

MICHAEL BATTY: BIO & INFORMATION

Michael Batty has been an artist for over 35 years, primarily as a painter concerned with abstraction. He works in series, utilizing a visual approach for each series that best develops a concept focused on specific ideas and subjects of contemporary art.

His production over the past 25 years has culminated several key bodies of work: the *Tone Poem Series*, the *Prop* photographs, the *Kinetic* paintings and the *Cut Line Abstractions*.

*Tone Poem* collages and canvases:

As well as colour and music, there is a relationship between colour and language within the painted *Tone Poems*, with blocks of solid colour organized on a page as a poem might be. These can be sympathetic or discordant experiences. Like poetry, visual art has a limited palette of words / colours, and the meaning and feeling of the works comes from the arrangement of the individual elements. It is the emotional effect of the individual blocks of colour (words) and their relation to each other (sentences) that makes the impact on both our conscious and sub-conscious mind and the serial nature of the overall work that brings out its poetry.

Chris Keatley – Curator  
Pendulum Gallery, Vancouver, BC

*Prop* photographs:

The *Prop* photographs mark a pivotal moment in the overall practice—the expanding of an interests in kinetic art into three dimensions. Batty's previous interests in two dimensional concerns give way to a new physicality, one of balance, friction, and mass The artist states:

I became interested in finding a new location for my paintings. In the studio, I began to focus on the vantage point of the corner of a room; a point where two converging lines meet. Once I viewed this as a potential site for my work, this location of two separate planes transformed my sensibilities. I began to envision the possibility of three-dimensional, sculptural installations.

The sculptures are created with a multitude of panels in a wide range of colours and are arranged in a delicate balance with no underlying armature or support, creating a cascading form that extends down and out from the corner of the room and onto the floor. The photographs can be viewed as a clashing of monochromatic paintings caught in a moment of creation or demolition.

Despite being meticulously assembled, the work gives the impression of precarity – the shapes could easily have tumbled into this formation on their own. As these captivating installations are temporary to the space they are in, Michael Batty chose photography as a medium to capture the equivalent experience to seeing the real objects. The photographs allow the installations to exist as permanent works of art.

*Kinetic Paintings* series:

Color kinetics take precedence in developing Michael Batty's diverse compositional interplay of energy and lyricism. The artist states:

My interest in pushing the dynamics in my own practice has led me to reconsider my pictorial imagery in order to create paintings that offer the viewer participation in the construction of their space. The new exploration I have entered into, deals with my increasing interest in developing diverse compositional interplay in my paintings.

The paintings that are made up of multiple canvases are a way of further increasing the dynamic relations within this body of work. These paintings function by way of a physical interplay with one and other. Upon viewing the series of works, it becomes apparent that each is a direct metamorphosis of the other. The paintings flow “to and fro” like some kind of animated abstract GIF.

Utilizing thin strokes of exacting color set against passages of seemingly empty voids of primed canvas, the eye is guided through interacting elements in a search to both connect and de-code the image. Elements of repetition combine with the suggestion of gravity to animate color and form into a work of a kinetic nature.

*Cut Line Abstractions:*

These paintings provide us with what is essentially a subjective reality. They are paintings of artistic traces – a record of the artist’s relationship to his materials, the interplay of his conscious and sub-conscious desires and time itself. The multi-directional score lines seem to exist as remnants of physical movement unseen by the unaided eye; atoms, electrons, quirks and quarks on a micro scale and the movement of planets, solar systems and light itself on a macro scale. The downward drip of the paint reminds us of our experience in this world expressed through the forces that operate in our everyday lives; gravity, momentum, energy.

About the Artist:

Michael Batty graduated from Emily Carr College of Art and Design in Vancouver in 1989 with a major in painting. He has attended the renowned artist workshops in Emma Lake, Saskatchewan under the tutelage of the likes of Anthony Caro, William Pehudoff and Dorothy Knowles. He also studied printmaking at The Art Institute at Capilano College in Vancouver. Batty’s paintings can be found in collections around the world, including the Waldorf Astoria in Beijing, China, W Guangzhou, China, Four Seasons, Dubai, UAE, and Bank of Montreal in Calgary and Toronto, White Plains Hospital of Advanced Medicine and Surgery, among many others.