

XHIBIT

2010 Winter Exhibition



About **XHIBIT**

This catalog displays the works of artists currently exhibiting at the Preston Contemporary Art Center; all pieces are available for sale. See additional works on our web site:
www.prestoncontemporaryart.com.

For inquiries regarding any of the work, please contact Paul Schranz at pschranz@prestoncontemporaryart.com or call 575 . 523 . 8713.

Collectors

To receive *Xhibit*, our quarterly catalog, please email us your name and address for the print version, or simply request an electronic version by email to info@prestoncontemporaryart.com.

You are also invited to contact us by email if you would like to be added to our exhibition announcement email list.

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Preston Contemporary Art Center

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Hours:

Wednesday - Sunday 1 - 5 pm
All other times by appointment.

Current Exhibition:

January 15 - March 28, 2010

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Cover

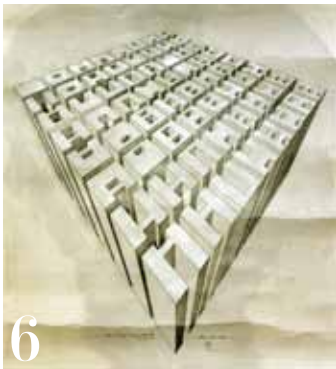
Work by: Malaika Zbesheski Charbonneau
Pablo and Patty, 24" x 36",
mixed media on canvas

2010 Winter Exhibition

Preston Contemporary Art Center



Malaika Zbesheski
Charbonneau



Dan Davidson



Amy M.
Lam Wai Man



Alan Weinstein



Peter Zelle

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Art and the sciences, philosophy, and even math have frequently co-mingled in the production of aesthetic work.

In our 2010 Winter Exhibition, we find influences of the *I Ching* as it manifests itself in both pictorial and geometric representation. We see the science of the human body as it works with the aesthetics of human anatomy. We recognize progression and cadence, almost as though some of the paintings are musical scores. We discover the physics of color and light as they mix with the medium of glass to create constantly changing color phenomena. And we sense how large painted hand gestures can simplify a painting through a few critical strokes that yield a complete story narrative.

This exhibition is not only about the aesthetics of art, but also the intellect of artists in their pursuit of tangible answers to what are often ethereal questions. It is an exhibition that engages both the eye and the mind.

Each of the exhibitions at the Preston Contemporary Art Center is organized to present a deeper experience than just artwork hanging on walls. When we realize the incredible impact that an artistic work can create upon our personal space, we also realize its necessity in our lives.

Paul Schranz, Director



El Paso, 48" x 48", mixed media on canvas

Malaika Zbesheski Charbonneau

"...emphasizing disassociated Space and overlapping Time
make tangible the intangible, the invisible visible..."



