

Galerie de Bellefeuille June 2007

I am an experimental painter. I have been working on my craft since 1996. I start work with a conceptual point of entry and then work intuitively, in dialogue with the work. The art making process largely determines the completion of the piece, and one work often then leads to another. My experience within the studio is a catalyst for my departure from a mode of modern secular monophasic consciousness into an experience of interconnected consciousness with nature and all living things. My environmental concerns, existential questions, and my academic interests influence the starting point. In the work I contemplate questions pertaining to ultimate meaning, death and issues of personal control.

In 2000, I wrote a Masters thesis which created a new hermeneutic of art based upon the work of Jung, Tillich, and Hiedegger; it was subsequently applied to the work of Roland Poulin. The thesis included significant discussion about the relationship between art, cosmogony, and the human psyche. In my research I have studied philosophers and theologians who challenge conventional wisdom and advocate the adoption of a new mythology and I have been developing a visual vocabulary to explore this idea.

My work is influenced by and linked to many Quebec artists. My painting application has recently been compared to Riopelle and Borduas, and the contrast between the organic and geometric to Charles Gagnon. I have been influenced by Poulin's use of opposites to create tension, and his use of dark void forms. In my work I examine consciousness by using abstraction and a symbolic vocabulary. A visual vocabulary has been derived from natural elements and industry and is used as a vehicle for the examination and expression of the contemporary psyche.

– John Robert Barkley