CAPTURE 2014: NOVA SCOTIAN REALISM

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DALHOUSIE ART GALLERY



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cover image: Tom Ward, *Looking Up*, 2013 (detail)

Canada Council Conseil des Arts for the Arts du Canada for Alex Colville

FOREWORD & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

By Peter Dykhuis, Director/Curator

IT WAS AN AFTERNOON in November of 2012 when, quite unannounced, a contingent of members from the group PLANS (Professional Living Artists of Nova Scotia) came to the front door of the Gallery wanting to schedule a meeting with me. It seemed silly to organize another time for a second visit considering that everyone was together at that moment, so I invited the entourage in for a chat.

The pitch was simple: the members of PLANS felt that artists who painted in a Realist, highly representational manner were not receiving serious, critical attention in the province. They proposed an overview exhibition that would remedy the situation. More interestingly, they already had retained the services of a guest curator, funded by the Robert Pope Foundation: none other than the highly esteemed, national expert on Realism in Canada, Tom Smart, whose résumé included many exhibition and publishing projects with Alex Colville, Tom Forrestall, and Christopher and Mary Pratt.

Quite serendipitously, I had just signed a contract that morning with the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal to host their travelling exhibition in March of 2013 of work by the Montreal-based Realist painter Pierre Dorion. I had decided to book this exhibition because I was curious about how the work of a contemporary Realist painter from Quebec would be received in the Atlantic heartland of Magic and Photo Realism. The PLANS proposal became the unexpected gift from left field, the second part to the inquiry that was now on my mind. Besides, it had been decades since anyone in the local gallery and museum community had even asked the questions "what is realism today?" and "why do artists still work in the Realist mode anyway?" To me, the burning issue was the need to investigate the significance of contemporary Realism in the first place. Was it, at best, critically relevant to our image laden culture or, at worst, nothing more than an anachronistic souvenir of craft based practices?

Plus, another consideration entered the picture. The Dalhousie Art Gallery, celebrating its sixtieth year in 2014, is the oldest public gallery in Halifax. The presence of Realist artwork, manifested both in its exhibition history and the Permanent Collection, is part of an on-going conversation weaving through the Gallery's programming legacy—all the more reason to embark on this investigation.

So we all agreed to work together and begin the exploration. It was agreed upon that I would function as a second curator, a co-pilot of sorts, to Tom's reconnaissance missions in the field. A call for submissions was written and distributed, 112 submissions were received and a long shortlist of 43 artists was selected for studio visits. Tom conducted the majority of the investigative tour in the summer of 2013, logging over 3,500 kilometers on his car in an epic two-week period that took him to every corner of the province. He documented his visits with his cell-phone's camera, sending me hundreds of images that I warehoused on my computer at the Gallery. After weeks of trying to make sense of it all, including a strict editorial cut down to the work of twelve artists (which only emulated an old-school reading of Realism in Nova Scotia) we realized that we needed to expand our selection to include works that question the accepted tenets of Realism and ask the viewers to expand their mindsets as well.

And therein lies the curatorial significance of this exhibition. We did not begin with a preconceived notion of what we were going to find; indeed, it was the artists who were going to tell us what was 'happening' in the province and provide us with a comprehensive snapshot of 'Realism' in our territory. Hence the title of *Capture 2014: Nova Scotian Realism*, which defines the exhibition as an overview of current regional artistic activity, but also describes how images are acquired and processed by artists, and how they are transubstantiated into another form of meaning through painterly strategies—and how the artists capture the imagination of the viewing public.

Capture 2014 also gives us the opportunity to exhibit works by Alex Colville and Tom Forrestall from our Permanent Collection—works that are seldom on public display, let alone exhibited together. Installed in our Reading Room, a small space adjacent to the main exhibitions gallery, they include two early serigraphs by Alex Colville: *After Swimming* (1955) and *High Diver* (1957), and a pen and ink drawing by Colville from 1953 titled *Study for "Man on Veranda"*, and two egg tempera paintings by Tom Forrestall titled *The Kitchen* (1967) and *Made Use Of* (circa 1968).

I would like to thank Tom Smart for his sense of game in this project. We became a good team; Tom, as a trained art historian, spoke to the work at hand in each studio visit and brought an expanded historical, cultural context to the conversation. I, then, analyzed the collection of work and, in consultation with Tom, connected the dots, and focused on the visual vocabulary as it related to the physical exhibition space.

Many thanks are extended to my colleagues at the Gallery, Michele Gallant, Wes Johnston, Sym Corrigan, and Angela Glanzmann, for their dedication and support. Much appreciation also goes to Sue MacIsaac who was retained by the PLANS group as their administrator during the organizational and research phase of the project. We were fortunate to be able to hire her to address the remainder of the detailed organizational work during the exhibition preparation phase, something that she accomplished with much grace and style.

CAPTURE 2014: NOVA SCOTIAN REALISM

By Tom Smart, Curator

NOVA SCOTIA has a long and distinguished history of Realist painting. As early as the eighteenth century, portraitists, landscape painters, still life painters and ship portraitists all set down in paint accurate descriptions of people, places and objects. They established the foundation for an important dynamic artistic and cultural movement that was significantly developed over the last century, particularly in the years after the end of the Second World War. The paintings and drawings that are preserved in public and private collections now define a vital part of Nova Scotian history, and they represent a significant chapter in what distinguishes the province culturally in the national fabric.

The most well known exemplars of this mode of painting are Nova Scotians Alex Colville and Tom Forrestall and their followers, who have been grouped under the category of "Magic Realists". These artists developed a nationally and internationally important school of painting that is directly associated with the rich cultural history of the province.

In the uncanny realism of Alex Colville, the Nova Scotian landscape in and around Wolfville provides the theatrical stage on which he sets down eerie, unsettling narratives that suggest impending danger. His paintings also set a mood of discomfort, perhaps owing to a loss or absence, or to the consequences of a catastrophic trauma. They also speak of enduring relationships between men and women, between humans and animals, and of lasting bonds to the landscape of home.

The paintings of Tom Forrestall, on the other hand, are testaments to a keen eye and mind engaging with the landscape of his home and province to find their eternal, immutable aspects. The work of these two artists resonates widely around the country and the world. Their art is easily accessible; the Realist mode makes it possible for viewers to enter into the pictures' stories and to find something meaningful and truthful to take away from the experience.

From the groundwork that has been laid by these two artists and their contemporaries and peers, a vibrant, diverse and important practice of Realist art has emerged and grown in Nova Scotia. It is part of the province's identity at home, across the country and internationally. Realism is among Nova Scotia's cultural ambassadors, and is a key element in the composition of a national multicultural identity.



