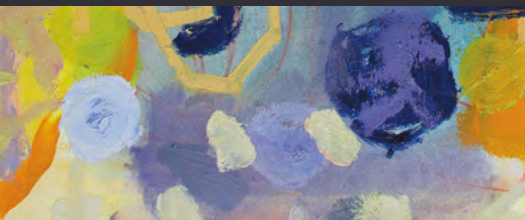
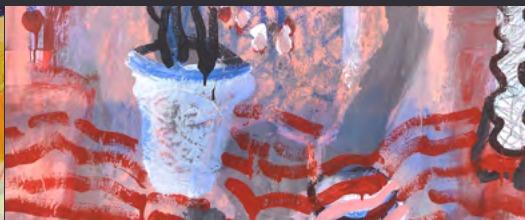


JACK



MCWHORTER

PATRICIA



**ZINSMEISTER
PARKER**

EARL



ISELIN

Jack McWhorter

Patricia Zinsmeister Parker

Earl Iselin

November 2 - 27, 2021

Essay by Tom Wachunas

THE PAINTING CENTER

547 West 27th Street, Suite 500, New York, NY 10001
Tues-Sat, 11-6 pm, 212-343-1060, www.thepaintingcenter.org

Reading Beneath, Behind, and Between

"If good art illustrates anything at all, it's likely to be a story you didn't even know needed telling." – David Salle

In the introduction to his 2016 book, *How to See*, painter and critic David Salle wrote, "Art is more than a sum of cultural signs: It is a language both direct and associative, and has a grammar and syntax like any other human communication."

This analogy, while complex and expandable, is useful in "reading" contemporary painting. Think, then, of the three painters in this exhibit – Jack McWhorter, Patricia Zinsmeister Parker, and Earl Iselin – as writing in dialects. Each of their respective dialects is in its way a discreet synchronicity, or a dialogue, transpiring in unique terrains wherein the painter straddles the fluctuating boundaries between representation and abstraction.

In the past, Jack McWhorter has characterized his process and product as "personal archaeology." For this group of recent paintings, that description remains potently apropos. Equally potent is the wide arc of his subject matter, born from his question, "How can one give form to one's connection with the cosmos whether it be lost or hidden?" He adds this consideration: "Contemporary cosmology challenges us to look at nature in new ways and to see the inorganic world from broad areas; art, astronomy, chemistry, earth sciences and physics."

At the core of his aesthetic is a persistent navigation of tensions and harmonies within symbiotic dualities. His compositions, which he calls "live surfaces," are clusters or matrixes

of lines, shapes, and patterns that juxtapose accumulations and singularities, gatherings and dispersals. Like an explorer's field notes on remembered sights and sites, places and spaces, his pictures often entwine a then with a now, as if remembering their own beginnings even as they are transformed by his imagination into new visual moments.

Live surfaces to be sure, they're drawn with a vigorous, gestural immediacy, combining marks made in broad and loose ways with more concentrated movements of the hand that we might associate with calligraphy. Additionally, McWhorter's exuberant palette imbues his imagery with a numinous energy, bringing to their spatial dimensionality a sensation of rhythmic pulsing. Rising from evanesced fields of personal history and the memories held there, his transfixing configurations have a heartbeat.

Similarly, visceral gesture, remarkable chromatic dynamics, and personal history are prominent in Patricia Zinsmeister Parker's works. Recently she wrote "I have always believed that abstract art and representational art are one and the same. It's just a matter of scale and particularity." Her pictures are invigorating records of spontaneous actions – an immersion in the primacy of painterly impulse and intuition.

In a spirit of equanimity, Parker presents her canvases here in pairs, suggesting a continuum, or conversation, between a non-objective work and one of a relatively more representational nature. For example, *Girl in White Tutu* sits beside *My Leaky Fawcet*, while *Wallflower* attends *Lunch With Picasso*. Two pictures reading as a single entity, these pairings are unified by one or more formal commonalities, such as a recurring color, shape, or pattern motif.

