

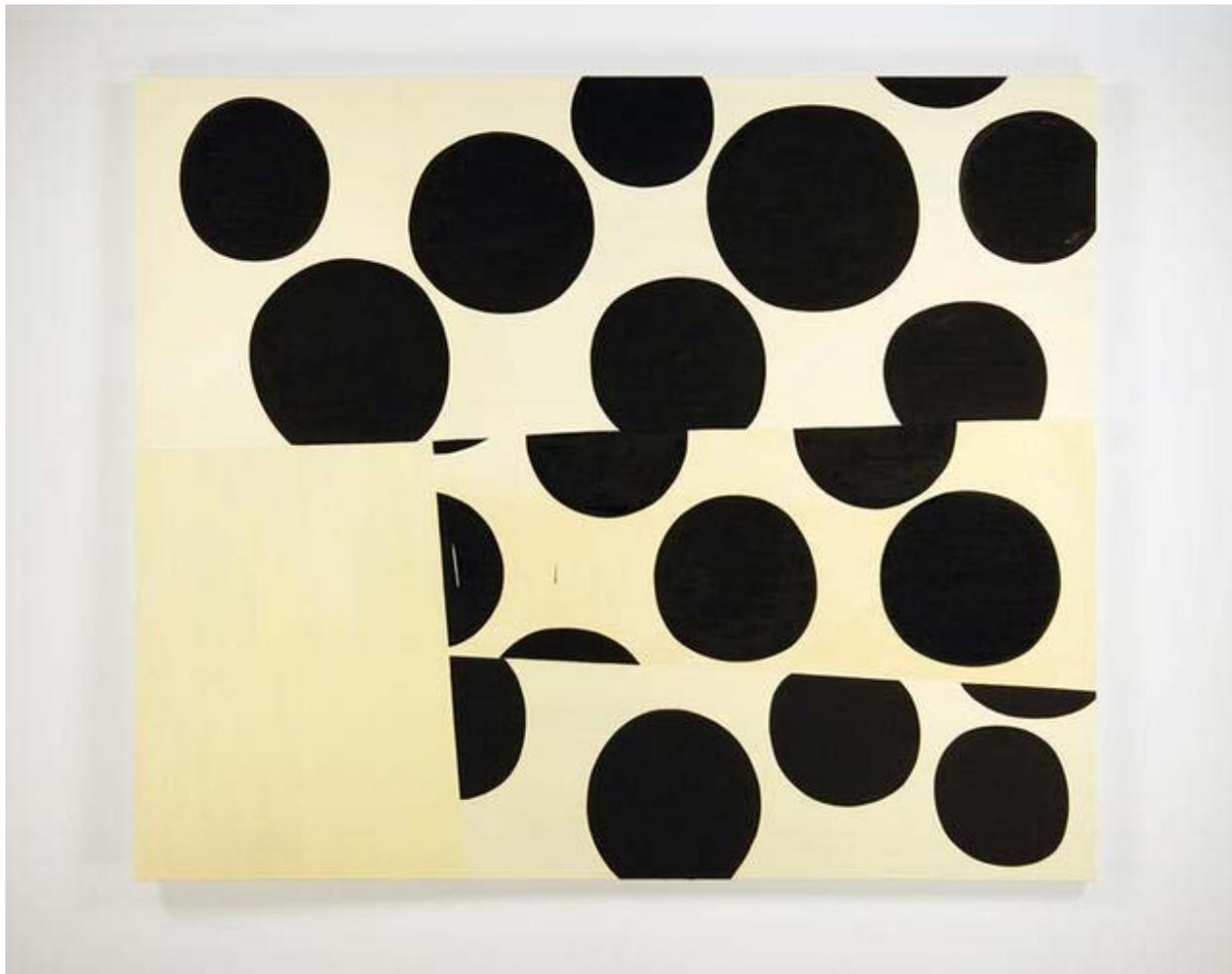


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TORONTO: Waiting & Watching

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Elizabeth McIntosh: Untitled (Black dots on swatches) (2009): Oil on canvas, 75 x 90 inches. Courtesy the artist & Diaz Contemporary, Toronto.