Alex Colville, Study for "Man on Veranda", 1953, Collection: Dalhousie Art Gallery. Purchased with support of the Canada Council for the Arts Acquisition Assistance program, 1978

In 2010, a group of artists in Nova Scotia organized themselves into a coalition called "PLANS" (Professional Living Artists of Nova Scotia) with the purpose of strengthening Nova Scotia's cultural foundation, and finding opportunities for the province's Realist artists to sustain themselves in their home province. Many initiatives were contemplated and set in motion, and the group formed several partnerships across artistic disciplines to enhance the goal of artistic sustainability. In particular, the PLANS group worked with art galleries and curators across Nova Scotia and Canada to document and interpret the contemporary Realist art that has emerged from the shadows of Colville, Forrestall and their followers.

The results of this activity are *Capture 2014: Nova Scotian Realism*, a juried, curated exhibition organized under the auspices of PLANS; this exhibition catalogue; and the many hours of raw footage of the studio visit process, which was shot by Nova Scotian filmmaker Peter Murphy for a potential film documenting the project.

Capture 2014: Nova Scotian Realism is a contemporary survey of how the tradition of Realist art is currently being practised in Nova Scotia. The exhibition is pluralistic in nature; many different approaches to Realism are represented in the exhibition, and the curatorial approach reflects a diversity of expressions. The work has been organized into categories that describe the different ways and methods that the selected artists are adopting and adapting Realism to reflect their unique experiences as artists, and as citizens of Nova Scotia.

The categories are based on the concept of "capturing" experience, place or ideas through Realism. The groupings include the capture of scenes or the land-scape directly, on site by painting *en plein air*, or by using site-specific activity as the basis for translating or fixing the experience of place later in the studio.

Other categories reflect how some of the artists are capturing the landscape and its creatures in uncanny and magical atmospheres. There are also examples of artists who are creating visual metaphors with the purpose of engendering perceptualist and even transcendent experiences. Still others are interpreting fluid moments—the passage of time—and the transitory nature of life and the ever-changing landscape.

Beyond interpreting the landscape through a Realist lens, the exhibition presents the work of artists who are interpreting humans in the context of the built environment. There are others who are quoting historical still-life processes and styles, are adapting tradition-based technique and media, and are modifying photographic and digitally based descriptions to create metaphors of the miraculous nature of the ordinary or pointing to dystopian narratives. The exhibition also contains the paintings of those who look to Realism to develop unique statements within the logic of figuration, or expressive and social Realisms.

Documentary and interpretive, *Capture 2014: Nova Scotian Realism* seeks to dispel common assumptions about the nature of Realist art by exhibiting paintings by living artists who are working within and pushing its boundaries. Above all, the exhibition's curatorial impetus is inclined to question received notions of Realism in a contemporary context.

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TOM FORRESTALL (Dartmouth) Forrestall is one of the finest watercolourists and egg tempera painters working today. His practice as a Realist is bifurcated along the lines of medium and intention. His watercolours, made *en plein air*, take full advantage of the capacity of the medium to express as directly as possible the experience of place and the immediacy of thought. His temperas, carefully composed and painted in the studio, are elaborate essays on how painterly space can be complexly and intricately constructed to create the

illusion of reality and the passage of time.

Forrestall's triptych of watercolours produced *en plein air* brings subject matter to this exhibition which is not addressed by its other artists – the industrial port of Halifax. The central panel in *The Harbour* also features a graphic device favoured by Forrestall, that is, a viewing screen in front of the main subject matter. In past work, this screen is often shown as branches or tall grass; in this case, it is a chain link fence accurately rendered with an economy of painterly gestures.

CHRISTOPHER GOREY (Ingonish)

Painting *en plein air* has the unique capacity to embody experience, mood and emotion engendered by place. The uncanny Realism that watercolours can conjure is a property not just of the materials, but of the sensibility, acumen and talents of the artist. Gorey has developed these to a high degree, and to such an extent that he gives us perceptual lenses through which we can organize the experience of place in an orderly manner through the vocabulary of his painting.

JOY SNIHUR WYATT LAKING (Bass River) Snihur Wyatt Laking's paintings are traces of direct confrontations and communions with the world in front of her eyes. Her personal style allows for the immediate translation of the experience of reality into paint. She finds in nature's colours, patterns, rhythms, and forms an elegant lyricism that speaks a quiet truth, while allowing the sensitive viewer to transcend painterly description and find meaning in the personal meditation on place. Hers is a perceptual reality born from a transcendentalist impulse to find infinity in the particular.

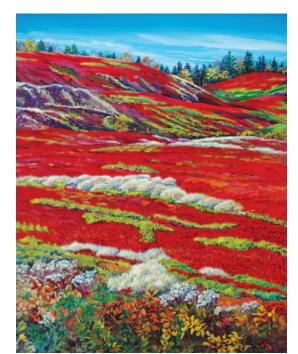
TOM WARD (Indian Point)

In Ward's carefully composed, orderly worlds there is little direct evidence of humanity. Nature is stripped to its essentials, and reality is simply expressed in the cleanly delineated surfaces bound by some unknown geometrical relationships that provide an abstract foundation onto which imagery has been grafted. In this respect, Ward's Realism is an heir of Alex Colville's example. However, where Colville's uncanny Realism may be a by-product of processing trauma and a need or desire for order, Ward's is more an abstract essay on formal relationships clothed in a nomenclature of an east coast iconography of clapboard, rock, sea, and fog.



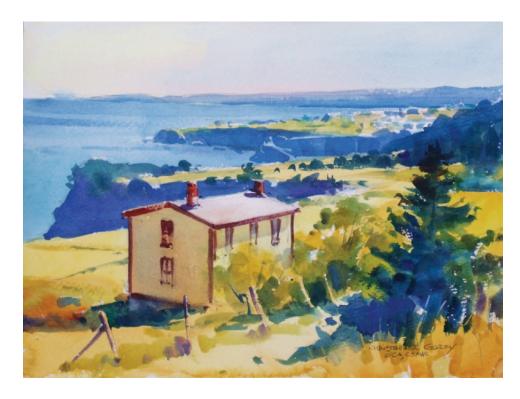


opposite: Tom Forrestall, *The Harbour*, 2012 top: Tom Ward, *Looking Up*, 2013 bottom: installation view, Dalhousie Art Gallery, 2014



Joy Snihur Wyatt Laking Blueberry Fields in Autumn, 2013

bottom: Christopher Gorey West Coast, Conception Bay, Newfoundland, 2010



CAPTURE OF LANDSCAPES AND FIGURES IN UNCANNY AND MAGICAL ATMOSPHERES



Alan Bateman, Goose, 2012

ALAN BATEMAN (Canning)

Bateman combines a direct interpretation of subject matter using a nearly Photo-realistic style, with a poetic sensibility that lends his subjects a symbolic dimension, and imbues his landscapes with a perceptualist sensibility. His painterly *tableaux* are entire worlds unto themselves, orderly, complete, and yet are metaphors of values and truths that transcend time and place. In the carefully observed woodlot, or in the elegantly composed descriptions of birds and animal life, he asks gentle questions about the enduring properties of time's passing.

