SCOTT PATTINSON

HOLD AND RELEASE

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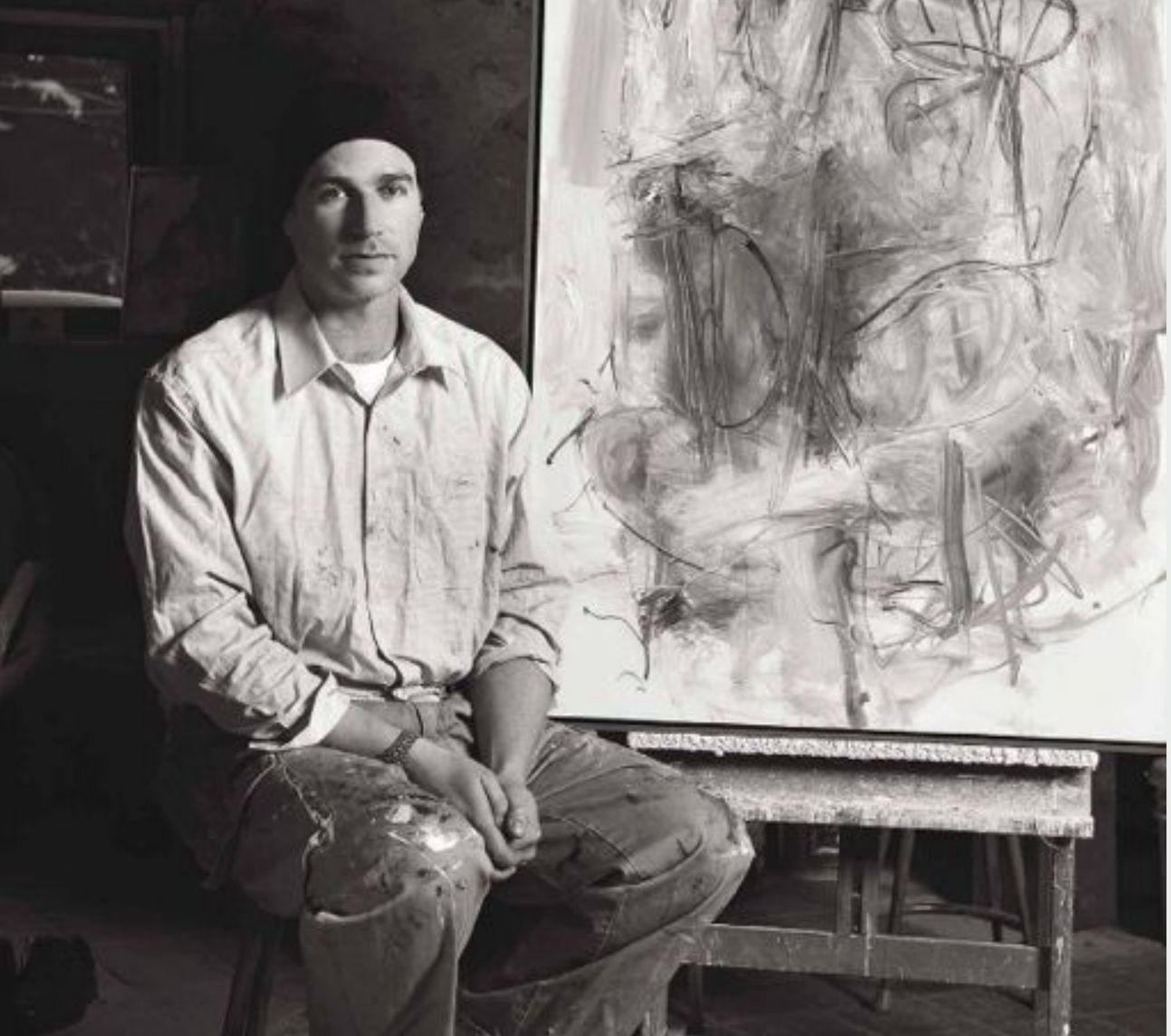
GALLERY STRATFORD



The Raw Geometries of Silence:

The Paintings of Scott Pattinson

Courage is a necessary but insufficient attribute for an artist to create an evolving body of compelling work. Technical skill, discipline, the elusive ability to distill experience and channel energy into an expression that simultaneously listens and speaks in an original voice without timidity – these are the attributes of a real artist.