There was a period in Parker's career when she deliberately painted with her "untrained" left hand. Consequently, the representational elements in her works regularly possessed a distinctive awkwardness. She has recently commented that her leftist approach, if you will, is a thing of the past. Her current paintings signal a re-emergence of her trained right hand – what she calls her "... return to figurative work and draughtsmanship skills – those skills being undermined and buried for decades by the use of my left hand."

Parker's drawing acuity is especially evident in her renderings of female forms. They seem to emerge from under surrounding scruffy veils or rough layers of paint in a fluid, even graceful manner, deftly capturing the subtlest of bodily attitudes.

Insightful and inciteful, Parker makes art that wags a sassy finger in your face and rattles your sense of "finished" aesthetic decorum. As the sardonic titles of her paintings suggest, such as *Caught in the Act of Painting*, she's a painter seriously engaged in mindful play, and generous enough to provide us refreshing cause to chuckle.

Meanwhile, for Earl Iselin, the act of painting is in many ways an ongoing inquiry into the very motives and meanings of creativity. Metaphor is certainly an active force in his iconography. "In five of the paintings I have offered," he writes, "I've used isometric perspective, which has the penchant to lift, in essence to 'sky' the painting, as if to give flight to imagination."

Those five paintings share a title, *Partially Buried*, named after Robert Smithson's 1970 land art installation, *Partially Buried Woodshed*. Made on the grounds of Ohio's Kent

State University when Iselin was living there, it was a site he visited, occasionally sitting inside, and which he remembers as greatly obscuring his view of the blue sky, itself a symbol of pure, limitless possibility.

That sensation has prompted some intriguing philosophizing about history and existence itself. What he calls 'skying the painting' is his way "...of defying the past and escaping its definition." Thus his paintings present the shed not as something dead, collapsed by gravity and entropy, but as a bright-colored geometric structure, maybe a house, free-floating in an open field dotted with suggestions of dirt piles or bodies of water.

Meanwhile, his series of paintings under the collective title of *Stack*, is a further probing of history. These smaller individual pieces, some executed in lavishly-hued impasto, are attached to each other to make large modular grids, evoking a variety of modernist painting genres such as Color Field, Minimalism, Expressionism. The *Stacks* are intended by Iselin to symbolize and encourage imagination – his, and ours – and to create an energy for really seeing our present.

And again, Iselin's words describe that energy best: "It is...a creative force... to move me beyond the limitations of my own gravity, beyond myself, that gives purpose to the painting, a purpose that has everything to do with you. Your sky is as blue as mine." Jack McWhorter. Patricia Zinsmeister Parker. Earl Iselin. To you, the viewer...enjoy the flight.

- Tom Wachunas, 2021



Jack McWhorter, *Crystal Tablet*, 2021, Oil on canvas, 29" x 23"



Jack McWhorter, *One of the Ptolomies*, 2020, Oil on canvas, 55" x 54"



Jack McWhorter, *Flood Time*, 2018, Oil on paper, 26" x 19.75"



Jack McWhorter, *Rebounding Star*, 2019, Oil and crayon on paper, 30" x 22"



Jack McWhorter, *Thousand of Minutes*, 2019, Oil on panel, 24" x 19"



Jack McWhorter, *Uracus Rises*, 2021, Oil on canvas, 60" x 54"



Jack McWhorter, *Daytime Astronomy*, 2018, Oil on paper, 57" x 51"



Jack McWhorter, *Ursa Minor, Facing North*, 2021, Oil on paper, 30" x 22"