PETER DI GESU (Halifax)

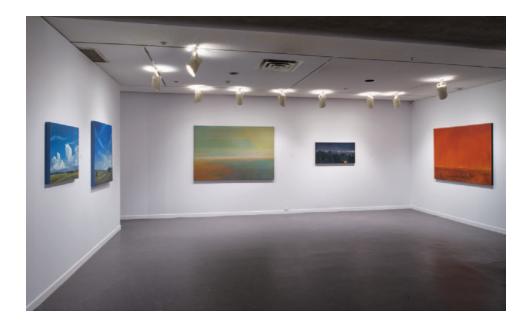
Peter di Gesu's finely described landscapes seem to exist in their own realities, neither in the present, nor past, but suspended between waking and dreaming. They drift along the margins of memory. Their meanings are conjugated by the interaction of viewers who, by experiencing their painted surfaces, allow another reality to emerge somewhere beyond the picture plane and into the illusory space that is a metaphor of existence and thought.

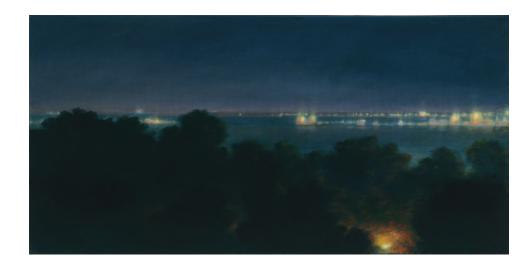
ED HUNER (East Petpeswick)

Huner's apparently disconnected compositions trace the way recognizable, allusive images stimulate memory and emotion. Their reality lies in the manner that their narratives find meaning through the participation of the viewer. Engagement with discordancy defines Huner's creative strategy. In the encounter, he releases new avenues of understanding, and ways to find coherence in a fragmented reality.

GORD MACDONALD (Halifax)

MacDonald's interpretations of place ask viewers to enter into the imaginative spaces behind the picture plane and to find meaning in the perceptual experience. His form of Realism invites the attentive to find common ground between subject and object. By rendering the world around him in what appears to be a photographic way, MacDonald shows how the impression of stylessness can, in fact, be the catalyst for profoundly mystical experiences in which the self dissolves and becomes part of all that is seen and sensed. In the particular he points to an immutable, real essence.



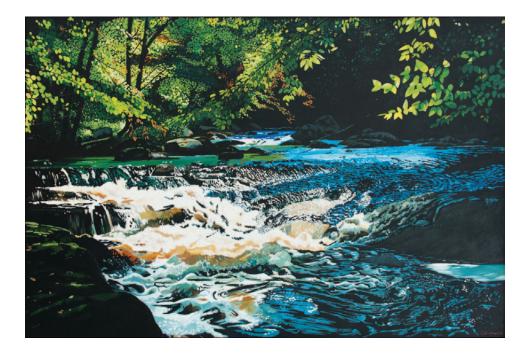






top: installation view, Dalhousie Art Gallery, 2014 bottom: Peter di Gesu, *One Night in L.A. II*, 2013 top: Ed Huner, R*obyn Listening*, 2013 bottom: Gord MacDonald, *Amherst Sky*, 2013





CAPTURE OF FLUID MOMENTS

JAYÉ OUELLETTE (Arisaig) Ouellette's paintings are exquisite affirmations of the way in which a keenly seen and described subject can create calm, meditative moods in the viewer. Her beautifully evocative naturalistic paintings of waves are the result of intense seeing, not just with the eyes but with the entire range of bodily sensations. In the delicate touch of her brush as it describes the incessant movement of waves, she captures the effects of light moving on and through the watery medium. To view one of her paintings is to encourage a profound, near mystical experience in which matter and time seem to dissolve into a common field of energy, light and movement.

PETER GOUGH (Bridgewater) Gough's painterly style is based on a very careful, analytical examination of his subjects in microscopic detail. By decomposing reality into an alphabet of shapes and marks he is able to reconstitute it as an aggregation of atomized applications of paint which, in their totality, come together in the way a David Hockney landscape might: a crystal clear construction of an imagined reality that is entirely artistic and deeply personal.

top: Jayé Ouellette, *Thelxiope*, 2013 opposite: Peter Gough, *Symphony #2*, 2011

CAPTURE OF HUMAN OBJECTS AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Steven Rhude, Road to Idiot Cove, 2013

MALCOLM CALLAWAY (Chester)

Callaway has carved an enviable reputation as one of the finest ship portraitists working today. His work is tightly composed and respects the very rigid parameters of Realism that constitute the conventions of this genre. While respecting these parameters, Callaway imbues his ship portraits with a lively dynamism and light filled illusory space that, when combined, transcend the illustrative impulse and convey a poetry of place that is timeless and deeply human.

RICHARD THOMAS DAVIS (LaHave)

Davis's mode of Photorealism is built on finely structured formal compositions that owe a debt to the work of Alex Colville and Christopher Pratt. Yet, unlike them, he never fully embraces the uncanny dimensions of the so-called "magical" terrain they explore. His paintings point to real times and places. In his use of commonplace and ephemeral subjects he suggests something permanent, enduring, but in the tight balances that characterize his compositions and subjects, something feels slightly out of kilter as if the moment of change is imminent. The instant that stands still in the process of artistic interpretation is about to vanish.

PAUL HANNON (Halifax)

Hannon's urban landscapes take their cues from Edward Hopper's Depression-era streetscapes that are lit by the incandescent bulbs of streetlights and diner windows, and by the glow of twilit skies. Like his American mentor, Hannon finds in the collision of different kinds and intensities of light, playing out in the theatres of his recognizable yet empty streets, a potent means to describe the ubiquity of melancholy and loss, of time passing, and of the haunting truth that reality is as much a construction of the mind and emotions as it is an accumulation of built structures.

ROY MANDELL (Wedgeport)

Mandell's complex compositions describe recognizable places and still lifes. Yet, his is a strange sort of reality, blending the known and familiar with a disquieting peculiarity. While



Paul Hannon, Pizza Parlour at Dusk, 2012

truthful description might seem to define his personal style, he dashes the expected picturesque narrative by inserting incongruous elements into the compositions. By constructing reality more as accumulations of discrete elements, he creates perplexing mosaics that he seamlessly knits into visually coherent theatres where meaning is an elusive quality, captured by simply being present and perceiving.

