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Gallery Hours: Thurs-Sun, 1-5pm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Rachael Solomon, Program Manager, info@hopperhouse.org, 845.358.0774

Please note our gallery hours: Thursday-Sunday, 1-5 PM or by appointment. Admission is \$5 adults, \$3 Seniors; Free for members, students and children. Docent guided tours can be arranged for an additional fee.

Nyack, NY-***Inventing worlds: Abstraction Painting by Leslie K. Price, Lorna Ritz, and Robert Straight***, February 16 – April 7, 2013

The three painters in this exhibition all draw from nature using improvisational techniques, but the results are widely varied.

Leslie K. Price sees nature as a metaphor for life: “I paint from some aspect of the natural world, and the uniqueness of the space, light, and color interacting with it.” <http://www.lesliekennethprice.com/>

Lorna Ritz’s abstract paintings “bring the landscape indoors. They become windows that peer deeply into space beyond their four edges.” <http://lornaritz.com/>

Robert Straight’s creates his “own world” that draws from aspects of contemporary life. While he uses math and science as a basis for his constructed abstractions, he embraces improvisation in the execution. <http://www.robertstraight.com/469.html>



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Inventing Worlds Abstract Painting by:

Leslie K. Price, Lorna Ritz, Robert Straight

February 16 - April 7, 2013

Reception: Saturday, February 16, 5-7 PM

Edward Hopper House is supported in part with funds from
the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency



Leslie Price, statement:

During her life, my mom would say: "Give me flowers now, while I'm alive. Don't wait until I am dead." I remember watching her in our apartment as she tended to her houseplants. When playing with my friends, in front of our apartment building, I remember noticing and being amazed by weeds pushing up through the cracks of the cement sidewalk and causing the sidewalk to crack more. Those early experiences, and my interest in Buddhist philosophy, have informed my ongoing dialogue with nature as a metaphor for life. Flowers, for example, are pregnant with religious, romantic, and social symbolism. Lilies signify purity for Christians while lotuses represent purity for Buddhists. Roses symbolize love.

Because of my Dad's influence, I grew up listening to a lot of Jazz music. Improvisation makes jazz unique and that quality takes on the appearance of abstraction in my paintings. I paint from some aspect of the natural world, and the uniqueness of the space, light, and color interacting with it. Nature is always changing—the same is true for our bodies as parts of nature. These changes happen so slowly to be perceived by the naked eye. We see the effects of change but not the change, itself. Nature seems permanent but it is not. The source material that I choose to paint from provides a structure for improvisation. I sample the colors, shapes, patterns, and light. My intention is to create a painting that is both dynamic and meditative simultaneously, which is similar to my experience of the source material. All paintings are acrylic and water soluble oils on birch panel.

Lorna Ritz

As a painter and teacher, Lorna Ritz has inspired and guided countless students and has established herself as a courageous, monumental force in the field. With a compelling process that explores well beneath the level of what a viewer might see, Ritz speaks with confidence about the patience and hard work applied to her brand of improvisational paintings:

"My paintings feel like landscapes, though they are not objectified: they don't hold objects, but they do hold spirits, memory and souls, all of which rise up in a form conducive to be said in paint. The paint finds them even before I do, and the paintings sing through the light created by the color combinations themselves. I explore ideas just as a jazz improviser finds his lines. I enjoy the struggle and the search, reaching for the inaccessible. My process, always unsettling, completely passionate, radical, and driven by a sense of wonder. The surfaces of my paintings resemble ancient walls, in that there is a sense of history beneath the myriad layers that have been scraped and repainted many times over. I feel like I am at a construction site breathing life onto the canvas through a simultaneous building up and tearing down of color. I love to see open space create entry way into the picture plane of the flat surface of linen. That physical act of breathing life into the painting that becomes like mirrors and windows. Each one represents a crystallized chunk of formal experience, as well as being very personal at the same time. They are earthy, rock-like and weighty, and yet have in them the rhythm of the sea. I communicate personal experience, sending waves of emotion that look like the work was painted with little conscious effort. This lends the effect of time distortion, even though the painting took months of concentration to

pull together. It is always hard to let the painting go, but knowing when to move on to a new one is an art form in itself.

Lorna Ritz earned a BFA from Pratt Institute, and an MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art, both in painting and sculpture. She has taught at R.I. School of Design, Brown University, University of Minnesota, and Dartmouth College, and has been a Guest Critic at the Vermont Studio Center from 1991 -present. She currently teaches painting, drawing and art history at Western New England University, and drawing at the New York Studio School, NYC. She has lectured, exhibited, and been in collections worldwide and has received prestigious grants including three from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, Harvard University's Kittredge Fund Grant. This project has been supported by a grant from the Artist's Resource Trust.