Five Toronto exhibitions ask that we observe closely, but reward by delighting our

eyes.

For her third solo show at this gallery, Vancouver-based painter Elizabeth McIntosh appears to be testing the limits of her abstraction-based practice. McIntosh is most well-known for hard-edged, colourful canvases;

her previous work featured triangular forms that were either in ordered grids or jostled against each other, kaleidoscopically. While McIntosh's paintings are still concerned with the repetition of basic shapes, the latest work suggests some interesting new directions. In *The Brute* (all works 2009), McIntosh has placed Stella-like bands of colour on top of a washy neutral background. *Swoop* features a band of brown drippy paint (such looseness in the paint-handling seems new), while *Untitled (Black dots on swatches)* is almost completely devoid of colour other than black and white. While McIntosh's paintings have always been fun for viewers to look at, one gets the sense that, this time, the painter is enjoying herself more than ever.

**Elizabeth McIntosh: a good play
Diaz Contemporary
100 Niagara St.
May 20 – July 6, 2010**

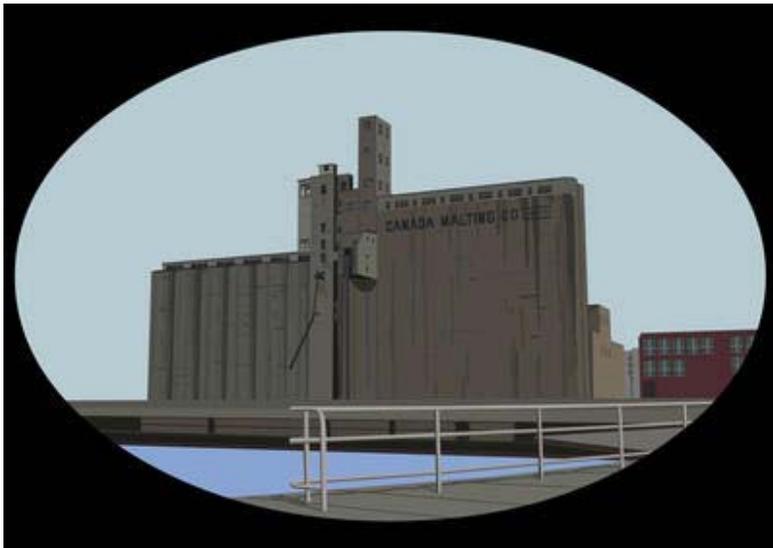


Chris Shepherd: Islington (2009): Chromogenic print on dibond, 24 x 36 inches, edition of 10. Courtesy the artist and Bau-Xi Photo, Toronto.

Last year, Toronto-based photographer Chris Shepherd had the opportunity to photograph in the Toronto subway system after hours, and the images with which he returned to street level show the stations in a

**Chris Shepherd: Waiting
Bau-Xi Photo (<http://www.bau-xi.com/>)
324 Dundas St. West
June 5 - 19, 2010**

rarely seen light: clean, and devoid of commuters and transit staff. The images show Shepherd to be a photographer with an eye for symmetry and detail. In an image of Islington station, we are surprised by the immaculate white tiles and the lattice of exposed wires, pipes and rods that we'd never notice if we didn't have a reason to look up. The four structures in the middle of the photograph start to feel less like pillars than sentinels the more you consider them. In other images, such as Finch and Osgoode, we are given the opportunity to take in the saturated colours that adorn many of the stations, which we don't register as we rush through them. The image of Osgoode, taken down a short hallway towards the subway arrival platform, also transforms into a modernist grid, with the square-tiled walls and striped ceilings receding in a deep depth of field. The Toronto images will be augmented with the first of a series of similar images the photographer snapped during a recent excursion through the New York City subway.



Luke Painter: From Victorian to Modernism to What? (Still from a colour video, 2010): Courtesy the artist, 47, and Angell Gallery, Toronto.