SHELLEY MITCHELL (Halifax/Lunenburg)

Mitchell's subject is light—the way it falls on objects in the landscape and the manner in which it illuminates the world, giving it substance, form and reality. Her compositions are carefully constructed and sharply delineated, reflecting a sensitivity to a manner of architectural rendering. The realities she describes border on the prosaic as she takes familiar east-coast subjects and presents them in ways that are declarative and precisely ordered, yet are transformed by light into lyrical, poetic interpretations of being and looking.

STEVEN RHUDE (Wolfville)

Rhude begins his paintings with multiple applications and layers of dripped and splattered paint, cheekily quoting the gestures of legendary American Abstract Expressionist painter Jackson Pollock. His images coalesce out of this painterly ether into realistic representations of vernacular Maritime subject matter—in this case, a selection of fishing buoys. Functional markers in the watery environment of the fisher person, the buoys' striped patterns, particularly in relationship to the double yellow roadway lines, also quote 1960s and 1970s hard-edge painterly abstraction. Yet, there is no denying that the form and content of his painting realistically represents the buoys, almost in a one-to-one, life-like scale.



right: Shelley Mitchell, Blue, 2013 bottom: Roy Mandell, Ready for Dumping Day, Meteghan, 2013







top: Richard Thomas Davis, '65 Volvo, 2013 left: Malcolm Callaway, *The Classics*, 2013

STILL LIFE-HISTORICAL, MAGICAL AND OTHERWISE



Katie Melanson, La Pomme Verte, 2012

ADAM GUNN (Halifax)

Gunn makes excellent use of the creative strategy of dislocation to give a sense of a reality that may well be true, but is balanced on a cusp between what we might expect and yet struggle to find coherent. His fanciful compositions are rendered in a highly naturalistic way. They accurately describe bizarre truths made from toy-store flotsam and solidified spray insulation foam. Painterly, imagined, real, true, and strange, Gunn's paintings are metaphors of a world of designification—of things that exist and are real, yet in aggregate are emblems of disjuncture.

KATIE MELANSON (Halifax)

Melanson's *trompe l'oeil* paintings retrieve an earlier, nineteenth-century form that seeks to trick the eye into believing that what is merely a mirage, conjured by the magic of art and the medium of oil paint, seems real and present. In her painstakingly described simulacra of real things, arranged in staged *tableaux*, Melanson joins an elite rank of painters for whom virtuosity is measured by the degree to which truth can be manufactured as a new realism illuminated by strong contrasts and gentle, sensual descriptions of textures and materials in paint. By fooling the eye, Melanson asks her viewers to surrender to the alluring siren of parallel worlds and to the comforting, prosaic narratives that can be conveyed by modest objects richly described.

YANINA MOVCHAN (Halifax)

The genetic code of Movchan's Realism is her faithful and deliberate use of historical oil painting techniques and materials. Her palette and processes are governed by centuries-old recipes for the proper preparation of pigments and grounds, and for the correct methods of drawing, composing and laying in of colours to effect an image in oil paint. More than homages to historical processes, Movchan also adapts a northern European approach to realistic description. In her hands, the vintage iconographies of memento mori still lifes and depictions of animals have a classical patina, yet also a shadow of a contemporary sensibility that renders them both of their time, of their artistic provenances, and as characters in enigmatic, hermetic narratives.

SUSAN PATERSON (Dartmouth)

Paterson's jewel-like *trompe l'oeil* meditations show that behind the intensely described Realism is an avenue for gaining insight into the miracle and mystery of presence itself. By looking back to the sixteenth-century Spanish mystical Realists, Paterson creates moving metaphors of the passage of time and the immutability of eternity. She imbues fruit and vegetable, and personal objects, with a quiet reverence.

MARY REARDON (Halifax)

The poetry of carefully described painted objects in an indistinct pictorial plane provides Reardon with the means to explore the nature of memory and forgetfulness. Hers is a symbolic Realism through which she probes the manner in which the relationship between objects and textures can describe a complex, near musical cadence. She explores how an individual is formed by something as intangible as memories. The still life, naturalistically rendered, captures ephemeral truths through the substances of symbol-laden objects. Containers—baskets, cups, bowls, glasses, nests—represent the physical mind, and feathers stand in for memories that make up a human soul. In the combination of vessel and feather, Reardon points to the fleeting moment when something is simultaneously remembered and forgotten.

ANNA SYPEREK (Mahoney's Beach)

In the manner inspired by American Regionalist painters of the mid-twentieth century, Syperek plays off the tensions between a rigorously applied personal style and a kind of untutored, direct description of the landscape or still-life. As a consequence, she lends to her subjects a kind of anthropomorphism. Her paintings embody a humanity that is the consequence of the way a line is turned, a form is described, one mass flows into another, and all elements of the compositions display a coordinated integrity. Viewing Syperek's reality-based subjects is to witness how the hand and mind can enliven what presents itself before her eyes, and can cast it with a human spirit. Her subjects seem to breathe. Every surface is sensual.



Susan Paterson, Garlic on Shelf, 2013

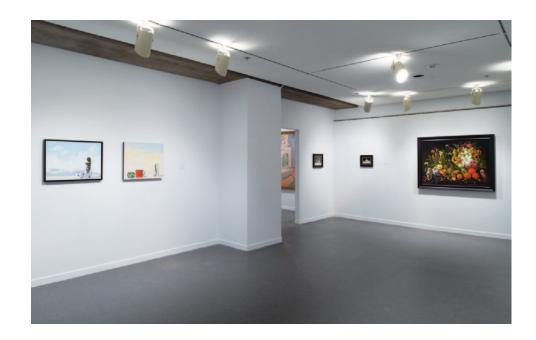


Anna Syperek, My Red Wing Onions, 2013





top: Mary Reardon, *Memory Landscape 46*, 2011 bottom: Adam Gunn, *Unknown Unknowns*, 2012





top: installation view, Dalhousie Art Gallery, 2014 bottom: Yanina Movchan, *Still Life with Two Guardians*, 2013

FIGURATIVE WORK: EXPRESSIVE AND SOCIAL REALISMS AND COMMENTARY



DOUGLAS BOUTILIER (Rose Bay) Boutilier's figurative work is influenced by a Balthusian approach to subject matter. His figures, wrapped in enigmatic atmospheres, are charged by an allusive sexuality and a unique symbolic iconography. His surrealistic *tableaux* combine recognizable elements in a strangely distorted, discontinuous reality. The figures and the enclosed rooms that they inhabit are intended to be metaphors of realities that are hermetic, puzzling archetypes. In Boutilier's airtight atmospheres, deep human truths are exposed and neuroses alluded to through mute naturalism, and esoteric, fraught symbols of the unconscious.