Michele, 30" x 60", acrylic on canvas

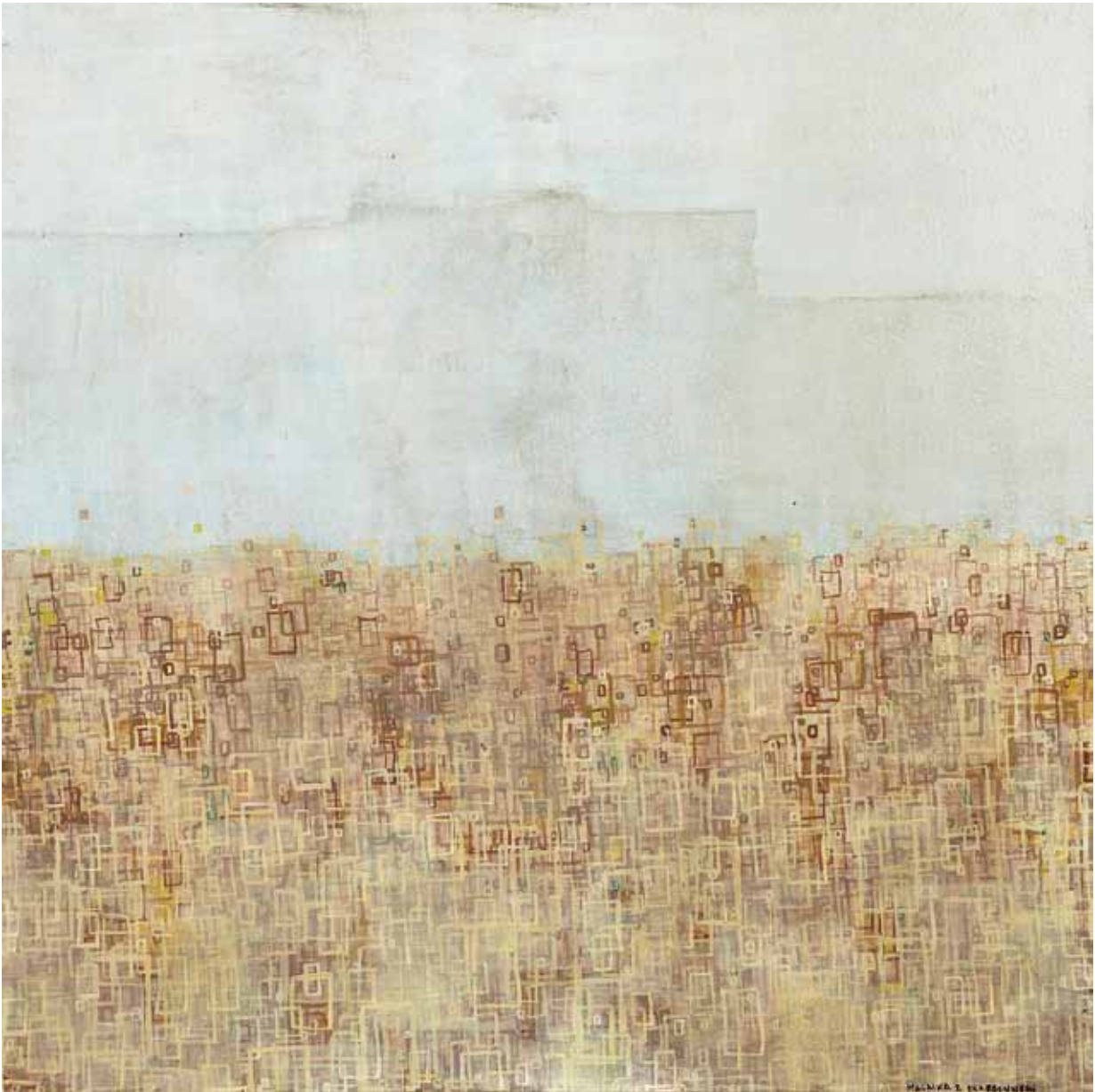
Paint on canvas becomes a document of the ephemeral concepts of Time and Space for painter Malaika Zbesheski Charbonneau. Born in El Paso, TX, the artist has expanded her worldview to include travels throughout North America and Europe, and her multi-cultural experiences in transit have led to a distinctive body of work.

People and places visited have become an inspiration for the abstract paintings of two series, "Cities" and "Conversations." Both are directly influenced by empirical knowledge, but what she paints cannot be strictly measured. Charbonneau says that she paints memories of cities in which she has lived or found as destinations of travel. Frequently employing physical maps as an underpainting, she embellishes, pronouncing and accentuating the areas that to her are most influential, and thereby romanticizing the dynamics of the environment. Viewers become engaged by recognizing the titles, by the association of colors, and by the exaggeration of specific neighborhoods. The works invite us to