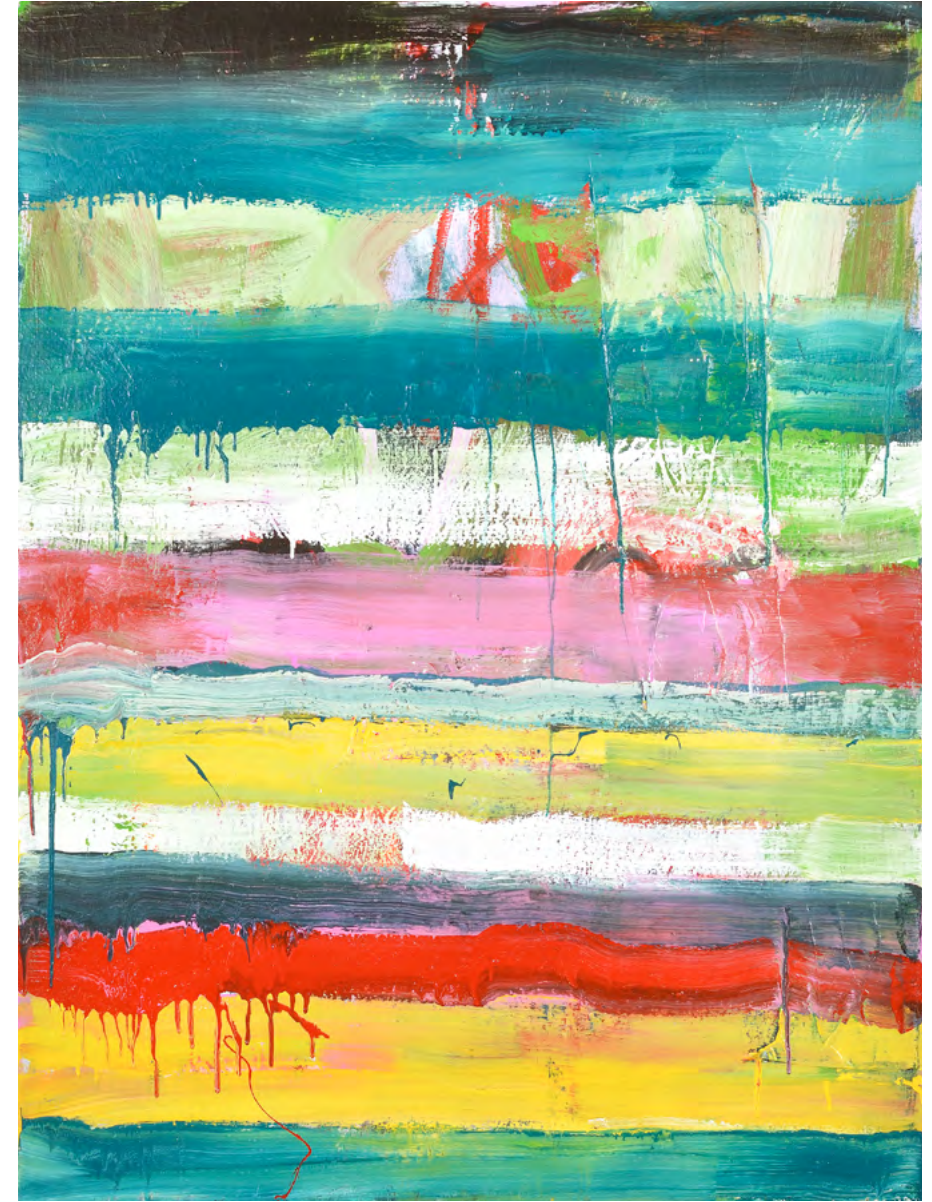
Patricia Zinsmeister Parker, *Girl in White Tutu*, 2021, Mixed media, 48" x 36"



Patricia Zinsmeister Parker, *Pleasures of the Flesh*, 2021, Mixed media, 48" x 36"



Patricia Zinsmeister Parker, *Caught In the Act of Painting*, 2021, Mixed media, 48" x 36"



Patricia Zinsmeister Parker, *Navajo Nation*, 2021, Mixed media, 48" x 36"



Patricia Zinsmeister Parker, *Lunch With Picasso*, 2021, Mixed media, 48" x 36"



Patricia Zinsmeister Parker, *My Leaky Faucet*, 2021, Mixed media, 48" x 36"



Patricia Zinsmeister Parker, *A Vintage Bathing Suit*, 2021, Mixed media, 48" x 36"



Patricia Zinsmeister Parker, *Wallflower*, 2021, Mixed media, 48" x 36"



