

TERRA INCOGNITA

Polly Jones



Kenny Jones



Robert Green

Exhibit Statement: a word about the phrase Terra Incognita

“Terra incognita”, Latin for “unknown land”; is a term used in cartography for regions that have not been mapped or documented. The expression is believed to be first seen in Ptolemy’s Geography circa 150 CE.

The term was reintroduced in the fifteenth century from the rediscovery of Ptolemy’s work during the Age of Discovery. Also, ancient cartographers did claim that fantastic beasts (including large serpents) existed in remote corners of the world and depicted such as decoration on their maps, only one known surviving map, the Lenox Globe, in the collection of the New York Public Library, actually says “Here be dragons” (using the Latin form “HIC SVNT DRACONES”). However, ancient Roman and Medieval cartographers did use the phrase HIC SVNT LEONES (literally, Here are lions) when denoting unknown territories on maps. During the 19th century terra incognita disappeared from maps, since both the coastlines and the inner parts of the continents had been fully explored.

The phrase is now also used metaphorically by various researchers to describe any unexplored subject or field of research.” – Wikipedia

The unknown as a place still holds powerful sway over the imagination, though we in the 21st century are apt to think of sci-fi worlds in outer space instead of a place we can literally go to in a sail ship or caravan. However, it’s funny how once I hear of a place unknown to me, such as the lost continent recently found under the Indian Ocean, the world changes and becomes a new place – it would seem the Terra Incognita reveals instead of hides. The medieval mapmakers who originally wrote this phrase as a warning and a statement of fact also fascinate me. How did the world seem to them when the world held vast and unknown continents populated by strange beings and beasts – Terra Incognita is the home of the Other and would seem to suggest that even strange beings deserve a home. But what about going there, is the land of incognito “a nice place to visit, but we wouldn’t want to live there?” Viewing and making art invites the same responses, explore and possibly discover or stick to what is familiar. It is true that to go into the unknown is to risk it all, for, beyond it there be dragons.

In another sense we already live in the Terra Incognita, the world picture of increasingly strange digital simulations and virtual realities are being endlessly multiplied. So we must reverse the earlier statement and affirm that there are more Terra Incogniti today than ever before – simply click on someone’s Pinterest to see the lands populated by beasts and beings, funny and sublime. The human mind seems to be a birther of places. Thanks to Robert Green for pointing out this cartographical phrase that sparked the curatorial idea for this exhibit.

Robert Green

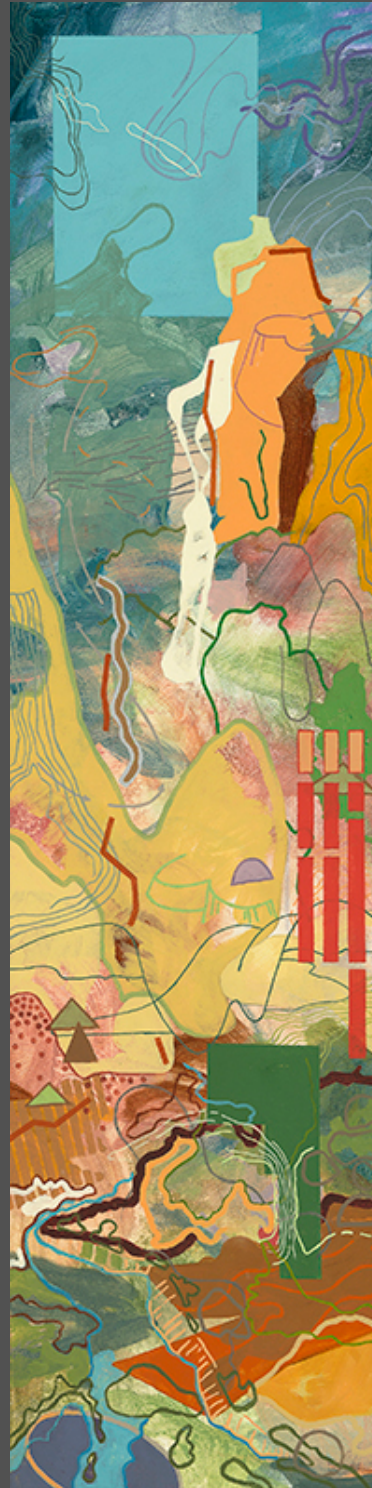
Robert Green, *Cascade*, 2007
mixed media on paper, 23" x 9"