Over the past five years, Scott Pattinson has developed a deft and confident maturity in his work. Back in 2005, writing in the National Post, RM Vaughan described him as an "exuberant and sizzling emerging painter". Four years ago he was one of two 'young' Canadian painters chosen to represent Canada at an international exhibition in Italy. Just three years ago, art critics in Vancouver and Edmonton called him edgy, innovative, a young painter to collect. Now 40, Pattinson is "emerging" no more. He is a present artistic force to be reckoned with.

Pattinson's brush strokes have the sort of muscular energy that, were he a dancer, would cause people to swoon. The same type of marks and gestures are found in the intense emotional paintings of the Abstract Expressionists of the last century. Because Pattinson respects underlying sculptural elements in his paintings, the pictorial space is held tight.

Yet despite the raw immediacy to the mark making, the paintings contain a tension that betrays deliberation, emphatically insisting upon emotional outburst as a rational human response to the chaos and unpredictability of our environment. Riotous collisions of colour and forceful insertions of white space do not merely reflect the concentrated vortex of energy that comes from periods of silence – these paintings create a place where the viewer, if they give themselves the time, can experience the energy.

Four years ago in the late fall, during a group exhibition, we received an unusual visitor in the gallery. A local farmer came in just before closing, and asked if we minded if he just spent some time looking around. About ten minutes later, I looked up from my desk and was astonished to see him imitating the strokes that each artist must have made to create their work. Tight small gestures here, swooping trowel gestures there. I was mesmerized by the clumsy yet visceral intimacy with which he encountered the paintings. When he stood in front of Scott's paintings, his arms started to move like a symphony conductor during a Bartok finale. The dance continued for several minutes and then he stopped abruptly and exhaled. His arms at his side, he turned to me with a big grin on his face, and said, "That fella's got balls."

"Riotous collisions of colour and forceful insertions of white space do not merely reflect the concentrated vortex of energy that comes from periods of silence – these paintings create a place where the viewer, if they give themselves the time, can experience the energy."

Certainly, Pattinson's enthusiasm for the rough and tumble of hockey and his early forays into architectural studies speak to a personality unafraid to either mix it up or make things happen. Less obvious is the origin of his preoccupation with tuning into the vibrations of the silence and stillness that comes from deconstruction, letting go and returning to a pre-technological, pre-architectural world.

Pattinson's articulation of this interstitial place of renewal – sometimes coolly represented by the white space in the paintings, sometimes evoked by the sensuous use of reds and oranges – has become more insistent and forceful. In his earlier series (Torewa, Silence, Pacific I), it occupies a relatively small proportion of the canvas, and architectural references enforce perspective, distance and time. But in the later Pacific II paintings, and now in the Clyde House series, the gestures float nimbly, joyously (perhaps, impishly) over a prominent background of pure white, referencing the sort of gossamer lightness of being that many can only hope for or approach asymptotically.

The calligraphic introduction of ink invokes the Shù Zhé Zhé compound stroke that signals abrupt changes of direction, a clever pretext that focuses strictly on the verb, the action itself, pure and without the burden of reflection or footnotes.

Scott Pattinson is the real deal, an uncommon talent with a restrained ego in the prime of his painting career, a painter who is willing to gently share his gifts.

Carlyn Moulton
Curator, Oeno Gallery

RM Vaughan (2005) *The Big Picture, National Post, Toronto,* June 11, 2005

(Left) **Clyde House #15,** Oil on Canvas, 50x60", 2013, Private Collection NYC
(Above) **Clyde House #14,** Oil on Canvas, 50x40", 2013, Private Collection

Pacific II #27, Oil on Canvas, 54x36", 2012, Artist Collection

Clyde House #5, Oil on Canvas, 60x40", 2013, Private Collection of Tom & Linda Steadman

(Above) **Pacific II #35,** Oil on Canvas, 50x60", 2012, Private Collection of Wynne Thomas
(Right) **Clyde House #3,** Oil on Canvas, 50x60", 2013, Private Collection

Pacific II #49, Oil on Canvas, 8x8", 2013, Private Collection of Jody Boras

Pacific II #43, Oil on Canvas, 58x54", 2013, Private Collection of Erin Assaly

(Left) **Clyde House #17,** Oil on Canvas, 40x60", 2013, Artist Collection

(Above) **Pacific II #47,** Oil on Canvas, 40x32", 2013, Private Collection of Louis & Christine De Jong