Earl Iselin, *Clearfield*, 2020, Oil on canvas, 34" x 41"



Earl Iselin, *Clarion*, 2020, Oil on canvas, 34" x 41"



Earl Iselin, *Partially Buried 1*, 2018, Oil on canvas, 48" x 24"



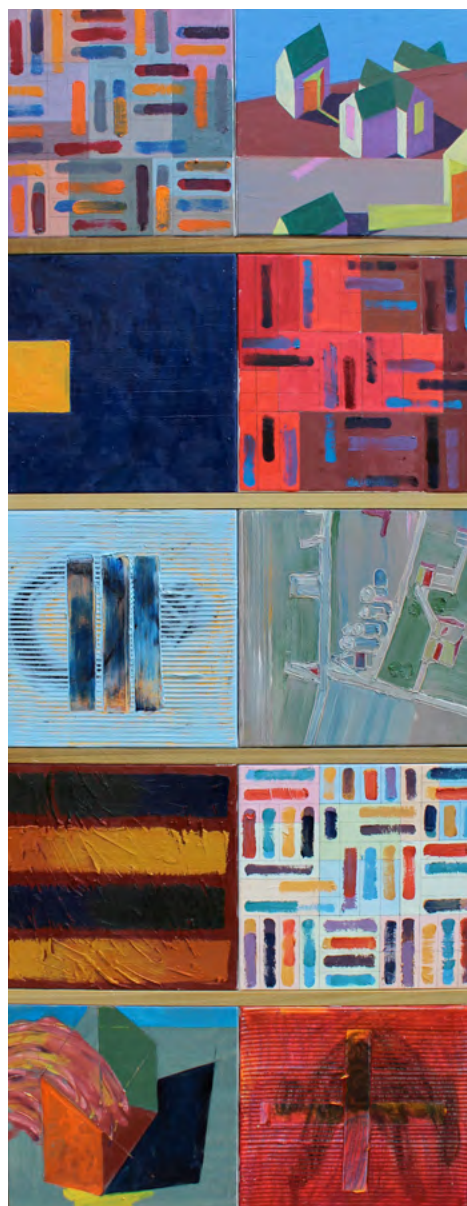
Earl Iselin, *Partially Buried 2*, 2018, Oil on canvas, 48" x 24"



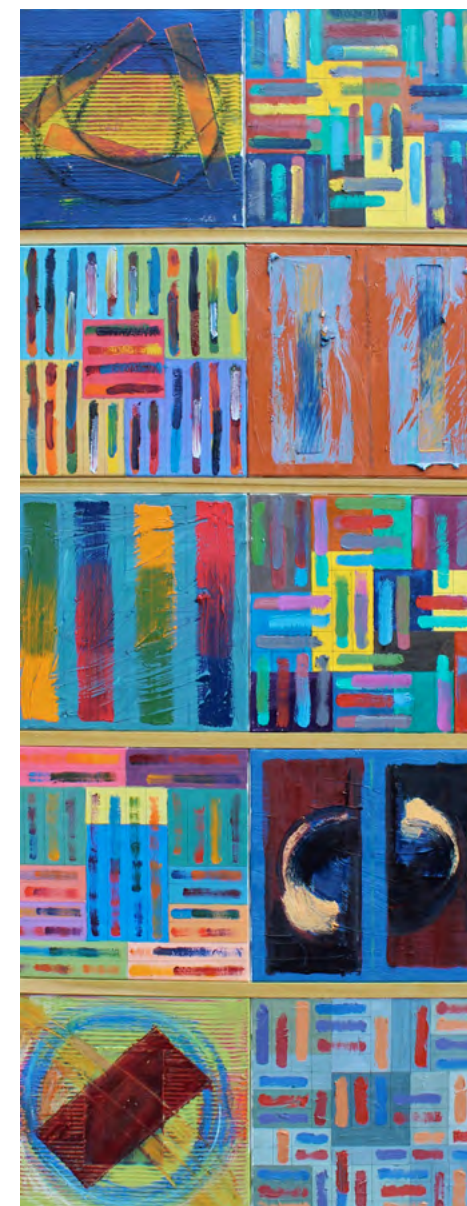
Earl Iselin, *Partially Buried 3*, 2018, Oil on canvas, 48" x 24"