ANTHONY CLEMENTI (Brookside) Clementi's painterly interpretations of sites of catastrophes are depicted with a critical (and perhaps deliberately neutral) gaze that lifts his carefully rendered, eerie realities to a level of social protest. In what appears to be a rapid,

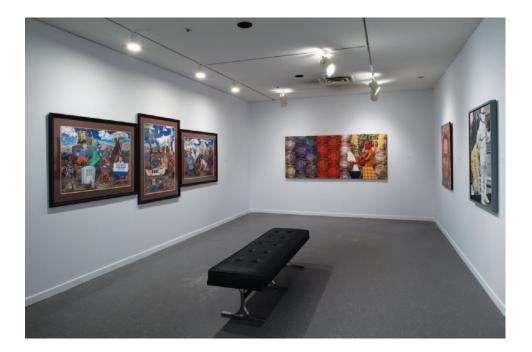
perhaps even urgent application of pigment, he describes visual truths in a manner that alludes to the transient visual vocabularies of journalistic/ documentary verisimilitude. His are dire warnings of the approaching dystopia that may, in fact, have already arrived.

DERRICK DALE JOHNSON (Sackville) Johnson takes aim at Canadian political life and its politicians. His is a critical view, combining a personal style that is direct, accusatory, easily read and which borrows from the visual language of editorial cartoons and the form of political satire. Through his easily decoded paintings, Johnson points to the ways in which politicians can alter perceptions of reality and bend interpretations of truth. Johnson enjoins his viewers to seek truths behind political events, and thereby form a deeper, nuanced appreciation of the reality of life in Canada.



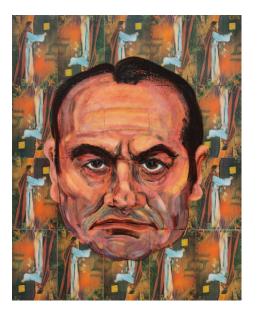


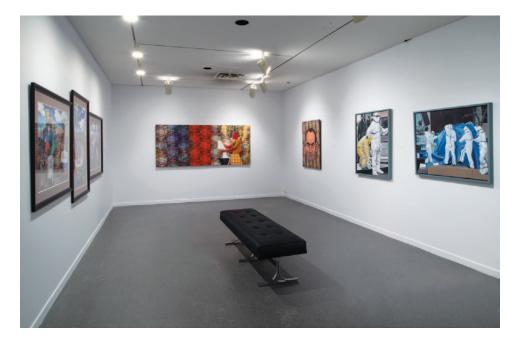




top: Derrick Dale Johnson, *Figures in a Landfill*, 2012 bottom: installation view, Dalhousie Art Gallery, 2014

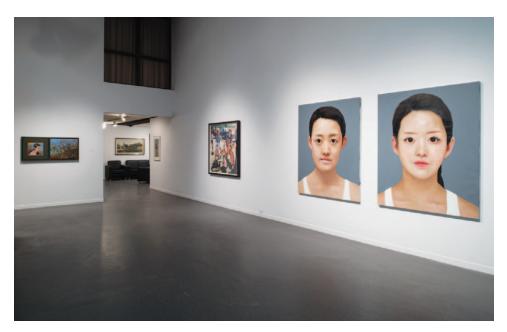
opposite, top: Douglas Boutilier, Amusement Park - Ring Toss, 2011 opposite, bottom: Anthony Clementi, Checkpoint; Fukushima Series No. 7, 2012 ONNI NORDMAN (South Bar, Cape Breton) Nordman's painting references the early twentieth century German Realist movement Neue Sachlichkeit (New Objectivity). In particular, he finds in the work of Max Beckmann, whose portrait he included in one of his painted assemblages, sources of inspiration for his own work: complex painterly and material constructions that challenge the way we perceive art and the world. Through an array of iconographic devices, painterly strategies, modes of representation, and material grounds – among them lenticular screens on which he paints his images – Nordman creates complex essays on perception, the reality of images and the media. His work frequently quotes antecedents in a painting movement that, a century ago, challenged the very concepts of "objectivity" and "reality".





top: Onni Nordman, Object, 2010 bottom: installation view, Dalhousie Art Gallery, 2014

CAPTURES OF IMAGERY FROM PHOTOGRAPHIC AND DIGITAL SOURCES AND RE-PRESENTED THROUGH PAINT AND PASTEL



installation view, Dalhousie Art Gallery, 2014

SUSAN GIBSON (Canning)

Gibson's highly theoretical speculations on the nature and limits of Realism are rendered in the visual language of the family snapshot that is drawn in an elaborately conceptual and systematic manner. Hers is a modality that riffs off the most mundane and apparently random descriptions and captures—of reality, to suggest an enduring, profound truth that is neither seen nor sensed by the camera. It is wholly suggested by the delicate, loving manner in which her subjects are sensually described and presented to the viewer as eternal, enduring statements.

AMBERA WELLMANN (Halifax/Seoul)

Wellmann's painted images borrow from a number of visual languages, among them photo-journalism and advertising. Her use of the different vocabularies is to offer partial episodes of strangely dystopian narratives that have a basis in contemporary culture. Her portrait diptych shown above of a young Korean "surgical tourist" presents "before" and "after" portraits of the same model—one prior to plastic surgery to "Americanize" and hide her distinguishing racial features, and the second after the procedures. Wellmann's mode of Realism invites easy access to the imagery, yet the message of her work is to question the truthfulness of socalled "real" images and the "reality" they purport to convey.



Ambera Wellmann, There is Nothing to Fear, 2013



Susan Gibson, Parade, 2013

WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

Dimensions are in centimeters; height precedes width. Works are in the collection of the artist unless otherwise indicated.

Alan Bateman

Brush Pile at Sunset 2012 acrylic on board 61.0 x 76.2

Goose 2012 acrylic on board 101.6 x 61.0

Douglas Boutilier

Snow Globe 2012 oil on linen 152.0 x 91.4

Amusement Park - Ring Toss 2011 oil on linen 101.6 x 81.3

Malcolm Callaway

The Classics 2013 oil on canvas 91.4 x 121.9

Anthony Clementi

Covering (Blue Tarp); Fukushima Series No. 2 2011 acrylic on canvas 80.0 x 100.0

Checkpoint; Fukushima Series No. 7 2012

acrylic on canvas 100.0 x 80.0

Richard Thomas Davis

'65 Volvo 2013 oil over tempera emulsion on panel 162.5 x 177.8 Private collection