Clyde House #1, Oil and Ink on Canvas, 16x16", 2013, Private Collection of Carlyn Moulton & Barbara Bassille

Clyde House #6, Oil on Canvas, 10x10", 2013, Private Collection of Shari Gold & Richard Hiduk

(Above) **Clyde House #4,** Oil on Canvas, 30x24", 2013, Private Collection
(Right) **Pacific II #26** (Detail), Oil on Canvas, 55x77", 2012, Private Collection of John Mulvihill

Pacific II #31, Oil on Canvas, 50x50", 2012, Private Collection

Pacific II #46, Oil on Canvas, 24x24", 2013, Private Collection

(Left) **Pacific II #24** (Detail), Oil on Canvas, 60x80", 2012, Private Collection of Jay Jolliffe & Alexander Stanley

(Above) **Pacific II #44,** Oil on Canvas, 48x34", 2013, Private Collection of E&N Lazar

Pacific II #25, Oil on Canvas, 54x48", 2012, Private Collection

HOLD and RELEASE

Passion colour shadow shot dream evacuation breaking light line tumult time swing silence slide surrender and hold strike border limit bust hold and hold and release.

What does it mean to hold? How strong can you keep? What does it mean to release? How feral runs unfettered freedom?

In 1962, American art critic Clement Greenberg said that Abstract Expressionism, if it meant anything, meant "painterliness."[1] Independent curator and art critic Karen Wilkin, in her Notes on Color Field Painting, stated that Abstract Expressionism is the belief that "the role of art was not to report on the visible, but to reveal the unknown."[2] For Greenberg, Abstract Expressionism pointed to fleshy ideas about the act of painting: "loose, rapid handling, or the look of it; masses that blotted and fused instead of shapes that stayed distinct; large and conspicuous rhythms; broken color, uneven saturation or densities of paint."[1] Yet, Wilkin pointed to a more ephemeral idea of Abstract Expressionism, one of spiritual narration and soulful embodiment through the act of creation.

The concept of "hold and release" is not a new one. In fact, like the dichotomy of the Greenberg and Wilkin ideas, it is the tension between the tangible-physical and the fugacious-spiritual. Where "hold" implies certain grippable realities, "release" evokes transcendence from worldly architecture toward a more elusive, unconstructed space. It's a concept we understand intimately as humans because it's one we actually live. We hold boundaries, craft limitations, keep walls. Yet, we desire to reach outside what is known to seek the extraordinary. We crave release. We want to be tasked with dreaming; pursuant to an aspiration of fording beyond flesh, outside of frontier edges, into indeterminable outcomes and pure creation.

Scott Pattinson's exhibition, HOLD and RELEASE, is lustfully "painterly." Big brush strokes, robust swirls, raggedy bits vying against pulsing paint baubles, raging and expiring colour daubs floating in deep geometries, saturate colour in strikes, silhouettes and stabs, and intense wreckages of forms that leave occasional remnants of independent paint fall. The rhythm is push pull push pull. The paint tumult sometimes comes wrapped up neat, other times is spun out crazy. It's spectacularly physical.

Yet the work is not just these alternately wild and crafted scenes of painted action; it's also communicating something that isn't visible, revealing something unknown. The paintings unleash a powerful, lusty world

"Big brush strokes, robust swirls, raggedy bits vying against pulsing paint baubles, raging and expiring colour daubs floating in deep geometries..."

of interior emotional spaces competing with rigid exterior elements that promise as much to release you as to hold you. In some cases, the work braces and stalls and defines, and at other times, it shatters and wrecks and pushes havoc. The canvases are passionate, chaotic, simple, fierce, longing, seething, withdrawing, confused, and crystallized visions of what it means 'to be'. They are collectives of moments in time; a parade of spiritual plateaus and turbulence, moving through the channels of light and shadow towards deepest longing, driving in heavy pursuit of steady dreams, and still more silently, towards being cast wildly into unfettered freedom.

The tensions between silence and chaos, desire and the void, are mirrors of the tension between the act

of the painting and the outcome of that act. Inherent in each action, in each outcome, is a "hold" and equally, a "release."