Earl Iselin, *Stack 2*, 2018, Oil on canvas, 65" x 26"



Earl Iselin, *Stack 3*, 2018, Oil on canvas, 65" x 26"



Earl Iselin, *Stack 4*, 2018, Oil on canvas, 65" x 26"

Biographies

Jack McWhorter's paintings explore the intersection between science and art and their connection in process, intuition and discovery. His work is driven by a belief that non-representation offers compelling and adequate means of dealing with ideas that are most important to him, such as the dialogue between invisible and visible, conscious and unconscious, between matter and spirit and other lines of communication. McWhorter lives and works in Akron, Ohio. He received his MFA from Kent State University in 1983 and attended the Blossom Studio Intensives studying with Elmer Bischoff, Janet Fish, Alex Katz and Adja Yunkers. Over the past twenty years, he has exhibited widely at international venues including exhibitions at Sichuan University Museum, Chengdu, China, Museum of Hebei Normal University, Shijiazhuang, China, Meerbeek-Kortenbergh Gallery, Belgium, Kunstgalerie Artisjok, Lier, Belgium and UZ Gathuisberg Gallery, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium; among others. He has been a visiting artist at St. Luca School of Art, Brussels, The Walworth Barbour American International School, Tel Aviv and for the Ohio Arts Council.

Patricia Zinsmeister Parker's career spans four decades, and her work is best described as narrative abstract expressionism. Her painting methodology is based on a well honed sense of intuition acted upon with random gestures, which eventually suggest the content of the paintings and prints. The subject matter

(iconic shapes, symbols and color tonalities) comes together in the "soup" of pigment, collage and ideas which evolve with the flow of physical activity. Parker was an adjunct professor at the University of Akron in the School of Art from 1978-1998. During the same time, she was establishing an impressive exhibition schedule. She was the first female painter to exhibit work in the Cleveland Museum's "The Invitational: Artists of Northeast Ohio," an exhibition honoring regional artists. "Cleveland Collects Contemporary Art," a major exhibition at the museum, showcased a large painting "Art" from the collection of the Jones Day law firm. She has had solo shows at major museums and universities throughout Ohio, including a major retrospective at the Butler Institute of American Art in Youngstown. Other venues include Washington, D.C., Chicago and Xiamen University in southern China and Xian University in central China. Parker's paintings are represented in the collections of the Akron Art Museum, the Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio, the Canton Museum of Art, Kent State University, Case Western Reserve University, Archives of American Art (Smithsonian Institution) and Artists Archives of the Western Reserve. Parker was recognized by the Senate of the State of Ohio for induction into the Hall of Fame for contributions and achievements in Art. Parker holds B.F.A., M.A. and M.F.A. degrees from Kent State University, and pursued independent study from 2004-2008 at the Instituto de Allende, Mexico.

Biographies

Earl Iselin is a full-time painter living in Tallmadge, Ohio. Tallmadge is an original township in the Western Reserve, and a neighboring community to Akron, Ohio. He has lived in this area since graduating from Kent State University with a MFA in painting. He lives with his wife of thirty-six years, one of their adult sons, and two dogs. He maintains a studio there. Earl taught for thirteen years at two Kent State University campuses, focusing primarily on drawing. He is a retired civil servant, which allows him to work full-time at painting. During the 1990's, he maintained a studio at the former BF Goodrich factory in Akron. He has shown at the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Dayton Art Institute, the Canton Art Institute, the Akron Art Museum, and at Canal Place, and has participated in many group shows in Ohio and Pennsylvania. He has previously shown at The Painting Center once. While in graduate school, he had yearly solo shows on the Kent Campus and has continued to exhibit there since. He also showed with the arts group NOVA in Cleveland for many years, participating in their group shows several times a year. His work is in the collections of the University of Akron, Kent State University, Stark State University, and several private collectors.

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