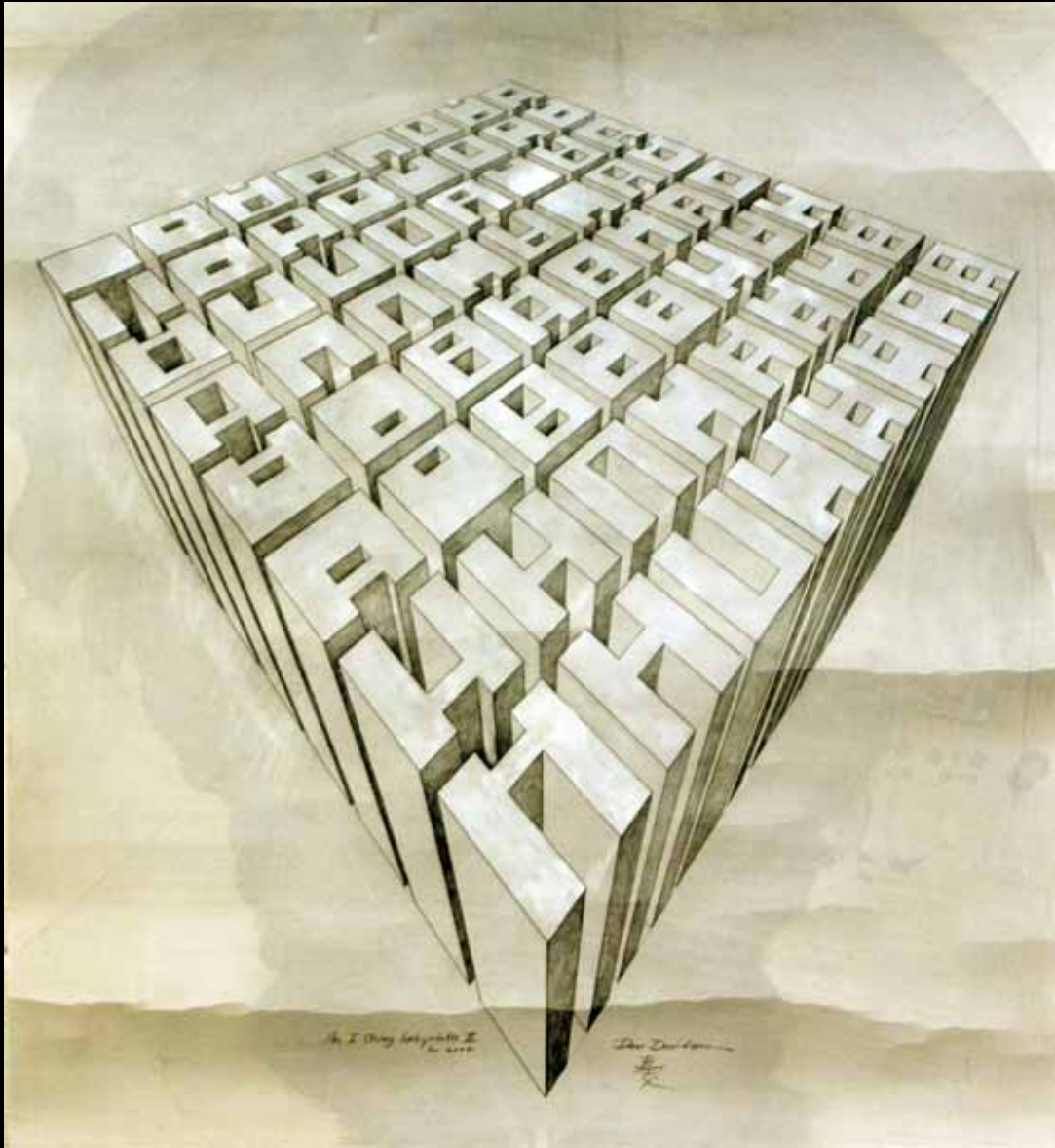
insert experiences of our own, revealing memories we have not documented ourselves.

Charbonneau also paints memories of conversations shared or overheard, employing the canvas as "an audio equalizer; the viewer is able to see the inflection and amplitude of the conversation. The magnified or minimized geometric shapes give an aesthetic form to an audio experience." Repeatedly recalled and embellished in her mind, these subjects take a new form of repetitive layers of paint that become an "elaborate fabric of Time and Space." A relationship develops between the artist and the viewer, a dialogue of time-travel to places and people remembered.

Charbonneau holds a BFA from Emily Carr Institute, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Her work has been exhibited in Canada and in South Dakota and is in a number of private and public collections in the United States, Canada and Europe. She resides in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada.



Santa Fe, 24" x 24", acrylic on canvas



Architecture 3: A Labyrinth of the 64 Hexagrams of the I Ching, 33" x 30",
graphite and ink wash on paper

Dan Davidson

"These *I Ching* paintings as a group have come to a moment of completion and wish to be seen together in exhibition, each commenting and adding to the others. But I do not feel that the larger work of the *I Ching* paintings is concluded, for more, much more needs painting."

I Ching 15B: Assymmetric Spaces of the 64 Hexagrams,
64" x 32", ink and china white on paper

The structure of the *I Ching*, the Chinese “Classic Book of Change,” encompasses both the positive energy of “yang” and the negative energy of “yin,” the first “yes” and “no.” Dan Davidson first discovered this book of wisdom in the 1960’s; since 2004, however, he has used the ancient oracle as both the content of his artwork and a guide to “a better approach to painting, without theory or isms.”

Davidson, who holds degrees from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (BFA), The Yale School of Art and Architecture (MFA), and the University of Illinois, Chicago (MFA), spent years both developing, then abandoning, theories and forms dictated by the contemporary art world. In searching for a new path, he studied the world’s grand painting traditions. His search led him eventually to Taiwan’s National Palace Museum, which houses the best of the most ancient works. His recent rediscovery of the *I Ching* has resulted in the current body of work based on a translation by Taoist Master Alfred Huang.