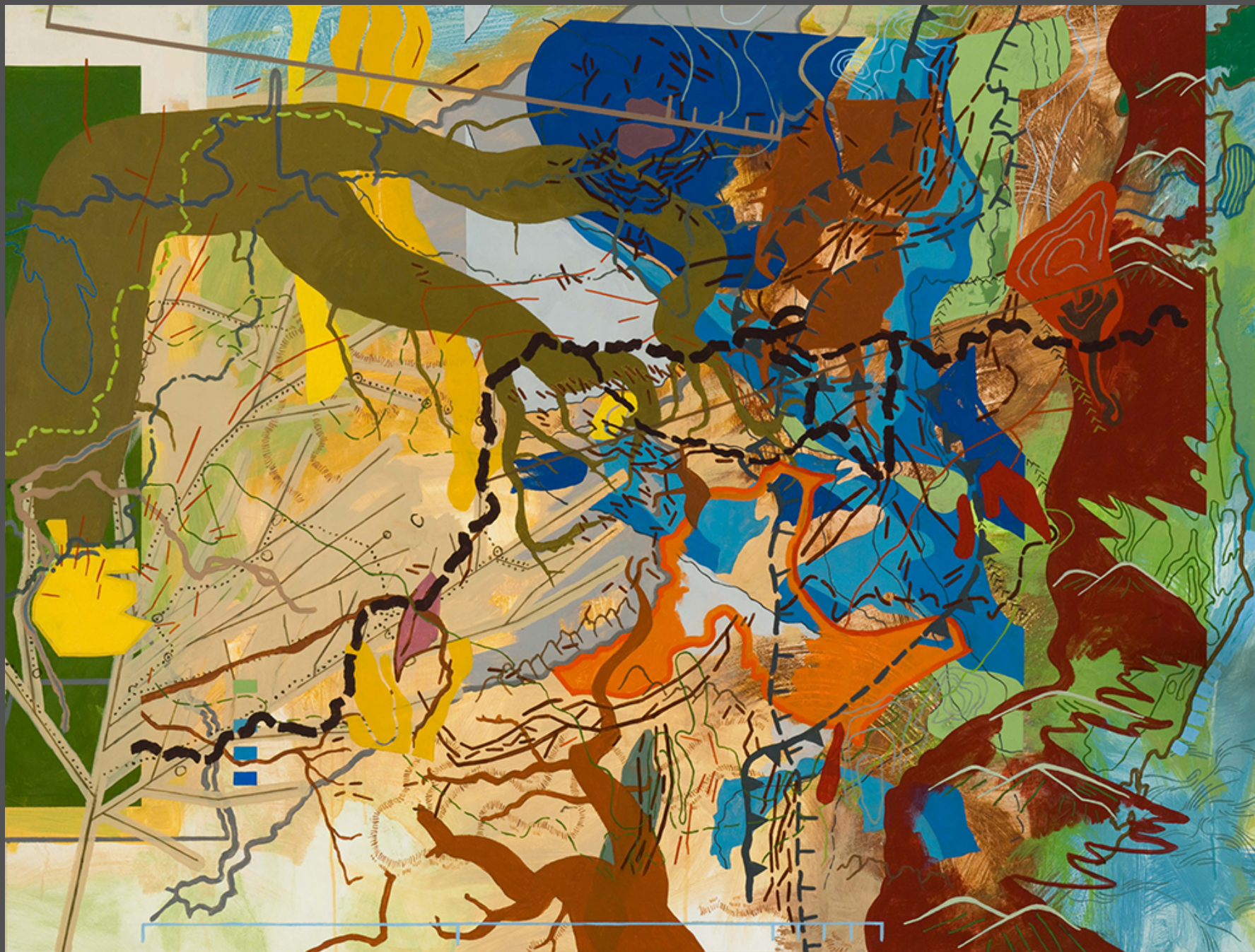




Robert Green, *Darwin and the Beagle (Journey Series)*, 2010
acrylic on paper, 36" x 48"