Tucked away in Toronto's still gritty but slowly gentrifying Parkdale neighbourhood is 47, a rough-hewn gem of a warehouse-cum-art space. Its current exhibition, *Ancestral Vision*, is a two-person show featuring Toronto-based artists Luke Painter and Philippe Blanchard. Both artists deliver entertaining works that delight the eyes. Painter's "From Victorian to Modernism to What?" is a sculptural video installation that collapses those two architectural forms

**Luke Painter and Philippe Blanchard:
Ancestral Vision**

47

**47 Milky Way (off Queen St. West,
west of Dufferin)**

To May 31, 2010

into one work. From a large-scale sculpture of a Victorian-era house, a video animation is projected of a modernist factory caught in a continual cycle of de- and re-construction. The loop seems to be a critique of contemporary artists' inability to break free of the influence of Modernism, and also speaks to the cyclical nature of the decline and resuscitation of neighbourhoods. Blanchard's wall installation emerged from his research into the history of animation. His amusing, wall-mounted mural features cartoony figures in the process of discovering and using fire. The figures are animated, strobe-like, through the artist's use of coloured papers and inks, and synchronized lighting. It's a simple, yet hypnotic, effect, which harkens back to the early days of the moving image.



Ben Walmsley, Untitled (Girl in a Eyelet Shirt),

2010.: Oil on canvas on wood. 24 by 18 inches.

Courtesy the artist and Birch Libralato, Toronto

In an art world full of large-scale, boldly coloured, hard-edged abstract or messily expressionist paintings, conventional portraits may seem a bit anachronistic. But, somehow, Ben Walmsley's portraits of children — his own, and the friends of his children — don't feel this way. Walmsley is best known for his series of large-scale, but realistically painted, 'portraits' of liquor bottles in the

Ben Walmsley: The Next Ones

Birch Libralato

129 Tecumseth Street

To June 26, 2010

1990s, which were framed with strips or corner blocks of solid colour. In the series, *The Next Ones*, the blocks of colour are still there, but this time, full-figures of children replace the liquor bottles (reflecting, perhaps, the different stage that the artist is in his own life). Walmsley says that his goal is to create a painting that rivals Vermeer's famous *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, and he comes pretty darn close in a few of the paintings such as a portrait of a doe-eyed, cherub-faced little girl wearing a string of pearls. In other paintings, such as *Untitled (Boy in Leaf's jersey)*, Walmsley conveys the boundless energy of children in the loose swoops of paint that make up this child's mop of coppery-coloured hair. The slightly older girl portrayed in *Untitled (Girl in an Eyelet Shirt)* is captured at a time of transition; the baby fat is starting to melt away, and an adult-like expectation is starting to creep into the eyes. Perhaps, that is what makes these portraits so appealing. Walmsley has produced these portraits at a time when the world is an oyster for his sitters, as well as for himself as a painter.



Justine Kurland, *Land of the Lost*, 2008: Photograph courtesy of the artist and Clark & Faria.

American photographer Justine Kurland first gained attention for *Another Girl, Another Planet* in the late-90s, a series depicting young girls cavorting in landscapes, and positioned as half Shakespearean faeries

and half juvenile delinquents. Since that time, Kurland has keenly and sensitively documented, for lack of a better term, 'alternative' ways of living. She has photographed the citizens of utopian communes in Virginia and California, and men who trek into the wilderness to have spiritual

Justine Kurland: This Train is Bound for Glory

Clark & Faria (<http://www.clarkandfaria.com/>)

55 Mill Street, Distillery District

May 19 – June 20, 2010

experiences in nature. In this way, her work feels quintessentially American in spirit, celebrating itself as a country full of free-thinkers and independent spirits.

Kurland's work has as much to do with the people she photographs as the landscapes in which they move, and her latest suite of photographs strike a wonderful balance between these two interests. Photographed over two years of travel, Kurland captures the vanishing nomadic lifestyle of the American hobo against the changing landscape. As in some of earlier works, the figures are often dominated by the landscape, such as in the little girl, perched on a rock and watching a train roll underneath a towering mountainside. The photographs place Kurland in a long tradition of capturing humanity's experience of, and place within, the natural world. Also showing: Evan Lee.

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