

LAURA CULIC

Toronto, ON

BIOGRAPHY

Laura Culic is an award-winning painter based in Toronto. She studied fine art and illustration at the Ontario College of Art, completing her studies in 1985. Culic has worked professionally as an artist for over 30 years; as an illustrator, a mural painter and a fine artist. Culic is represented by several fine galleries throughout Ontario.

Culic's paintings reside internationally in many corporate, private and government collections, including the Art Collection of the Government of Ontario; she is an elected member of the Ontario Society of Artists, and is a recipient of an Ontario Arts Council grant.

Culic's accolades include Best in Show at the Ontario Society of Artists 139th Open Juried Exhibition, Best in Painting at the 51st Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition and the David B Milne Award of Best in Show at the Art Gallery of Bancroft's Annual Juried Show.

ARTIST STATEMENT

I have a deep affinity to the land and paint in direct response to my powerful emotional connection to the dense forest, lakes and rocky, wild landscape of the Canadian Shield. Whether abstract or representational, my work evolves from impressions of the natural world I carry in me as a result of many meditative hours spent in this harshly beautiful environment; hiking, paddling, observing, absorbing, and just being.

Process driven and multilayered, my approach involves building up multiple layers of wax and pigment. This process is an exploration in mark making, layering, drawing into, and scraping back paint, using a range of tools and media. By repeatedly adding and subtracting; concealing and revealing, in a process akin to nature's cycles of erosion and decay, growth and renewal, I work to capture the spirit, atmosphere and energy of place.

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CV

EDUCATION

1981-1985 General Studies, Ontario College of Art & Design
1980-1981 Illustration, Sheridan College

SELECT SOLO + GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2022 *Stopping Place*, Wall Space Gallery, Ottawa, ON
2021 *Ebb & Flow*, Earls Court Gallery, Hamilton, ON
2020 *Toronto Outdoor Art Fair*, juried online exhibition
2019 *Out of the Back*, Earls Court Gallery, Hamilton, ON
2019 *Where the Sky Touches the Land*, Earls Court Gallery, Hamilton, ON
2019 *Riverdale Art Walk*, Jimmie Simpson Park, Toronto, ON
2019 *Bancroft & Area Studio Tour*, Bancroft, ON
2018 *Art Gallery of Bancroft Juried Exhibition*, "Best Landscape" Award, Bancroft, ON
2018 *Art Gallery of Hamilton Exhibition*, Hamilton, ON
2018 *Bancroft & Area Studio Tour*, Bancroft, ON
2018 *McMichael Autumn Art Sale*, McMichael Gallery, Kleinburg, ON
2018 *Out of the Back*, group exhibition, Earls Court Gallery, Hamilton, ON
2018 *Kingsway-Lambton United Church Show*, Etobicoke, ON
2018 *Below the Surface*, Noodle Gallery at Alton Mill Art Centre, Caledon, ON
2017 *Canada 150 Exhibition*, Gallery 133, Toronto, ON
2017 *Secret Cache*, group exhibition, Earls Court Gallery, Hamilton, ON
2017 *I Frequently Go There*, two-artist show with Clarence Porter, Earls Court Gallery, Hamilton, ON
2017 *Bancroft & Area Studio Tour*, Black Spruce Art Works, Maynooth, ON
2017 *Toronto Outdoor Art Fair*, juried fair, Nathan Phillips Square, Toronto, ON
2017 *10th Anniversary Exhibition*, Yorkminster Park Art Gallery, Toronto, ON
2017 *Art Gallery of Bancroft Juried Exhibition*, "David B Milne Best in Show" Award for *Tamarack Bog No. 3*, Bancroft, ON
2017 Lake Ontario Waterkeeper Gala, donated painting for fundraising gala, Canadian Broadcasting Centre, Toronto, ON
2017 *Invocation*, Art Gallery of Bancroft, Bancroft, ON
2017 *Solo Exhibition*, Kidd Gallery at Kingston General Hospital, Kingston, ON
2016 *Mistletoe Magic*, John B Aird Gallery, Toronto, ON
2016 *Square Foot & Big Ideas*, group exhibition, Paula White Diamond, Waterloo, ON
2016 *Secret Cache*, Earls Court Gallery, Hamilton, ON
2016 *Summer-scapes*, group exhibition, Arta Gallery, Toronto, ON
2016 *Toronto Outdoor Art Fair*, juried fair, Nathan Phillips Square, Toronto, ON
2016 *Elemental*, two-artist show with Laurie Skantzos, Paula White Diamond, Waterloo, ON

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- 2016 *Scapes*, group exhibition, Navillus Gallery, Toronto, ON
- 2016 *Lake Ontario Waterkeeper Gala*, donated painting for fundraising gala, Canadian Broadcasting Centre, Toronto, ON
- 2016 *Northbound*, solo exhibition, Ben Navaee Gallery, Toronto, ON
- 2015 *Small Works II*, Navillus Gallery, Toronto, ON
- 2015 *Mistletoe Magic*, John B Aird Gallery, Toronto, ON
- 2015 *Square Foot & Big Ideas*, group exhibition, Paula White Diamond, Waterloo, ON
- 2015 *Reflected Natures*, two-artist show with Dara Aram, Earls Court Gallery, Hamilton, ON
- 2015 *Toronto Outdoor Art Fair*, juried fair, Nathan Phillips Square, Toronto, ON
- 2015 *Out of the Back*, group exhibition, Earls Court Gallery, Hamilton, ON
- 2015 *The Artist Project*, Better Living Centre, Toronto, ON