Robert Green, *Early Spring Ascent*, 2011
acrylic on paper, 48" x 12"





Robert Green, *Lewis and Clark (Journey Series)*, 2009
acrylic on paper, 36" x 48"



Robert Green, *Cook's Third Voyage (Journey Series)*, 2009
acrylic on paper, 36" x 48"



Robert Green, *Tintinnabulation*, 2006
acrylic on paper, 40" x 50"



Robert Green, *Etude*, 2011
acrylic on paper, 13.5" x 48"



Robert Green, *Pastoral Sonata Fragment*, 2011
acrylic on paper, 10.25" x 36"



Robert Green, *Falsification*, 2008
acrylic on paper, 18" x 23"



Robert Green, *Aleatory*, 2012
acrylic on paper, 10.2"5 x 36"



Robert Green, *Fugue*, 2011
acrylic on paper, 10.25" x 36"

Robert Green, Artist Statement for “Terra Incognita”, 2013

The idea was simple enough. I would borrow one language, the language of maps, and use it in paintings to describe something it was never intended to describe. This strategy possessed an element theorists have referred to as “defamiliarization”: taking something so familiar that people have long ago stopped paying attention and bringing to it a strangeness or foreignness that makes them take notice again.

It is the very thing you experience when travelling to a foreign country: everything you see is familiar by kind, but it all is utterly dumfounding. Such experiences rekindle your interests, reinvigorate your senses such that they tingle with anticipation and grasp at every jot and tittle.

Perhaps if you think about the nature of maps—that is the language of maps—you’ll deduce the irony in my choice of languages. Maps are in a very real way works of art. The people that make art and make maps utilize the same fundamental elements, lines, shapes, and colors; but since the intentions of the two fields are different, these languages developed into different semiotic systems of meaning. I borrowed the one adhering to maps and am using it as a way of restructuring my art. When I did that, my art immediately changed in character--though in another way nothing had changed.

My work participates in the idea of terra incognita because the language I’ve borrowed is so ill suited to the tasks to which I put it. It can’t adequately describe in a concrete and quantitative way, thus it creates strange and clumsy references. But its imprecision allows the elements of the language to allude to other qualities beyond the visual ones that artists seem to focus on; qualities like feelings, stories, and the passage of time. It may evoke, but cannot describe.

In the works I’ve included in this exhibition you’ll find examples in which I’ve used the language of maps to 1) allude to a pictorial landscape and a journey within that landscape, 2) narratively explore an historic journey by combining culturally and historically diverse maps of sites along the route, and 3) chart the compositional structure and character of particular forms of music. Each of these themes achieves a terra incognita, bringing a new world into existence which resides somewhere betwixt the original inspiration and a map.

Robert Green's Works/Prices

Cascade , 2007, mixed media on paper, 23" x 9"	\$800
Darwin and the Beagle (Journey Series) , 2010, acrylic on paper, 36" x 48"	\$4000
Early Spring Ascent , 2011, acrylic on paper, 48" x 12"	\$2500
Lewis and Clark (Journey Series) , 2010, acrylic on paper 36" x 48"	NFS
Cook's Third Voyage (Journey Series) , 2009, acrylic on paper, 36" x 48"	\$4000
Tintinnabulation , 2006, acrylic on paper 40" x 50"	\$4500
Etude , 2011, acrylic on paper, 13.5" x 48"	\$2500
Pastoral Sonata Fragment , 2011, acrylic on paper, 10.25" x 36"	\$1500
Falsification , 2008, acrylic on paper, 18" x 23"	\$1500
Aleatory , 2012, acrylic on paper, 10.25" x 36"	\$1500
Fugue , 2011, acrylic on paper, 10.25" x 36"	\$1500

