Phenomenal: Group Exhibition

Painting embodies action motivated by vision while fusing material marks and mental intentions. The act of painting activates a rich interplay amongst sensory faculties, physical acts, and critical thinking processes. The five painters in Phenomenal exemplify painting’s phenomenal potential to represent and reveal subjective experience through its shared language.

NW5 Painting Colloquium

Two exhibitions and a two-day inaugural colloquium offer an intra-disciplinary exploration of painting’s interdisciplinary engagement with the liberal arts. Painting has a special relationship to representation. The discipline’s historical and contemporary practices reflect cultural values, identity issues, power differentials, and notions of space that often envision philosophical ideas and scientific discoveries. Painting engages what art historian Richard Schiff describes as a manual imagination. It is grounded in the materiality of pigment, the immediacy of making marks, and the supremely relational and contextual nature of color interaction.
**Eric Elliott**

Eric Elliott completed his M.F.A. in Painting and Drawing at the University of Washington in Seattle in 2007, and his undergraduate work at the University of California, Berkeley in 2003. Elliott also completed a year-long, Kickstarter-funded art residency at the Jerusalem Studio School, Israel in 2014. He was the 2009 winner of the Behnke Foundation’s Neddy Artist Fellowship, received the Seattle Art Museum’s 2008 Kayla Skinner Special Recognition Award, and was in the 2009 Northwest Biennial at the Tacoma Art Museum. Eric Elliott is represented by the James Harris Gallery in Seattle, Wash., and he currently works as the Assistant Professor of Painting at Colorado Mesa University.

“Painting and Drawing are my primary connection to the world; they are a ritual where I meditate on the space I inhabit and the objects that surround me. The structures of my everyday life become inspiration for exploration. The focus of each painting or drawing varies; some are about the objects and the intimacy revealed through the accumulation of material, marks, and form. This evident vulnerability creates an emotional connection between the viewer and the work. My paintings are intimate and quiet. Although my imagery is simple and low contrast, the surface is complex. The work is built out of small lines and marks that pile up on top of each other. I polish and sand so that sometimes the ‘imagery’ is only created by a change from matte to gloss. This repetitive mark-making and reworking of the surface of the painting allows me time to contemplate my own intentions and to discover the work’s particular presence and identity.”

**Ann Gale**

Ann Gale received her B.F.A. from Rhode Island College and her M.F.A. from Yale University. She has been the recipient of several awards, including the Western States Art Federation/National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Grant, and a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship. She received an Academy of Arts and Letters Museum Purchase Award and is an Academician of the National Academy of Art and Design, New York. Gale’s work has been shown in galleries and museums across the United States, and has included solo exhibitions at the Portland Art Museum in Portland, Ore., and the Weatherspoon Art Museum at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Her work is represented by the Dolby Chadwick gallery, San Francisco; the Prographica gallery, Seattle; and Steven Harvey Fine Art Projects, New York. Gale is a professor of painting and drawing at the University of Washington School of Art, Seattle.

Ann Gale paints people from direct observation, searching for what is apparent beyond the guarded and practiced stance of the individual. She focuses on measuring and distilling observations of light and form. In her recent work, she focuses on the psychological presence of her models and the intimacy revealed through the process of observation. The image exists as an intricate composite of observations revealing the fragile and momentary nature of perception.

**Emily Gherard**

Emily Gherard is represented by Bridge Productions in Seattle. She received a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design (2002) and MFA from the University of Washington (2004). Her exhibition record includes Francine Seders Gallery, 4Culture in Seattle, Henry Art Gallery and Museum of Northwest Art. Emily has taught for the last 10 years throughout the Puget Sound area.

“The surfaces of my work record the history of their existence. Like old shoes, they are worn smooth through touch, and deteriorate over time. Even the rigid staples that encrust some of my paintings sag with fatigue and weight. Through a nuanced surface, I imbue my work with its own tactile autonomy. I provoke an empathetic response through the accumulation of material, marks, and form. This evident vulnerability creates an emotional connection between the viewer and the work. My paintings are intimate and quiet. Although my imagery is simple and low contrast, the surface is complex. The work is built out of small lines and marks that pile up on top of each other. I polish and sand so that sometimes the ‘imagery’ is only created by a change from matte to gloss. This repetitive mark-making and reworking of the surface of the painting allows me time to contemplate my own intentions and to discover the work’s particular presence and identity.”

**Ron Graff**

Ron Graff is Associate Professor of painting at the University of Oregon since 1980, following six years teaching at the University of Iowa. He has exhibited his work nationally in museums and galleries, has work in numerous private and public collections, and has received several awards including the Oregon Arts Commission and a Ford Foundation Grant, and has lectured on his work at numerous distinguished Universities and Art Institutes. He received his B.F.A. from the Kansas City Art Institute and his M.F.A. from Yale University. Professor Graff teaches all levels of painting and drawing.

“I painted subjects directly from observation and invention for over forty years. For the past ten years the work has become abstract, dealing with issues that were only implied in my past landscapes, still lifes and figure paintings. The recent work has been about compression, light, space, presence and the lack of it, and images that are socially, politically, and personally felt. The paintings are about transitory subjects; memory relating to perception and time, patterns relating to communication and mapping, entropy, chaos, and how it positions itself in relation to painting in the expanded field of art.”

**Jan Reaves**

Eugene, Oregon based artist Jan Reaves received her MFA from the University of Oregon in 1983. She paints primarily large-scale works with an interest in gesture and the formal relationships of shapes and signs. Her work has been selected for the Oregon Biennial four times since 1985. She has won various awards including the Juror’s award for the 2001 Oregon Biennial at the Portland Art Museum. Her work is in many public and private collections. She has taught at Western Michigan University, the University of Iowa, and is currently teaching painting and drawing at the University of Oregon. She is represented by the Russo-Lee Gallery in Portland, Oregon.

“My work explores ideas about the body and its relationship to the natural world through the language of gesture and the materiality of paint. The body, as a temporal condensation of coded experience, responds to the sensations of the observed subject matter and becomes a construction site for the possibilities of psychological, metaphysical, scientific and poetic translations. The pursuit of what is elemental and essential in an experience drives my work in the studio.”

Apple Stacker, Acrylic on canvas on panel, 24 x 24 in., 2016

**Ann Gale**

Philodendron, Oil on canvas, 19 x 20 in., 2015

**Emily Gherard**

Untitled (Quiddity), Acrylic, ink, and graphite on panel, 24 x 20 x 1½ in., 2016

**Ron Graff**

Balancing Act, Oil on canvas, 38 x 35 in., 2015

**Jan Reaves**

**Emily Gherard**

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