The exhibition of Pattinson's work is severed – curated into segregated galleries in order to provoke viewer's consideration of what it means to "hold" and what constitutes a "release." One gallery offers a field of white canvases with thinner internal geometries, relinquishing brush strokes, a focus on graphic mark-making through confident black pulses and delineations, and a minimalist approach. The other gallery blasts out a series of twisty metrics of bold colour and thick lines that push and bust beyond the edges of the canvases. In these there seem to be shadows of figuration, architectural spaces, physical things that we want to see or to come to know. The two galleries express different ideas, yet they communicate as one. They are both examples of a desperate "hold" and tempestuous "release." They are intended as reciprocals - both platforms for evolutions and convolutions, order and disorder, and for what is manufactured and what is emotional.

The exhibition offers an opportunity to think holistically about contemporary Abstract Expressionism where "painterliness" becomes the physical "hold" and "revealing the unknown" offers the metaphysical "release." Within that framework, HOLD and RELEASE inherently questions the viewer's desires. Do you ride the raucous play of paint or do you risk escape beyond all form into pure feeling? Shall the twain never meet? Or have they covertly embraced as one?

Pattinson's body of work uniformly evokes this intense engagement of the moment where sensuality and emotion are built into mapped geometries of sliding specificity. Carrying on the tradition of Abstract Expressionism, Pattinson's work defies a static definition, seeking to exist in the flux of undulating realities and malleable logistics, offering a remarkable balance between tense hold and unbound release.

Aidan Ware
Curator, Gallery Stratford

1. Clement Greenberg (1995) *The Collected Essays and Criticism, Volume 4: Modernism with a Vengeance,* 1957-1969, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
2. Karen Wilkin (2007) *Notes On Colorfield Painting*, The New Criterion, Volume 26, Pg. 44

Silence #29, Acrylic on Canvas, 36x36", 2008, Private Collection

Torewa #90, Acrylic on Board, 30x30", 2005, Private Collection of Aidan Ware

(Above) **Pacific #41,** Acrylic on Canvas, 30x24", 2010, Stonefields Collection
(Right) **Silence #43** (Detail), Acrylic on Canvas, 30x36", 2010, Stonefields Collection

Pacific #43, Acrylic on Canvas, 48x36", 2010, Private Collection

Pacific II #42, Oil on Canvas, 60x40", 2013, Gift of the Artist to Gallery Stratford

(Left) **Pacific #54** (Detail), Acrylic on Canvas, 30x36", 2011, Private Collection
(Above) **Pacific II #17,** Acrylic on Canvas, 30x30", 2012, Stonefields Collection

Silence #31, Acrylic on Canvas, 54x48", 2008, Private Collection

Adrift #8, Acrylic on Canvas, 30x27", 2009, Private Collection

(Above) **Pacific #50,** Acrylic on Canvas, 18x24", 2011, Private Collection of Jody Boras
(Right) **Torewa #75** (Detail), Acrylic on Board, 16x16", 2006, Private Collection

Silence #28, Acrylic on Canvas, 36x30", 2008, Private Collection

Silence #22, Acrylic on Canvas, 72x60", 2008, Private Collection

Adrift #14, Acrylic on Canvas, 36x30", 2009, Private Collection

Silence #9, Acrylic on Canvas, 36x30", 2008, Private Collection of Markus & Leilah Scott-Alexander

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Pacific II #46, Oil on Canvas, 24x24", 2013, Private Collection 23

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Biography

Canadian painter Scott Pattinson was trained in architecture and urban design (University of Toronto, 2003) and although he did not pursue architecture as an artistic career, his painting subject matter continues an exploration and meditation upon urbanization and tensions between manufactured landscapes and spiritual fulfillment. For Pattinson, painting offered a more immediate creative flexibility and emotional multiplicity that architectural design could not. From his formal training however, he draws upon sculptural elements to define his painting style; often using a wide brush, thick and raucous palette, and actionable approach. A prolific painter, Pattinson's body of work uniformly evokes the energy of his intense and conscious engagement of the moment where emotion and sensuality are built into mapped geometries of specificity and architectural endorsement.

Early series such as Rafter (2005) and Torewa (2007) show broad strategies of expression in bold lines that later culminate in the tight, twisting geometries of work such as Silence (2008-2010) and Pacific (2010-2013). Recent work in the Clyde House series reveals a new dimension of Pattinson's work where taut intricacies and full-blown expressions of colour are replaced by a choreography of looser intonations and marks that float and stamp upon a field of white space. The Clyde House works represent an evolution in his work, backing away from hard edges and canvas boundaries, moving towards a freer, unbounded iteration.