Polly Jones



Polly Jones, *Doesn't Feel Like A Fall*, 2012
Mixed Media, 24" x 36"



Polly Jones, *Upper Air*, 2013
Mixed Media, 30" x 40"



Polly Jones, *Finer Gravitations*, 2013
Mixed Media, 30" x 40"



Polly Jones

Quieter Than Sleep, 2013

Mixed Media, 40" x 30"



Polly Jones, *Carnival Glass*, 2013
Mixed Media, 30" x 40"



Polly Jones, *Punch*, 2013
Mixed Media, 40" x 60"



Polly Jones
Inside And Outside, 2013
Mixed Media, 24" x 18"



Polly Jones
Murmur, 2013
Mixed Media, 40" x 30"

Polly Jones Art Statement for “Terra Incognita” 2013

The work in this show is a mixture of painting from observation and using collage as a way of expanding the image. I love the meditative nature of translating what I see into paint. I especially enjoy painting the disorienting qualities of glass. Looking is often complicated. Embedding actual text and printed matter into the paint is reflective of the many influences and thoughts that permeate the act of looking. Collage has a way of bringing the eye back to the surface. The pull back and forth between image and surface is a tension that mirrors the push and pull of being present in the moment, and then drifting off into the future or the past, unaware of the cup in your hand.

This year, due to my parent's downsizing, I've been given a lot of family dishes. Some originally belonged to my mother's grandmother. Several have made it into these paintings as subject matter. All of this has served to make me more aware of the passing of time and the inevitability of death. “Terra Incognita,” unknown territory, has become personal for me. Life after death is the ultimate unknown.

I came across an ancient cosmological chart. It's a round chart with hell in the middle and radiates out: earth, lower air, moon, upper air, planets including the sun, fixed stars, and finally heaven. I've loosely interpreted this map/chart and used it as an underpainting for many of the paintings shown here. The edge of my round still life table fits into this schematic. Pages from The Golden Book Encyclopedia and map fragments help place each cosmological level. For the higher areas, I've used pages from an old book on prayer, from discarded Bibles, as well as poetry and hymn texts. They are messy and mostly get obliterated with paint. After all, our destination is glimpsed through a refracted glass.