Buoys in a Cardboard Box 2010 oil over tempera emulsion

81.0 x 101.5

Tom Forrestall

watercolour on paper triptych, 38.0 x 57.0 each

oil on canvas 122.1 x 182.9 Red 2013 oil on canvas

One Night in L.A. II 2013

oil on canvas 50.8 x 101.6

Susan Gibson

Parade 2013 pastel on drawing paper 121.9 x 121.9

Christopher Gorey

West Coast, Conception Bay, Newfoundland 2010 watercolour on paper 26.5 x 37.0

Peter Gough

Symphony # 2 2011 acrylic on canvas 101.6 x 152.4

Rising Sea 2012 acrylic on canvas 114.3 x 457.2

Adam Gunn

The Traditional Mind-Body-Paint Problem 2012 oil on board 60.8 x 76.1

Unknown Unknowns 2012 oil on board 121.8 x 91.4

Paul Hannon

Pizza Parlour at Dusk 2012 oil on canvas 61.0 x 91.4

Ed Huner

Robyn Listening 2013 oil on canvas framed diptych, 57.1 x 122.6 overall

Derrick Dale Johnson

Figures in a Landfill 2012 opaque watercolour on paper triptych, 72.3 x 103.3, 103.3 x 72.3, 72.3 x 103.3 created with a grant from Arts Nova Scotia

on panel

The Harbour 2012

Peter di Gesu *Ride* 2013

115.0 x 152.4

Joy Snihur Wyatt Laking

Blueberry Fields in Autumn 2013 acrylic on canvas 76.0 x 61.0 Collection of Lidia Kwiatkowska and Rick Thomson

Gord MacDonald

Amherst Skv 2013 oil on board 60.9 x 76.0 Collection of J. Sperry

Between Windsor and Wolfville 2013 oil on board 91.4 x 91.4

Roy Mandell

Ready for Dumping Day, Meteghan 2013 oil on panel 76.2 x 101.6 Collection of Dr. Michel Comeau and Beth Misner

Low Tide Wedgeport Breakwater Wharf 2013 oil on panel 76.2 x 101.6

Katie Melanson

Everlasting Moments 2011 oil on canvas 35.6 x 40.6 Private collection

La Pomme Verte 2012 oil on panel 20.3 x 20.3

Moonlight Special 2013 oil on panel 12.7 x 17.8

Shellev Mitchell

Blue 2013 oil on canvas 61.2 x 61.2

Yanina Movchan Still Life with Two Guardians 2013

Onni Nordman

oil on linen

91.4 x 121.9

Chi Leroy 2010 oil on lenticular panels on board diptych, 102.0 x 105.6. 102.0 x 132.1

Object 2010 oil on lenticular panels on board 105.7 x 85.4

Jaye Ouellette

Thelxiope 2013 acrylic on panel 58.4 x 243.8

Susan Paterson

Garlic on Shelf 2013 oil on panel 16.5 x 20.5

Grandmother's Treasures 2013 oil on panel 22.0 x 28.5

Memory Landscape 46 2011 acrylic on canvas 50.5 x 57.2

Memory Landscape 49 2013 acrvlic on canvas 45.7 x 61.0

Steven Rhude

Road to Idiot Cove 2013 oil on canvas 110.5 x 244.5

oil on canvas 27.9 x 35.6

Tom Ward

Looking Up 2013 watercolour on paper 40.0 x 67.9 Private collection

Low Tide 2013 watercolour on paper 464 x 679 Private collection

Ambera Wellmann

There is Nothing to Fear 2013 oil and acrylic on canvas diptych, 162.5 x 129.5

Mary Reardon

Anna Syperek My Red Wing Onions 2013

BIOGRAPHIES

ALAN BATEMAN (Canning) was born in Nigeria when his parents Robert and Suzann were working for the Canadian International Development Agency. With his mother, sister and brother, Bateman moved from Ontario to Nova Scotia when he was 13. He is a self-taught painter who graduated from the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design, Halifax, having studied printmaking and art education. Bateman has had more than 15 solo shows and participated in 30 group shows over his 30-year career. His most recent solo exhibition was in November of 2013 at the Secord Gallery in Halifax.

DOUGLAS BOUTILIER (Rose Bay) was born in Niagara Falls, Ontario. He graduated from the Ontario College of Art, Toronto, in 1972 and has exhibited in commercial and public galleries in Canada and the United States. His work is in several public collections, including the Robert McLaughlin Gallery in Oshawa, Ontario, the Rodman Hall Arts Centre in St. Catharines, Ontario, and the Marietta/ Cobb Museum of Art in Marietta, Georgia.

MALCOLM CALLAWAY (Chester) was born and educated in England. He was trained in British Columbia at the Victoria College of Art, but is largely self-taught. Originally a cartographer before becoming a full time artist, Callaway is an accomplished playwright, cartoonist and art teacher. He has exhibited at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and in many commercial galleries across Canada. Recent exhibitions include a solo show at Amicus Gallery in Chester. Nova Scotia. in 2013. and a 2010 show affiliated with the Winter Olympics at the Presence Gallery in Vancouver, British Columbia. His work is in many collections including major financial institutions and private collections in Canada, the United States and Europe.

ANTHONY CLEMENTI (Brookside) was born in New York City and graduated from The New School University, New York, in 1981. He has exhibited widely throughout the United States, Canada and Europe, including at the Brooklyn Museum, Sculpture Space and Franklin Furnace, all in New York. In the 1980s and 1990s, he helped to organize, and exhibited in, several community-based exhibitions in New York City including Joint Forces, Wards Island Sculpture Garden, the Ninth Street Survival Show and Carnival Knowledge. He curated several exhibits at the New York Institute of Technology's Windows

On The Circle Gallery. His work is in the collections of Franklin Furnace, the Pratt Institute, College of Mount Saint Vincent, and the City of New York. His recent exhibitions include *Preshrunk* at Argyle Fine Art in Halifax in 2012, and Sitters, a permanent installation at the College of Mount Saint Vincent in New York, NY.

RICHARD THOMAS DAVIS (LaHave) was born in Middletown, New York, in 1947, and became a Canadian citizen in 1982. He studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art. Philadelphia. in 1965 - 66. but considers himself largely self-taught. His work has been exhibited in public and private galleries across the United States and Canada. In 2011 Davis had a major solo exhibition at Odon Wagner Contemporary in Toronto, Ontario. His portrait of Laurie Pawlitza, past treasurer of the Law Society of Upper Canada, was recently installed at Osgoode Hall, Toronto. Davis was the winner of the 2013 Kingston Prize for Portraiture, Canada's premier portrait competition. His work is represented in Toronto at Odon Wagner Contemporary, and in Halifax at Studio 21.

PETER DI GESU (Halifax) was born in Los Angeles, California, and received an MFA degree from the San Francisco Art Institute, California. He currently exhibits in commercial galleries in Denver, Colorado, Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Halifax, Nova Scotia. He has exhibited in museum-type venues in California, Iran, Japan, and India, and his work is in permanent collections at the Oakland Art Museum and the Pasadena Art Museum, both in California, and the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia in Halifax. His paintings are held in various private collections and corporations in the United States and Canada.