Pattinson's paintings are in many Corporate and Private Collections in Canada and Internationally, and his work has been reviewed in prestigious publications including the National Post and the Edmonton Journal. He paints from a renovated barn in rural Southern Ontario and a cabin in the Muskokas.

www.scottpattinsonART.com

Gallery Stratford, February 2014

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2014 - *Hold and Release*, Gallery Stratford: Stratford, ON
- *Untitled*, Oeno Gallery: Prince Edward County, ON

2013 - *Just a Moment*, Bugera Matheson Gallery: Edmonton, AB

2012 - *Recent Work 2006 – 2012*, Northumberland Art Gallery: Cobourg, ON
- *New Work*, Canadian Fine Arts: Toronto, ON
- *Recent Work 2006 - 2012*, Gallery in the Grove: Sarnia, ON
- *New Work*, Granville Fine Art: Vancouver, ON
- *Pacific II*, Agnes Bugera Gallery: Edmonton, AB

2011 - *New Work*, Oeno Gallery: Prince Edward County, ON
- *Pacific*, Agnes Bugera Gallery: Edmonton, AB

2009 - *Vanished*, Agnes Bugera Gallery: Edmonton, AB

2008 - *Silence*, Elliott Louis Gallery: Vancouver, BC

2007 - *Periphery Flash*, Elliott Louis Gallery: Vancouver, BC
- *Torewa*, Chapel Gallery: Bracebridge, ON

2005 - *Rafter*, Hittite Gallery: Toronto, ON

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2014 - *Group Exhibition*, Thielsen Gallery: London, ON

2013 - *Art Gives Good Gifts*, Renann Isaacs Contemporary: Guelph, ON
- *Let it Snow*, Oeno Gallery: Prince Edward County, ON
- *Beyond The Frame*, Macdonald Stewart Art Centre: Guelph, ON
- *Toronto International Art Fair*, Granville Fine Art: Toronto, ON
- *Six Impossible Things*, Oeno Gallery: Prince Edward County, ON
- *Summer Show*, Canadian Fine Arts: Toronto, ON
- *Art for Large Places & Lofty Spaces*, Bugera Matheson Gallery: Edmonton, AB
- *Resonance*, Oeno Gallery: Prince Edward County, ON
- *Different Strokes*, Canadian Fine Art: Toronto, ON
- *Group Exhibition*, Oeno Gallery: Prince Edward County, ON
- *The Red Show*, Granville Fine Art: Vancouver, BC
- *Rouge*, Renann Isaacs Contemporary: Guelph, ON
- *Group Exhibition*, Oeno Gallery: Prince Edward County, ON
- *Group Show*, Granville Fine Art: Vancouver, BC

2012 - *Holiday Group Exhibition*, Granville Fine Art: Vancouver, BC
- *Art Gives Good Gifts*, Renann Isaacs Contemporary: Guelph, ON
- *Group Exhibition*, Oeno Gallery: Prince Edward County, ON
- *Holiday Group Exhibition*, Bugera Matheson Gallery: Edmonton, AB
- *Beyond The Frame*, Macdonald Stewart Art Centre: Guelph, ON
- *Toronto International Art Fair*, Granville Fine Art: Toronto, ON
- *Revolving Group Show*, Thielsen Gallery: London, ON
- *Circle Works*, Renann Isaacs Contemporary: Guelph, ON
- *Abstraction*, Oeno Gallery: Prince Edward County, ON
- *Contemporary Methods*, Oeno Gallery: Prince Edward County, ON
- *Spring Group Exhibition*, Oeno Gallery: Prince Edward County, ON
- *U8*, Sopa Fine Art: Kelowna, BC
- *3rd Anniversary Group Exhibition*, Oeno Gallery: Prince Edward County, ON
- *The Red Dot Exhibition*, Renann Isaacs Contemporary: Guelph, ON
- *Gallery Spring Selections*, Agnes Bugera Gallery: Edmonton, AB