Polly Jones' Works/Prices

Doesn't Feel Like A Fall
Mixed Media
2012

\$900

Carnival Glass
Mixed Media
2013

\$1200

Upper Air
Mixed Media
2013

\$1200

Punch
Mixed Media
2013

\$2200

Finer Gravitations
Mixed Media
2013

\$1200

Inside And Outside
Mixed Media
2013

\$600

Quieter Than Sleep
Mixed Media
2013

\$1200

Murmur
Mixed Media
2013

\$1200

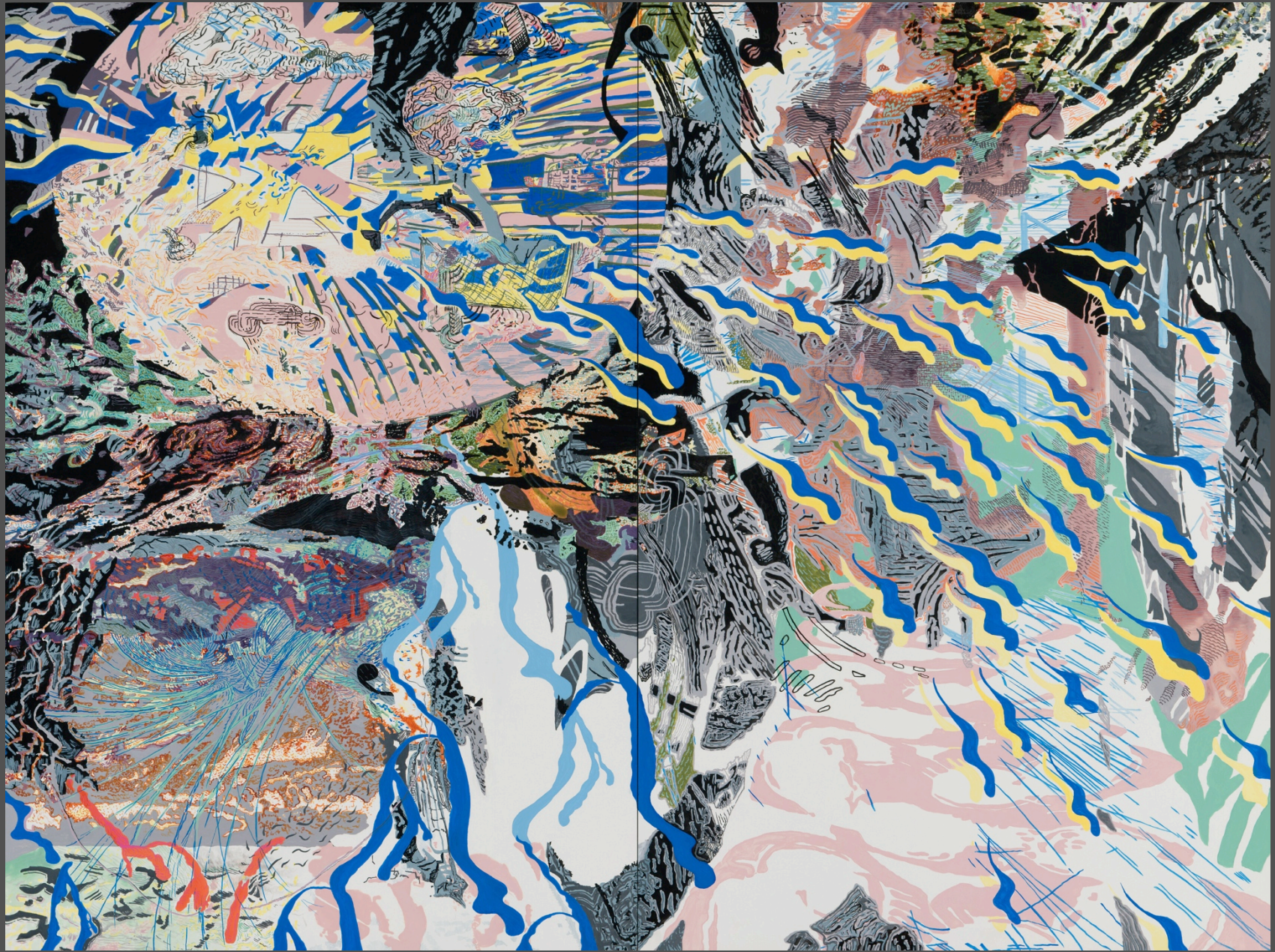
Kenny Jones

Kenny Jones

Thin Placements (with J.M. & H.P.)

Acrylic, Flashe, Bombay ink on panel, 55" x 36"





Kenny Jones, *Towards a Clearing (with L.P. & LHC)*,
Bombay Ink on panel, 36" x 48"



Kenny Jones, *Small Instabilities* (with S.O.H.O. & Arabian script),
Bombay ink on panel, 24" x 36"



Kenny Jones, *Net Effects* (with J.M.W.T. & E.H.P.G.)
Bombay ink on panel, 24" x 36"



Kenny Jones, *Smaller Stabilities in a Deluge (with Leo & script)*
Bombay ink on panel, 24" x 36"

Kenny Jones

*French Polynesia Penmanship (with E.H.P.
Gauguin & Spencer)*

Bombay ink & Collage on panel, 24" x 18"





Kenny Jones, *Thinner Scripts* (with K.D.J. & Spencer)
Bombay ink on two panels, each 18" x 24"

Kenny Jones, Artist Statement for “Terra Incognita”, 2013

In this show I have included works from the last 5 years that follow the organizing concept of this exhibit: Terra Incognita. It turns out; this has been a major, though hidden, goal for me – to allow a painting to take you to an unknown place.¹ During this time period I have travelled to more countries than at any other time in my life. I experienced the shock of the familiar when I met people who are similar and yet very different. This was probably the same response that Marco Polo had during his travels. Even today we are discovering new lands, albeit, around other suns. At last count we have discovered 861 extrasolar planets. Each discovery seems to change our place in the universe.² Our imagination need never want for unknown terrains, thankfully.