Working with graphite, ink, chalk and watercolor on paper, Davidson presents works that fit into three groups, depending on their functions related to the *I Ching*’s 64 hexagrams. Some pieces visualize the hexagrams and their geometric components; a second group of paintings associates pictorial symbols to the hexagrams or their combinations. In the third group, Davidson’s imagery reflects the history of art to offer a fresh perspective of current trends.

Davidson’s work has been exhibited in New Mexico, California, New York and China. He has published essays on art and geometry, as well as created *Pisces*, a board game for two players. He lives and works in Las Cruces, NM.





*I Ching 47A: Canon 1, 69.25" x 23",
watercolor and ink on paper*



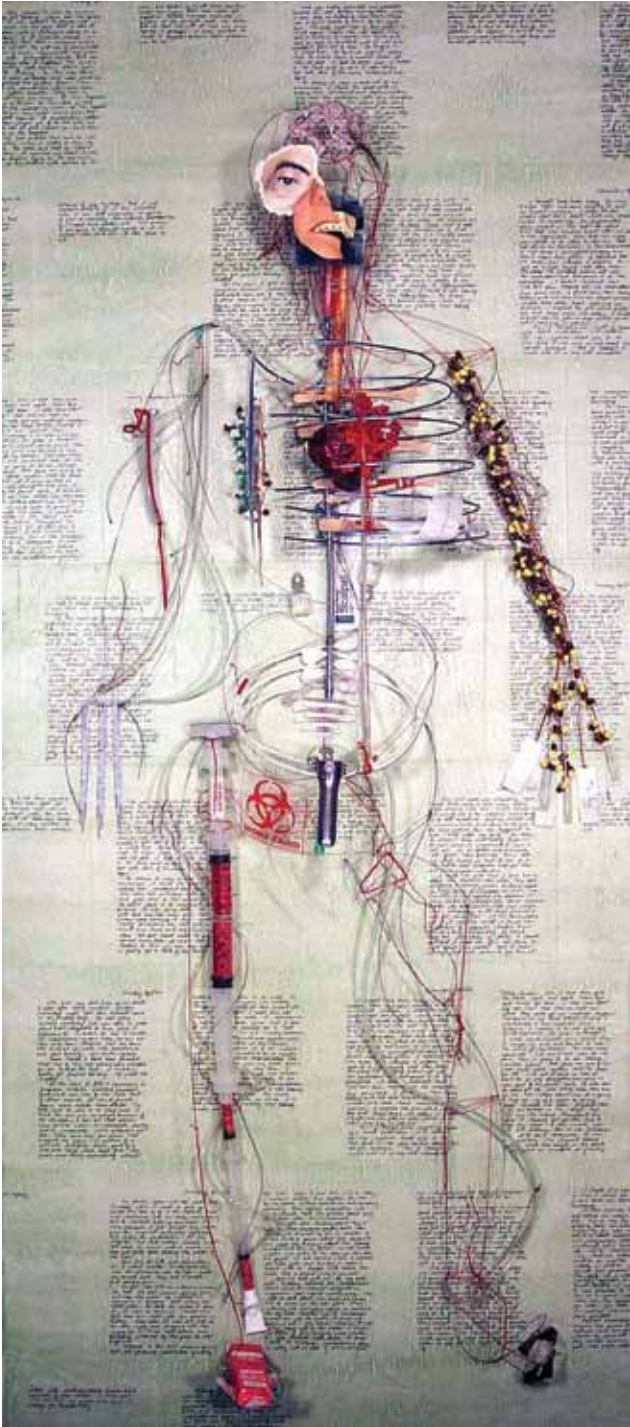
*I Ching 47B: Canon 2, 69.25" x 23",
watercolor and ink on paper*



Additions and Erasures 60" x 36", mixed media

Amy M. Lam Wai Man

"How do we relate to our own bodies, how do we form our identities based in our bodies fully informed by external constructs, how do we relate to others and how do those interactions shape who we believe we are and what our value is, how do we begin to honor ourselves and others by allowing ourselves to feel the flow that is the rhythms within our very bodily systems? We are all already connected. These are my playing grounds and my points of inquiry."



Life Medical Made Aided, 80" x 60", mixed media

“Our incredible bodies (minds included, of course), often taken for granted, house our very essences, our individualities, as well as our individual and collective dreams and histories.” This concept becomes content for Amy M. Lam Wai Man in her mixed media artworks. She explains, “It is from the body, in physical form or whether in concept, that art can communicate our very human experiences.”