2011 - *Holiday Room*, Renann Isaacs Contemporary: Guelph, ON
- *Sherry & Shortbread*, Agnes Bugera Gallery: Edmonton, AB
- *Noir*, Renann Isaacs Contemporary: Guelph, ON
- *Off the Racks*, Burlington Art Centre: Burlington, ON
- *Beyond The Frame*, Macdonald Stewart Art Centre: Guelph, ON
- *Summer Group Show*, Agnes Bugera Gallery: Edmonton, AB
- *U8*, Sopa Fine Art: Kelowna, BC
- *Maggies*, Thielsen Gallery: London, ON
- *Revolving Group Exhibition*, Thielsen Gallery: London, ON

2010 - *Shortbread & Sherry and Art*, Agnes Bugera Gallery: Edmonton, AB
- *Christmas Group Exhibition*, Thielsen Gallery: London, ON
- *Group Exhibition*, Granville Fine Art: Vancouver, BC
- *Beyond The Frame*, Macdonald Stewart Art Centre: Guelph, ON
- *Maggies*, Thielsen Gallery: London, ON
- *Atelier D'Artista*, Toscana In: Tuscany, Italy
- *U8*, Sopa Fine Art: Kelowna, BC
- *Group Show with Doug Dolman & Aidan Urquhart*, Thielsen Gallery: London, ON
- *What Keeps You Sane?* Oeno Gallery: Prince Edward County, ON

GROUP EXHIBITIONS CONTINUED

2009
- *Chromatic*, Oeno Gallery: Prince Edward County, ON
- *Shortbread & Sherry and Art*, Agnes Bugera Gallery: Edmonton, AB
- *Beyond The Frame*, Macdonald Stewart Art Centre: Guelph, ON
- *Group Show*, Alma Gallery: Guelph, ON
- *Letting My Mind Free*, Arta Gallery: Toronto, ON
- *U8*, Sopa Fine Art: Kelowna, BC
- *Group Show*, Oeno Gallery: Prince Edward County, ON

2008
- *Small Stuff + One*, Elliott Louis Gallery: Vancouver, BC
- *Shortbread*, Sherry and Art, Agnes Bugera Gallery: Edmonton, AB
- *Deck The Walls*, Alma Gallery: Guelph, ON
- *Beyond The Frame*, Macdonald Stewart Art Centre: Guelph, ON
- *Two-Man Show with Kim Atlin*, Oeno Gallery: Prince Edward County, ON
- *Summer Group Show with Bolduc, Caprani & Worsfold*, Thielsen Gallery: London, ON
- *U8*, Sopa Fine Art: Kelowna, BC
- *Group Show*, Thielsen Gallery: London, ON
- *New Gallery Artists*, Agnes Bugera Gallery: Edmonton, AB
- *In The Beginning*, Elliott Louis Gallery: Vancouver, BC

2007
- *Petit Format*, Galerie Quartier Libre: Montreal, QC
- *Shortbread & Sherry*, Agnes Bugera Gallery: Edmonton, AB
- *Bite Size*, Elliott Louis Gallery: Vancouver, BC
- *HK Summer Introducing Scott Pattinson*, Herringer Kiss Gallery: Calgary, AB
- *U8*, Sopa Fine Arts: Kelowna, BC
- *For The Love Of Art*, Agnes Bugera Gallery: Edmonton, AB

2006
- *Transitions*, Elliott Louis Gallery: Vancouver, BC
- *Reflections*, ACA Gallery: Toronto, ON
- *Changes*, ACA Gallery: Toronto, ON
- *Abstract is…* Arta Gallery: Toronto, ON
- *HK Summer*, Herringer Kiss Gallery: Calgary, AB
- *Summer's Creative Flutter*, Arta Gallery: Toronto, ON

2005
- *Continuum*, Elliott Louis Gallery: Vancouver, BC
- *Holiday Show*, Arta Gallery: Toronto, ON
- *Autumnity All The King's Men (& Women)*, Elliott Louis Gallery: Vancouver, BC

GALLERY STRATFORD

Curator: Aidan Ware

Installation: Patrick Cull and Gareth Lichty

Essays: Carlyn Moulton, *Curator*, Oeno Gallery
Aidan Ware, *Curator,* Gallery Stratford

Photography & Design: Cory Pattinson

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"Big brush strokes, robust swirls, raggedy bits vying against pulsing paint baubles, raging and expiring colour daubs floating in deep geometries, saturate colour in strikes, silhouettes and stabs, and intense wreckages of forms that leave occasional remnants of independent paint fall."

-Aidan Ware, Curator, Gallery Stratford

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