Robert Straight

Robert Straight's distinguished personal approach to abstract painting - his skill, taste, and originality - is immediately present in his solo show "The Elliptical Frontiers" at Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts. Color stands its ground here, giving us almost the pure sensation of painting. So it's really an illusion that this prominent Wilmington artist, who has taught at the University of Delaware for three decades, works with serene indifference to prevailing styles.

What he does, I believe, is invent problems for himself to solve, so that the differences in each of these acrylic paintings on wood panel are almost invisible, except to a questioning eye. But the problems create tensions, which give his paintings an aliveness that prevents them from being decorative.

Artist Statement

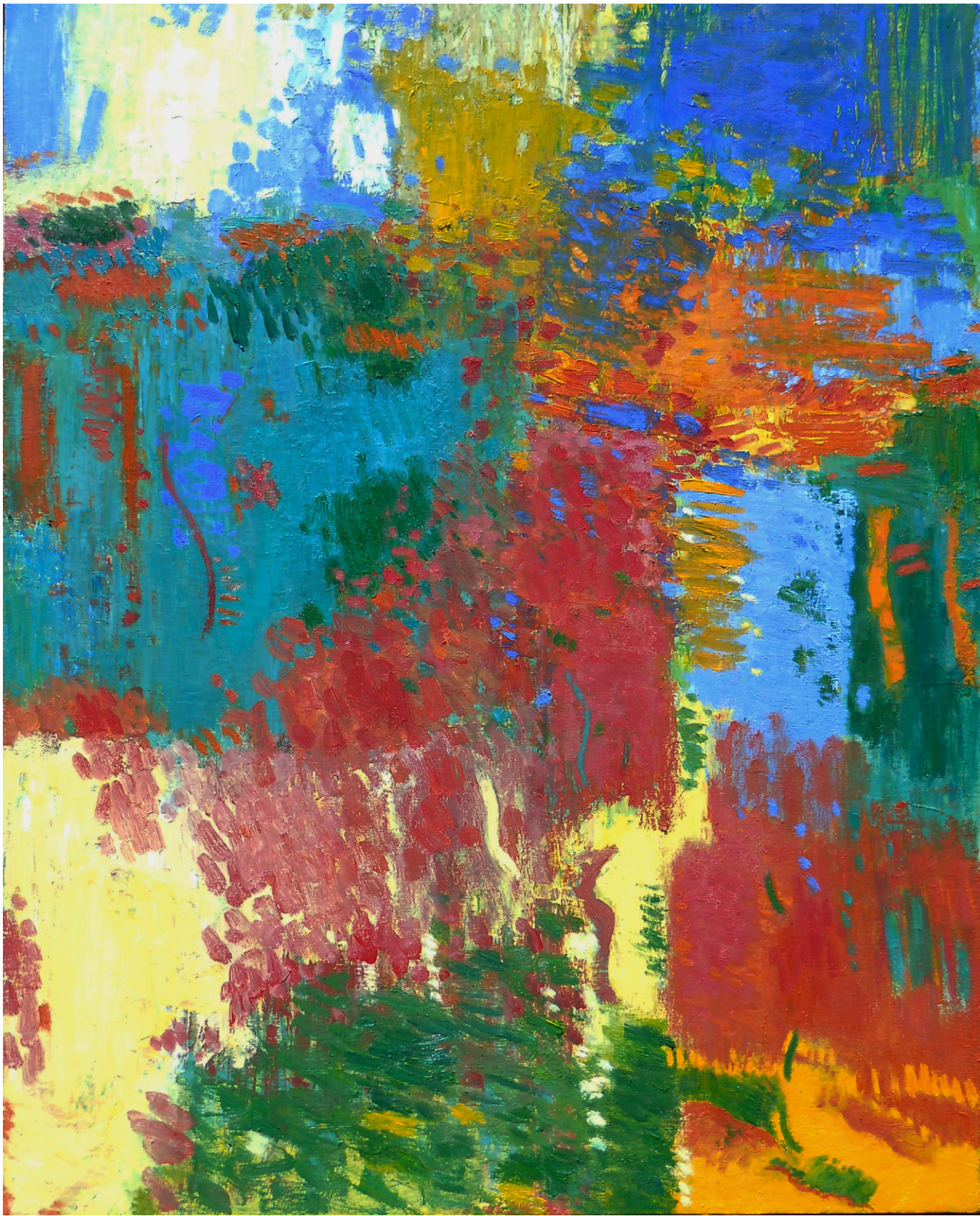
I've been working in the studio for over 40 years, so I've accumulated a vast repository of ideas and techniques that come and go, are added onto and sometimes temporarily forgotten.

Education

MFA Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, MI
BA California State University at Long Beach, Long Beach, CA



Red 2010, 16"x16" Leslie Price



"Sweet and Rosy Peony" 40 X 30" o/c 2012 Lorna Ritz



P-499, 2012, 40 1/4" x 36 1/4", Acrylic, mixed media, wood panel