

## HEADLINE GALLERY



Maggee Day

Question & Answer

*Painting The View from My Doorstep*

September 15th - October 15th

### **Plein air painting has become a large part of your practice - how has this changed the way you approach landscapes?**

It has allowed me to examine how I understand landscapes and furthermore, representational paintings as a whole. Before I did my Masters my painting process was stuck in a routine of painting from photographs, when I allowed myself to play with my process and attempt to make a painting that was not dependent on a photograph I realized how limiting cameras can be; they can not capture what our eyes see. Plein air painting also allows the movement of time to be captured within a painting —this forces painters to work fast, which in turn creates unexpected results within the canvas.

### **Your work has an incredible fluidity; you can feel the movement within your brush strokes - is this freedom granted through your multistep and medium planning process or is it spontaneous?**

What is fluidity? This idea of movement on a canvas; following the painter's body through the paint strokes?

I believe it is the wrenches that I throw into my process that allow this sense of movement. By translating one material into another or layering images wet-on-wet. I lose control of the paint, and the painting becomes a collaboration,

or push and pull between what I intend to do and how the painting reacts. I have to paint very fast to deconstruct and reconstruct the image while the paint is still wet. This adds an element of surprise, it allows for colours and shapes I could not have thought of and keeps me energized with a painting.

Without the wrenches I am simply copying one image onto another surface, and the image loses its gesture and becomes static, lifeless.

**Sketching on your iPad has become a new avenue for you to experiment. Can you speak more about this? How will you continue to use tech in your Practice?**

Yes, similar to exploring my process, exploring new materials have allowed me to break out of the way I was painting before. Every material, digital paint included, has different abilities and limitations. With my tablet I am able to create paintings anywhere and have access to an unlimited colour palette and brush styles. This convenience allows me to create plein air paintings faster than using any other painting medium, therefore I can attempt to capture the exact colour and light of a moment before it changes.

This new material adds new possibilities to my oil paintings, and I would like to explore this medium further by creating digital painting animations.

**What is the most gratifying and challenging aspect of working with oils? Exploring abstraction has been a topic of interest to you. Where has your continued research in this field taken you recently?**

Perhaps it is the history of oil paint, Oil painting also has the richest history in comparison to any other artistic medium. Therefore, when we create a painting today we are automatically referencing past art movements, tools, and processes.

I do have this love for the medium though, it is my passion and my primary tool. I am seduced by the colours created from pigments of bizarre origins, the colours flip between relating to the world, and having psychological or emotional responses. I am also interested in this duality of oil paint: It is responsive and lays where I put it, but it is also unpredictable and often takes a life of its own animating the object or scene I try to represent— I find it extremely challenging, but that is why I like it, because I can never master it. Every painting it feels like I have no idea what I am doing and where it is going to go.

**Artist residencies provide incredible space for creatives to explore their practice - how has participating in these programs helped you? Is there one place or moment that stands out in particular?**

I have only done two but after this pandemic I hope to do more. The Ou residency really stood out, I never realized how fruitful it is to be taken out of your space and be given the time and resources to just make art for two weeks. It allowed me to simply explore. Sometimes it takes something as simple as taking a break or

getting out of your element to allow change/growth and reflection in your practice.

**What does a typical studio day look like for you? Has this creative space served a new purpose throughout the pandemic?**

Haha, I am a pretty chaotic painter so I do not have a set schedule or routine. But after I have done enough planning and sketching and I am planning to work on a large canvas I typically go into the studio early, bring lunch, and have a marathon day of painting. Sometimes it will be 10 hours the first day, and if I do not finish it in one day I will have to come tomorrow to continue working into the painting wet-on-wet. By the end I have used over 50 different brushes and my studio is a mess.

**What aspects of Peter Lanyon's art move you?**

I am a big fan of his work, I love how it flashes back and forth between being representational and purely abstract. It's representational in nature but since we are not used to seeing landscapes in that format we see it as abstract, flat shapes and colours, we see it as paint. But in reality it has far more depth than a traditional landscape painting. This idea of rethinking how we see landscape has allowed me to think of different ways I can represent the space outside of my apartment building.

**If you were to suggest one place in Vancouver someone goes to feel inspired or invigorated, where would this be?**

Vancouver is a beautiful city there is no doubt, and I think living in other cities you realize how each city has different colours and feel to it. But at least in my practice I am not interested in painting the natural beauty of this area, I want to stay away from this history of romanticising wilderness. And instead turn the viewers attention to the beauty of every day. Before I gave myself this restriction I never noticed the beauty in the composition of a garden, or colours of the wood chips, or nuance of colour in one plant, or how the light turns golden and gets more bright before it sets, or how the colour of the sidewalk changes to different greys throughout the day.