TOM FORRESTALL (Dartmouth) was born in the Annapolis Valley in 1936 and grew up there and in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. In 1954 he enrolled in the Fine Arts program at Mount Allison University, studying under Lawren Harris, Jr., Alex Colville and Ted Pulford, In 1958 he married Natalie Leblanc, a fellow student, and had seven children. Forrestall has been painting full time since 1960. He has participated in many exhibitions in Canada and abroad, and works in watercolour and egg tempera-and has produced a collection of more than 100,000 pages of notes and drawings.

SUSAN GIBSON (GARVEY) (Canning) was born and educated in England (BFA, St. Martin's School of Art. London, 1968), immigrated to Canada in 1973, settled in Nova Scotia in 1975 and obtained an MA from the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design in 1982. She has exhibited her work in solo and group exhibitions in public and private galleries throughout Canada, and her work is in public, private and corporate collections including the Nova Scotia Art Bank, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Acadia University Art Gallery, Dalhousie Art Gallery, and MSVU Art Gallery, all in Nova Scotia, and Lavalin Inc. and Teleglobe, both in Montreal, Quebec. In the early 1990s she temporarily suspended her studio practice in order to work as a full-time curator in the public gallery system. In addition to her curatorial career, Gibson has taught studio, art history and theory at post-secondary levels, and has served on numerous arts boards and Canada Council juries. In 2006 she was awarded the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts Medal for extraordinary contributions to the visual arts in Canada.

CHRISTOPHER GOREY (Ingonish) was born in the United States and graduated from The Massachusetts College of Art in Boston with a degree in Art Education in 1972. He fell in love with Atlantic Canada and moved to Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, to paint full time in 1975. Over his 43-year career, he has exhibited in public and commercial galleries throughout Nova Scotia, Canada and the United States. His recent exhibitions include a solo show at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and the Art Sales and Rental Society, both in Halifax, and the Annual Group Salon of La Societé Canadienne de l'Aquarelle, in Montreal, Quebec. His work can be found in the collections of Acadia University, Wolfville, the Nova Scotia Art Bank, and Cape Breton University, Sydney, to name a few.

PETER GOUGH (Bridgewater) was born in Nova Scotia in 1947 and began his art education at the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design, Halifax, in 1969. Three years later he attended Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. Gough has exhibited in the United States, Scotland, England and Canada. His work is represented in commercial galleries across Canada and is in many private, corporate and public collections throughout Europe, the United States and Canada. One of his paintings was presented to HRH Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh, on his royal tour to Canada in 1997.

ADAM GUNN (Halifax) was born in Nova Scotia and was trained in animation at the Nova Scotia Community College, and graduated from the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design, both in Halifax, with a BFA in 2010. He was a finalist competitor in the 2011 and 2013 RBC Canadian Painting Competitions, and the Nova Scotia regional winner in the 2010 *BMO 1st Art!* competition.

PAUL HANNON (Halifax) was born in Cortland, New York, in 1952 and studied fine arts at the State University of New York at Oswego. He also attended the Empire State College as a studio artist in New York City with Pratt Graphics and studied at Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado. He has exhibited in numerous public and commercial galleries throughout Canada and the United States. His recent exhibitions include solo shows at the Courthouse Gallery, Ellsworth, Massachusetts, and Secord Gallery, Halifax. He has work in numerous public and private collections.

ED HUNER (East Petpeswick) was born in the Netherlands, grew up in rural southern Ontario and received his BFA from the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design, Halifax, in 1976. His formal training was as a conceptualist artist. Huner has exhibited in both private and public galleries in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Alberta, and British Columbia. His work is represented in the permanent collections of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and the Nova Scotia Art Bank as well as in private and corporate collections in Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, and Massachusetts.

DERRICK DALE JOHNSON (Sackville) was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and graduated from the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design, Halifax. He has exhibited in public galleries in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. His recent exhibitions include *The Politics of Art, OH CANADA and Beyond...* at the Saint John Arts Centre in Saint John, New Brunswick, in 2013. He was the recipient of a Creation Grant from Arts Nova Scotia in 2011.

GORDON MACDONALD (Halifax) was born and raised in the Maritimes; he spent his childhood in New Brunswick and Newfoundland. He left the Maritimes in 1981 to study at the Toronto School of Art and at the Ontario College of Art, both in Toronto, and the Art Students' League in New York City. MacDonald returned to the Maritimes in 1999, at which point he realized that the landscapes in New Brunswick and Newfoundland had a strong visual impact on him. His work is in corporate and private collections in Canada and abroad, including the President of Ireland's residence in Dublin, and the Canadian Embassy in Tel Aviv. Israel. ROY MANDELL (Wedgeport) was born in Winthrop, Massachusetts, in 1942. He graduated from the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston with a BFA in painting in 1966 and from Pennsylvania State University in University Park, PA in 1968 with an MFA in painting. In 1972 he immigrated to Canada and became a citizen in 1980. In 1981 the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia organized a retrospective travelling exhibition of his work. From 1975 to 1995 he exhibited at Kastel Gallery in Montreal, Quebec, and in 1985 had a show at the Duke of Argyle Gallery in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He exhibits his work at Zwickers Gallery in Halifax and at The Sign of the Whale Gallery near Yarmouth.

KATIE MELANSON (Halifax) was born Halifax, Nova Scotia. She graduated from St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish. Nova Scotia, with a BSc in Human Kinetics, and the Academy of Realist Art (ARA), a private institution teaching drawing and painting in the old master tradition, in Toronto, Ontario, and studied icon writing with Master Iconographer Olexa Mezentsev, at the St. Vladimir Institution in Toronto. Melanson was named one of the top 21 emerging artists under the age of 31 by Southwest Art Magazine in September 2011 for her published piece Everlasting Moments, and was a finalist in the Art Renewal Center's International Salon competition in the still life category. Her painting graces the cover of the New Margaree Handbook, a guide to the salmon pools in Margaree, Cape Breton. She is currently selling privately, working on new commissions for international private collectors and developing a body of work, including portraiture, landscape and still life, for a future solo exhibition.

SHELLEY MITCHELL (Halifax/Lunenburg) was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and graduated from the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design, Halifax. She has exhibited in commercial galleries in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Ontario, as well as in Maine. Her recent exhibitions include *Waterlines* at Argyle Fine Arts in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and *All Things Lunenburg* at the Lunenburg Art Gallery in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. Her work is in the collections of RBC, TD Bank, Halifax Port Authority, Aliant Mobility, and the Canadiana Fund State Art Collection, in Ottawa.

