will be exhibiting at TLG. In a few of these paintings, she engages with the canvas and its framing, introducing sensuous wallops of paint to make a corner or extend down the side of the canvas. In others, images appear: a flamingo here, a chair there, a bear or dog. The juxtaposition of image and abstraction works in the paintings' favour for it makes our looking an act of understanding and enjoyment at the same time. This is of a piece with how Totino incorporates references and representation into her work. Chernobyl, *The Matrix*, and news stories appear, but not simply as subtext. Instead, current events or pop culture succumb to the seduction of paint and canvas and take the form of images and abstractions.



Iain Baxter&, *Western Landscape*, Pacific National Exhibition, Vancouver, British Columbia, 1967, Duratran light box

Iain Baxter&'s exhibition *Passing Through* at the **Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery** at UBC is a touring show from the Art Gallery of Windsor. (Baxter& added the ampersand to his name a couple of years ago; he is perhaps best known for the work he did with his former wife Ingrid as the N.E. Thing Co. in the 1960s and 70s.) This current exhibition is an assertion of Baxter&'s role in Vancouver photo-conceptualism. By using slides he shot in the 60s and 70s, Baxter& assembles a show that makes him look like the progenitor of the witty, semiotic-hunting, Walker-Evans-with-a-flashlight style that is the Vancouver school. Thus we see here quite a few light boxes dated to the late 1960s and 1970s that were actually made in 2004 or 2005. It's hard to be accurate about these recent dates and when the prints were actually made. Since the show is hung with only the date of the slide, they call out for double dating. These caveats notwithstanding, what you will see are superb examples of Baxter&'s eye for the image, the pile, and the word.

Clint Burnham is a Vancouver writer. His recent article on Weegee can be found at <http://doppelgangermagazine.com/>.

Vancouver Art Gallery: <http://vanartgallery.bc.ca/home.cfm>
Paint continues until February 25.

Tracey Lawrence Gallery: <http://www.traceylawrencegallery.com/>
Mina Totino opens November 4 and continues until December 22.

Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery: <http://www.belkin-gallery.ubc.ca/>
Passing Through continues until December 10.

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