Man’s artworks reflect an extensive experiential base. Some pieces directly pay tribute to her heritage as a Chinese American, born in Hong Kong, raised in Los Angeles and residing in Las Cruces, NM since 1996. She presents a “very Westernized comprehension” of her own place in the world. An accomplished writer, poet, and performance artist, Man also brings literary components to the mix. Additionally, her wall pieces and hanging banners presenting conceptual views of the human body, both inner and outer selves, reflect another strong influence, the medical establishment as both friend and adversary. Man has witnessed both sides of that issue, experiencing the medical aspects of the death of her father and most recently, her practice as a medical/ surgical nurse.

Man holds a BA in Fine Art and Creative Writing from California State University, Northridge, as well as a BA in Sociology, University of California, LA, and BS in Nursing, New Mexico State University. She has instructed art at NMSU and has lectured, published, performed, given readings and conducted workshops in art and writing. Man’s artworks have been exhibited and collected internationally, including New Mexico, Texas, California and Mexico.



Surfacing, 86" x 31.5", mixed media



Resurfacing, 86" x 31.5", mixed media



Red Chair in Wood, 72" x 66", acrylic on canvas

Alan Weinstein

"With every decade, the work gets clearer, more focused.
The last couple decades have been the best. So far."



Gazing Figures, 72" x 24" panels, acrylic on canvas

Alan Weinstein's work is not easily categorized. One critic has described it as a "compressed history of modern art, employing aspects of Impressionism, Primitivism, Abstract Expressionism and Color Field painting." Another has commented that it "has less to do with geography than with his tendency to cross and recross the boundaries separating various media, physical sizes and realities." Weinstein's landscape pieces in the Preston exhibition are among his most recent paintings, continuing a body of work initiated a decade ago.

Weinstein explains the manner in which over the last ten years these landscapes have expanded for him. "Works grew by joining canvases. The calligraphic vocabulary began to embrace the figures of my drawings and earlier paintings. I explored frieze-like ideas with their lateral movement and absence of central focus. Then, for a time, my obsession shifted to the expansion of the image itself, the awareness

of peripheral vision, the balance between complexity of sight and the clarity of color. Recent paintings find impact by integrating cut-canvas elements into simplified saturated fields. Color has always transfixed my mind, and drawing is still the tool to probe the emotion of my thoughts."

Born in Toronto, Canada, Weinstein studied at the Ecolé de Louvre, Paris, France, then earned a BA from Princeton and an MFA from the University of Iowa. He has taught at the University of Saskatchewan, Guelph, Canada and the University of Texas, San Antonio. His work is represented in public collections, museums and galleries across North America and abroad, and has won numerous awards and honors. A 100 year-old converted barn outside Iowa City, Iowa serves as Weinstein's studio and home that he shares with his wife, author Nina Barragan. They reside part of each year in Teeswater, Canada.



Chair in Woods, 72" x 24" panels, acrylic on canvas



Day Break, 20" x 7.5" x 8" glass and steel

Peter Zelle

"To witness an artist surrounded by his works in the twilight of life, yet still invigorated by his tasks and endeavors, resonated and inspired me. I have been creating pieces ever since."



