

A Road Trip Show South Main Gallery 2018

Most of the paintings in this exhibition came from memories of a particular road trip I made with a friend, 10 years ago. We drove through the interior of British Columbia, staying at Three River Gap the first night. Into Calgary the next day, we then backtracked somewhat to go down the secondary highways of Alberta to Fort MacLeod for overnight at a cheap motel. The town was interesting because it was small and you could see the open prairie at the edges as you wandered around. Subsequently we drove through southern Saskatchewan, to the Cypress Hills and then up to Saskatoon. The final leg of the trip was back through Edmonton and down the Yellowhead Highway home to Vancouver.

I sat with the memories and photos of that trip for a few years before I could figure out how to use them. I wanted to, but it wasn't clear how to get the gist of it without getting bogged down in representation. About that time I was reducing the detail in my paintings so that I could be more imaginative with colour. *

Imaginative portraits, still life set-ups and landscapes are what I start with. I am not interested in a literal interpretation; I want to see a transformation that has some uniqueness to it, a new way of seeing something, an awkwardness or freedom from carefulness that surprises. In this series for this exhibition, vivid hues take over to be the most important element, alongside an interest in the integrity of the surfaces and the quality of the brushstrokes.

* This is a phenomenon that artists have long observed. "Leonardo recorded in his notebooks that illusionistic form and strong color were incompatible." Franklin Einspruch writing in *The New Criterion*, September 2018, p. 40.