YANA MOVCHAN (Halifax) was born in Kiev in the Ukraine and was trained and received her MFA in painting from the Ukrainian Art Academy, Kiev in 1995. She has exhibited in public and commercial galleries in Canada, the United States and Europe. Her work has been featured in solo and group exhibitions in: the Ukraine; Prague, Czechoslovakia; London, England; Canada; and the United States. Her most recent exhibitions have been in the United States at Art Hamptons in New York and the Los Angeles Art Show in California. Movchan's work is in the North American collections of the Glenn Gould Foundation, Natalka Huser, Tamara Pringsheim and Jeptha Davenport, Barbara and Ralph Goldman, and Anita and Leon Lapidus, and the collection of Danielle Trussoni of France, as well as many other private collectors.

ONNI NORDMAN (South Bar) was born in Sydney, Nova Scotia, and was trained at the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design, Halifax, from 1972 to 1973 and then again from 1991 to 1995. He was the recipient of the Established Artist Recognition Award from the Nova Scotia Arts & Culture Partnership in 2009. Nordman has exhibited in public galleries and artist-run centres throughout Canada, most recently at St. Francis Xavier University Art Gallery in Antigonish and Cape Breton University Gallery in Sydney, both in Nova Scotia. His work is in public, private and corporate collections in: Nova Scotia; St. John's, Newfoundland; Montreal, Quebec; Ottawa and Toronto, Ontario; Calgary, Alberta; New York City; Munich, Germany: Dubai: Melbourne, Australia: and Helsinki, Finland. In the spring of 2015 Nordman will have a solo exhibition and artist residency in Munich. Germany. and an exhibition in Helsinki, Finland.

JAYÉ OUELLETTE (Arisaig) was born in Peterborough, Ontario. She has exhibited her work in both public and commercial galleries in Canada and the United States, including six solo shows in Toronto, Ontario. Her work is included in a number of private and corporate art collections. Ouellette's commission work is extensive, most notably for the Skydome Hotel, in Toronto, and the creation of the annual awards for "Toronto Women in Film".

SUSAN PATERSON (Dartmouth) was born in 1958 in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and graduated from Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick, with her BFA in 1980. She also studied at Byam Shaw School of Art in London, England, the Academy of Realist Art in Toronto, Ontario, and Grand Central Academy of Art in New York City. She has exhibited in public and commercial galleries across Canada. Recent exhibitions include solo shows at Fog Forest Gallery in Sackville, New Brunswick, Gallery 78 in Fredericton, New Brunswick, and Amicus Gallery in Chester, Nova Scotia. She has won awards for her work in *International Artist's* magazine challenge and the Art Renewal Center's annual salon. Her work is in the collections of: the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia; the Nova Scotia Art Bank; Bell Canada, Magna International, and Olympia and York Development in Toronto; K.K. Sakai, Tokyo, Japan; and Husky Oil, Calgary, Alberta.

MARY REARDON (Halifax) is a native of Halifax, Nova Scotia, and graduated from the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design, Halifax, with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1993. Her work has been the recipient of numerous awards and she has exhibited in galleries in Nova Scotia and Toronto, Ontario, as well as internationally. She has most recently exhibited in solo and group shows with the Nova Scotia Art Sales and Rental Society. Her work is in private and corporate collections nationally and internationally, and with the Nova Scotia Art Bank.

STEVEN RHUDE (Wolfville) was born in Noranda, Quebec, in 1959. He studied at the Ontario College of Art from 1979 to 1983, which included a year of study in Florence, Italy, through the College's off campus program. Rhude graduated with honours in drawing and painting and also received the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Award in 1982. He has lived in Nova Scotia since 1990 and has exhibited extensively in both commercial and public galleries. Recent public shows include a solo exhibition at Acadia University Art Gallery in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, titled Temple of the Mind in 2010, and Finding Nova Scotia at the Inverness County Cultural Centre for the Arts. Inverness. Nova Scotia. in 2013. Rhude's work is in numerous private, corporate and public collections including Acadia University Art Gallery, St. Francis Xavier University Art Gallery in Antigonish, and the Halifax Bridge Commission, all in Nova Scotia, and both Scotia Bank and TD Canada Trust Collections. He is currently represented by Argyle Fine Art in Halifax, Emma Butler Gallery in St. John's, Newfoundland, and Gallery 78 in Fredericton, New Brunswick.

JOY SNIHUR WYATT LAKING (Bass River) was born in Owen Sound, Ontario, in 1950. The daughter of an artist, she graduated from the University of Guelph, Ontario, with a major in Fine Art in 1972. Her work has been exhibited provincially, nationally and internationally, and was featured in a solo exhibition at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia that subsequently toured for a year. Her recent exhibitions include *The Wonder and the Worry* with Margaret Boyle at the MacCarthy Gallery in Truro, Nova Scotia, March 2012. Snihur Wyatt Laking is an elected member of the Society of Canadian Artists and a founding member of PLANS (Professional Living Artists of Nova Scotia).

ANNA SYPEREK (Mahonev's Beach) was born in Leicester, England, and graduated from the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design, Halifax, in 1980. She has exhibited at: Mount St. Vincent University Art Gallery and Saint Mary's University Art Gallery, both in Halifax, Nova Scotia; St. Francis Xavier University Art Gallery in Antigonish, Nova Scotia; Studio 21, Halifax, Lyghtesome Gallery, Antigonish, and other commercial galleries in the Maritimes; the Robert McLaughlin Gallery in Oshawa, Ontario; and, in 2005, a solo exhibition of her work travelled to four galleries in Scotland. Syperek's most recent exhibition is Chi Mi Bhuam - I Am Looking Far Off Yonder. Her work is in the collections of the Canada Council Art Bank, the Nova Scotia Art Bank, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, VIA Rail, IBM, and many others. She teaches a senior drawing course at St. Francis Xavier University and is also a printmaker; she helped found the Nova Scotia Printmakers Association and establish the printmaking studio and course at St. Francis Xavier University.

TOM WARD (Indian Point) was born in Halifax and graduated from Dalhousie University and the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design, both in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He has exhibited in public and private galleries in Nova Scotia and Ontario, and his work may be viewed at the Peer Gallery in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. Recent exhibitions include a show of new watercolours at the Peer Gallery in November, 2013. His paintings are in private collections in Canada, the United States and Japan.

AMBERA WELLMANN (Halifax/Seoul) was born in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, and studied at the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design, Halifax, and the Cooper Union School of Art in New York. She has exhibited across Canada and the United States, and was the Nova Scotia regional winner in the 2011 *BMO 1st Art!* exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art in Toronto, Ontario. Her recent projects include an artist residency at the Arteles Creative Centre in Finland, and a solo exhibition at Gallery Page and Strange in Halifax.

DALHOUSIE ART GALLERY