Whisper, 5.5" x 5.5" x 12", glass and steel



Nobel Truths, 7.5" x 7.5" x 1", glass and steel

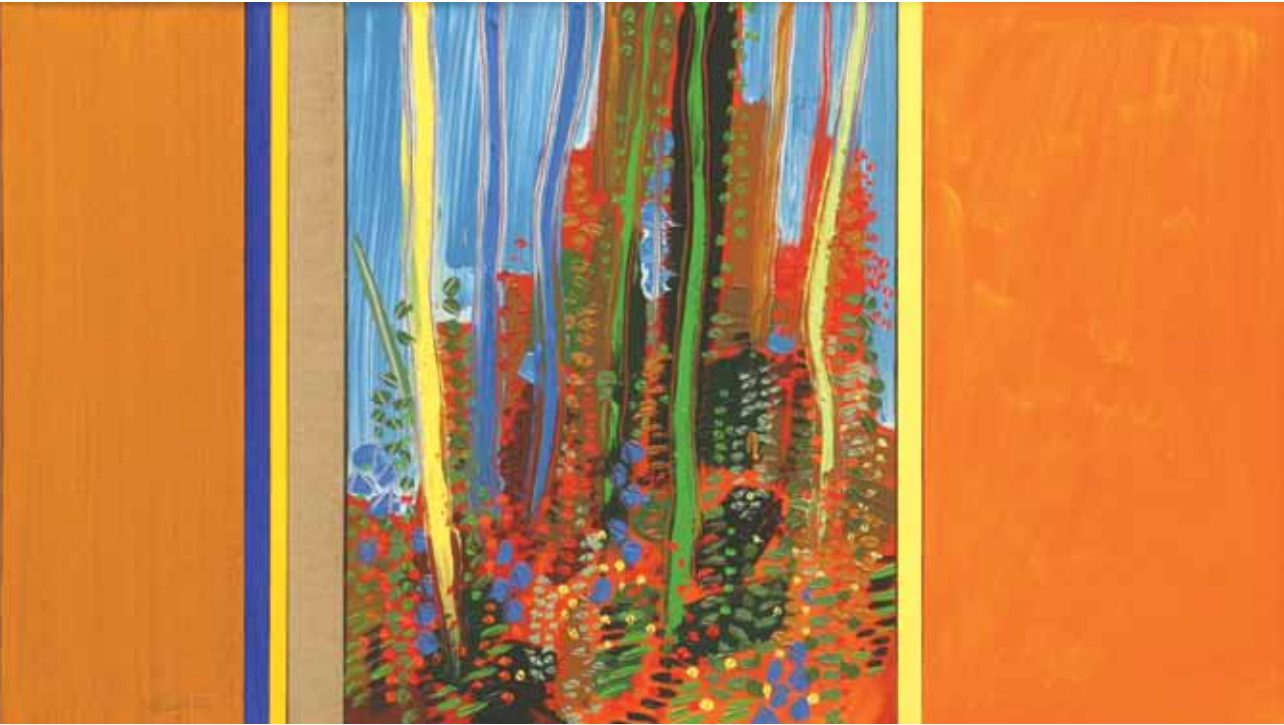
Sculptor Peter Zelle has worked with glass, clay and steel for 30 years. Explaining the early inspiration for his work, he recalls the wisdom of one of his teachers who suggested, "Living is the greatest art of all, and out of that comes the art product." At 15, he witnessed a perfect example of a creative life by observing his father's great uncle, the sculptor/painter Peter Krasnow in his home and studio. Then in his 90's, Krasnow was still making new works and living creatively. The young artist had just begun working with clay, and at that point, Zelle chose the direction for his own life.

Zelle approaches his work intuitively, responding to the way materials react with each other in space. Recently, he has combined glass and steel to create a series of houses. He says, "As I moved around the pieces I was intrigued by the shadows created by the steel and the depth and reflections within the glass." Other new works are life-size abstract figures of welded steel and cast glass, partially inspired by a board game he plays with his kids, in which various characters move across a landscape. Each character has a unique profile, specifying his individual powers and possible moves. What interests Zelle is this notion of uniqueness and the individual way each piece activates space. As he adds and removes materials, he encounters the fine line between sculpture and ornamentation, defining the abstract as opposed to the decorative.

After studies with Dale Chihuly at the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, Zelle earned a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design. An apprenticeship with noted glass sculptor Howard Ben Tre prepared him for establishment of the Zelle Glass Studio in Minneapolis, MN in 1992. He is an instructor for the Artward Bound program at St. Paul Academy, St. Paul, MN and will conduct a workshop for the Minnesota Center for Glass this summer. Zelle's list of public and private installations is lengthy, as is his list of commissioned works and gallery exhibitions across the country.



Untold Story, 8" x 5" x 14", glass and steel



Alan Weinstein, Autumn Grove, 24" x 42", acrylic on canvas

Commentary

Mary Anne Redding

Curator of Photography
Palace of the Governors/ New Mexico History Museum
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Just as the Zen concept of the unending circle was the unifying force of the last exhibition at the Preston Contemporary Art Center, the color blue and its clear references to water and sky interweave the threads connecting the artwork of the five artists in the Winter 2010 show. In the East, the color blue is believed to emanate yin energy that promotes peace and relaxation; it reflects love as it soothes and heals. In the West, blue is the color of creativity; it represents the deities from the ancient Greeks to the Virgin Mary, and is the color of royalty. Used to ward off evil, it also represents knowledge, health, and decisiveness. Blue creates feelings of peace and trust and is associated with adventure and exploration, something all of these artists seek to impart in their work, although in uniquely different ways.