When travelers of the 15th century saw areas of incognito on maps, I imagine it elicited one of two responses. Either, “That place is to be avoided at all costs” or an invitation to the explorer, “Possibly there is the kingdom of Prester John or a holy Grail.” Going there turns you into a wanderer, since no map has been made of that terrain. Finding our place in the world requires searching - sometimes in a circular manner. I am inspired by the strategy of triangulation to make my paintings - forking vectors of crossing paths.³

My artwork is abstract as a result of the process rather than a dogmatic rejection of realism. When I was first learning to draw, I noticed that whenever I would draw “realistically” it would work best if I let the first mark dictate the image and not the other way round. This is not a criticism of other ways of working; it is simply where I start in the art process – a kind of dyslexia of the imagination. Paradoxically, I find less initial control creates a better outcome. An abstract image also results from a desire to include my experiences from the world of seeing. These collusions can generate a richer image – it is like inserting a bit of the journey into the map. This desire to include footnotes of visual experience into the artwork is something Leonardo Da Vinci wrote about. A paraphrase from his journal: “draw hair as though it were a waterfall, water as though it were a garment flowing in the wind, cloth as though it was a mountain range.” Art is an invitation to travel to a foreign land, with its own weird customs and sayings. It is another way to say, “This painting is a new place I’d like to visit, a place of surprise and wonder”.⁴ The language of Abstraction is how I hope to keep the visual map mobile for both the viewer and myself. Mobility keeps me from getting stuck in a rut and thereby confusing the map for the territory.⁵ This seems closer to how I make my way in the world, using known maps to triangulate unknown terrains.

1. “I wish to make an apple as striking as a place”, attributed to Cezanne at CAA Conference session, New York, February 2013. Also presented in the same session, “Looking is inhabiting instead of decoding”.

2. As of 3/16/2013 according to *The Extrasolar Planets Encyclopaedia*: <http://exoplanet.eu>

3. “Triangulation is the process of determining the location of a point by measuring angles to it from known points at either end of a fixed baseline, rather than measuring distances to the point directly (trilateration). wikipedia.org

4. Art... is a foreign city, and we deceive ourselves when we think it familiar... *Art Objects: Essays on Ecstasy and Effrontery*, Jeanette Winterson.

5. Ruts figure in journeys to known places. “The ancient Greeks constructed roads with artificial wheel-ruts. The ruts... thus constituted grooves that guided the carriages on the rutway ... connecting major cities with sacred sites. wikipedia.org

Kenny Jones' Works/Prices*

Thin Placements (with J.M. & H.P.)

\$4000

Acrylic, Flashe, Bombay ink on panel, 36" X 55

Smaller Stabilities in a Deluge (with Leo & script)

\$2500

Bombay ink on panel, 24" X 36"

Towards a Clearing (with L.P. & LHC),

\$3500

Bombay Ink on panel, 36" X 48"

French Polynesia Penmanship (with E.H.P. Gauguin & Spencer)

\$1500

Bombay ink & Collage on panel, 18" X 24"

Small Instabilities (with S.O.H.O. & Arabian script),

\$2500

Bombay ink on panel, 24" X 36"

Thinner Scripts (with K.D.J. & Spencer)

\$2000

Bombay ink on two panels, each 18" X 24"

Net Effects (with J.M.W.T. & E.H.P.G.)

\$2500

Bombay ink on panel, 24" X 36"

*prices reflect net prices, additional commission percentage not included.

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