AWARDS + GRANTS

- 2018 Best Landscape, Art Gallery of Bancroft Annual Juried Exhibition
- 2017 David B Milne Award of Best in Show, Art Gallery of Bancroft Annual Juried Exhibition & Peoples' Choice Award
- 2016 Best in Show, The Northern Art Show, Apsley ON
- 2012 Best in Painting Award, 51st Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition
- 2012 Best in Show, Ontario Society of Artists 139th Annual Juried Exhibition
- 2009 Best in Show, Art Gallery of Peel 36th Annual Juried Show
- 2008 Ontario Arts Council Emerging Artist Grant

ABOUT ENCAUSTIC PAINTING

Encaustic may seem like a new term, but it is in fact a very ancient form of painting. There are some remarkably well-preserved examples of encaustic painting from as far back as 5th century B.C. Greece in existence. The word "encaustic" means literally "to burn in" in Greek. Happily, the medium has experienced resurgence in popularity over the past few decades.

So how encaustic painting work... how does one paint with wax?

Encaustic medium consists of beeswax melted with a small amount of resin. Pigment is added to the molten wax to create a form of paint. Painting with encaustic requires the artist to work quickly and deliberately; the wax begins to harden the moment it leaves its heat source. Molten wax is brushed on to a sturdy surface – usually wooden panels. As each layer of wax is applied, it is heated or "fused" to bond it with previous layers. Because heat binds each layer to the one set down before it, an image that may consist of many separate compositional elements will structurally function as one mass.

The wax surface may be scraped or incised to reveal underlying layers. Removing and revealing is often as much a part of the process as applying and adding. Many other mediums combine well with

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encaustic, such as oil paint, watercolour, ink, graphite, charcoal, collage and image transfer. The possibilities are varied and endless with encaustic, and happy accidents are often welcomed.

“But will it melt?” Many people are concerned about this, but encaustic paintings are extremely stable and structurally sound. The wax will not *begin* to melt until roughly 160 degrees Fahrenheit. As with any type of original artwork, encaustic paintings should not be exposed to extreme heat or cold, and should not be displayed in direct sunlight.

Your new encaustic painting is created with beeswax blended with a small amount of dammar resin, and coloured with pigmented wax and oil paint. The work is structurally sound and archival; moisture and mold proof. Historically, encaustic (which means “to burn in” in Greek) is the oldest and longest surviving painting technique in existence. The surface will not begin to melt until roughly 160 degrees Fahrenheit (water boils at 212 degrees Fahrenheit). So if your painting is melting, you have a more serious problem on hand.

As with any type of painting, it should not be exposed to extreme heat or cold. And like any original artwork, should not be displayed in direct sunlight (as opposed to daylight)

The only maintenance required is occasional gentle dusting.

Once the work is fully cured (a matter of a couple months) the surface is durable and scratch resistant – however until then, it’s not impossible that marks may occur from handling. The smooth sheen can be renewed by gently buffing with a clean, lint-free, soft flannel cloth.

If any gouging, scratching or chipping occurs due to inadvertent rough handling, please contact me and I’ll be happy to repair.

ABOUT COLD WAX

INTRODUCTION

Although I’ve painted with encaustic for several years now, and I’m completely in love with its tactile properties and unpredictable nature, I also love working with cold wax medium. I’ve created this page is to help clarify the differences – and similarities – with encaustic painting and cold wax painting.

COLD WAX BASICS

The most significant difference between encaustic and cold wax is that, while with encaustic painting the wax must be molten to work with, and then reheated (fused) once its applied to the surface, in cold wax painting there is no heat involved. (Please see my “About Encaustic” page for more encaustic details),

Cold Wax medium is basically beeswax mixed with a small amount of solvent and resin, which forms a soft paste. The cold wax paste is mixed into oil paint in varying proportions. Cold wax adds body, transparency and depth to the oil paint. It also speeds up drying time, increases the paint’s workability and does not require the special ventilation of encaustic.

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HOW I PAINT WITH COLD WAX

What I find exciting and compelling about cold wax is how it works as a medium to create layering. Over the years, whether I've painted with watercolour, oil, encaustic or cold wax and pigment, I've always painted in layers. I guess it's my "thing".

I squeeze out my oil paint and dollop a generous blob of cold wax paste onto a glass palette. I then mix the wax into the paint, varying the proportion of wax depending upon the amount of transparency I'm after. I frequently colour the wax with dry powder pigments or powdered charcoal as well as, or instead of, oil paint. I also often add marble dust to increase the body and texture of the paint.

Applying cold wax paint is the exciting part. I use a variety of tools such as squeegees, trowels, cabinet scrapers, painting knives, old credit cards, icing spreaders, brayers and rollers, silicone bladed painting tools.... you get the idea. The paint has a creamy, buttery texture and spreads and layers beautifully. One of the most fun parts of the process is the mark making. Again, anything goes – skewers, whisk broom, pine needles, plastic wrap, paper, pencils, – the tools you can use to mark the wax seem limitless. I also incorporate marks made by oil sticks, wax crayons, charcoal, graphite. Throughout its drying process the wax responds differently to manipulation. Once it has set up a bit, after a day or several hours, it can also be scraped away, revealing a history of colour and texture beneath.

In these respects; the layering, the manipulation with tools, mark making and the medium's ease and propensity to conceal and reveal and create a sense of history; in these things, cold wax shares a great deal with encaustic.

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