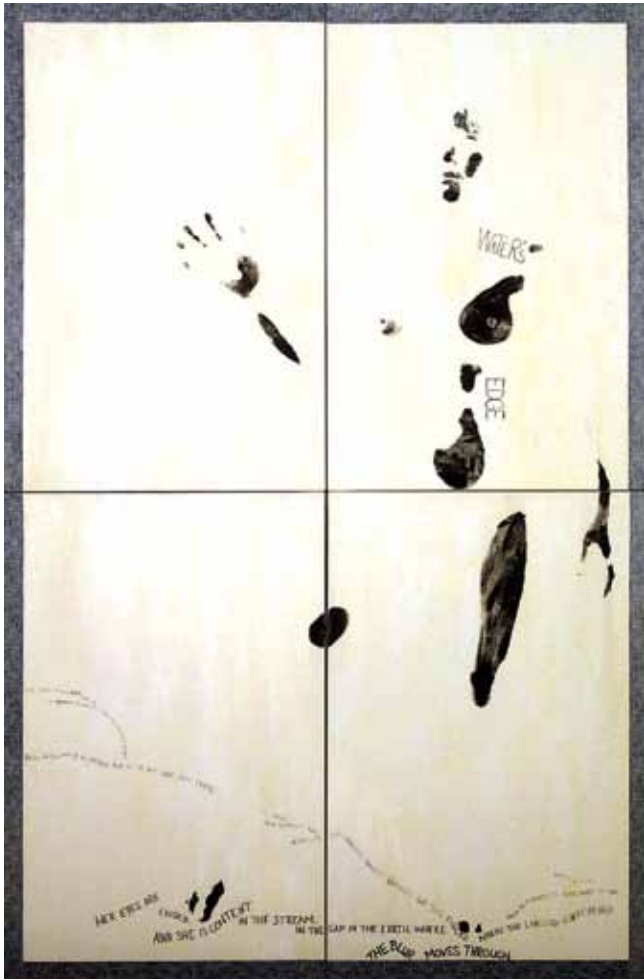
Alan Weinstein spent most of his life in Canada before teaching in Texas and finally settling down to paint in Iowa City, Iowa. Like the other artists in the exhibition he is a citizen of the globe, living in France, Holland, and Spain as well as traveling in Argentina, England, Italy, Israel, and Greece. The enigmatic artist loves color, especially blue; his paintings are dominated by flat expanses of blue: blue fields, blue trees, and blue people. *Blue Woods with Figures and Chairs* is the bluest of Weinstein's canvases. In *Autumn Grove*, a blue strip rips through a brown field resembling an acequia cut into the earth to bring water to the crops, in between the planted fields the woods lure the farmer into their blue dappled shade. Think of Henri Matisse introduced by the Impressionists to the Color Field painters in a blaze of bright sunlight and you begin to get a sense of the exuberant *joie de vivre* that infuses Weinstein's canvases. *Autumn* celebrates the multi-colored robes of Fall against a blue, blue sky – the last crisp air before winter covers the world. In *Figures in Woods*, blue stick figures rustle through the brown late fall leaves. In *Red Chair in Wood*, the artist paints a chair as a stand in for himself: the candy apple red chair peers cheerfully out from the blue tree trunks as the black night gathers behind.

In the colors of the eight trigrams of the *I Ching* the color blue is used twice: water is dark, deep blue and lake is cyan or azure. Dan Davidson closely follows the mathematical structures and symbolic content of the *I Ching* in creating his paintings, believing as he does that this ancient wisdom can enlighten the contemporary world. Mixing Western and Eastern painting styles, both of which he has studied intensely for many years, Davidson, a well-traveled academic, deliberately appropriates visual references from both traditions. In *I Ching 18: American Pop Art* the references come from popular culture as well as a mixture of high and low art – cartoons, comic books, Picasso, Rauschenberg and Johns, and, of course Robert Indiana's iconic *LOVE*. First designed in 1964 as a Christmas card for the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Indiana's design became so popular that it has since appeared in every art form imaginable. Davidson slyly references this popular sculpture that he would have had occasion to



Dan Davidson, *I Ching 18: American Pop Art*, 77" x 40", graphite, ink and watercolor on paper

see in his travels in New York, Tokyo, Shanghai, and Taipei, Taiwan. In Davidson's painting, *LOVE* unfolds as a mirror image of itself seeped in cyan. Blue has important references in both cultures that Davidson claims. Many of his other works in the show, *I Ching 6: The Eight Double Hexagrams as Landscape Elements*; *I Ching 43: Mondrian's Avatar Decorates a Duchanpian Bottlerack Simulacrum, Exhausting/Adorning*; *I Ching 46: The Miracle of Representation, Restricting/Traveling (after Caravaggio's Doubting Thomas)*; *I Ching 47A: Canon 1* and *I Ching 47B: Canon 2* are infused with Asian and American references, all in various shades of blue.



Amy M. Lam Wai Man, *Water's Edge*, 72" x 48", mixed media

Born in Hong Kong, raised in Los Angeles, and now living in southern New Mexico, Amy M. Lam Wai Man creates work that reveals the beautiful tensions of her multi-cultural world. *Surfacing and Resurfacing* reference traditional Chinese scroll paintings; Man's scrolls are trimmed in the ubiquitous blue that permeates this exhibition. The art of Chinese scroll painting dates back at least 4,000 years and is considered by many art historians to be the aesthetic highpoint of Chinese civilization. Designs typically include landscapes, flowers, birds, sometimes people, and delicate calligraphy conveying inspirational words and devotional messages. While *Water's Edge* is not a scroll, its words, albeit in printed English and not Chinese calligraphy, undulate along the bottom edge of the grid much as a stream meanders through the topography of landscape. Man also references the French artist Yves Klein. Klein worked with a chemist to develop his own unique shade of blue, called International Klein Blue, which he advocated as a means of evoking the "immateriality and boundlessness" of his own particular utopian vision of the world. In his series of *Anthropometries* Klein worked in collaboration with models, mostly his wife, the artist Rotrou. Using the naked female body as a living paintbrush dripping with blue or gold paint, he made body prints directly on the canvas. Man departs from Klein by using her own painted body to mark the paper thus asserting her artistic control over the process rather than being regulated to aesthetic muse. Combining Eastern and Western art historical references, Man creates work that bridges many cultures and establishes her place as a contemporary Asian-American artist.



Peter Zelle
Untold Story
8" x 5" x 14"
glass and steel

The only sculptor in this exhibition, Peter Zelle, shares the love of blue narrative with the painters and, like Man and Weinstein (discussed above), uses the abstracted figure in his fabricated steel and hand blown glass houses. People who live in glass houses are certainly closer to their surroundings than most of us who merely look out the various windows of our homes, thus having a fragmented view of the world outside the door. But just as it is easier to look out of a glass house, so too is it easier to look in, especially at night. The looming blue shadow in *Nobel Truths*

alludes to inside verses outside worlds, both physically and psychically, that each person inhabits. Juxtaposing the red hot doorway illuminating a tiny figure drafted by a towering blue shadow asks the viewer: is the shadow thrown by the figure in the doorway, does it belong to an unseen voyeur lurking just out of view, perhaps the shadow is cast by the viewer? One's answer will determine the level of interaction it is possible to have with the sculpture. The blue block glass of *Whisper* suggests water or sky; is the figure drowning in the confines of the house or does the structure of the home provide grounding and the security to soar? *Untold Story* is equally opaque: the letters floating in the glass don't make up recognizable words. Is this a house of dreams? Of secrets the figure is afraid to share? Again, how one chooses to answer these questions reveal as much about themselves as they do about the artist, maybe more so.



Malaika Zbesheski Charbonneau, *Las Vegas*, 48" x 48", mixed media on canvas

Rather than nature, Malaika Zbesheski Charbonneau looks to the humming urban landscape for her inspiration. Like Weinstein she has strong ties to Canada, and like both Weinstein and Davidson she is well traveled, often using maps from her journeys as the starting point for her paintings, thus directly linking her physical movement through the world to her artwork. Born in El Paso, Texas, Charbonneau has lived in Halifax, Ottawa, Saskatoon, Victoria and Vancouver and has traveled extensively throughout North America and Europe. For anyone born in the desert, the blue of the sky and dreams of water can become an obsession. The blue circles in *El Paso* represent the "cool relief of chlorinated swimming holes," so coveted by those who live in the parched

borderlands. Cooling blue bubbles gather over the city escaping from the scorched hot orange desert floor. Looking south, *Pablo and Patty* screams with the hot neon blue of Mexico. The canvas pulses with the fiesta beat, bands of color captured from swishing, swirling skirts as the dancers crisscross the dance floor. Traveling north to cooler climates via the increasingly congested highways that links Mexico, via El Paso, to New Mexico, the artist has captured a rare overcast pale gray-blue winter sky in *Santa Fe* seen from dirty car windows speeding up I-25. The hills between the pueblos thirst for moisture and the sun. The Canadian border is thousands of miles away.

- Mary Anne Redding

