



ZEN SEKAI GALLERY

JED IRWIN



A LIFE IN ART

March 9 through May 31, 2024



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In loving memory of my step-sister,
Glenna Ross, January 2, 1941 -
January 15, 2024, New York, NY. A
creative soul, sorely missed.





Introduction

I was in high school in the mid 1960s when I first met Jed Irwin. He had been newly hired as curator, by what was then called Cheney Cowles Museum (now Museum of Northwest Art and Culture) in Spokane WA. As curator he had instituted an outreach program called the “Intercampus Arts Association” which brought together area university, college and senior high school students, to explore networking, discussion and other art related projects. Jed offered me my first real job, as assistant to the curator, sparking a lifelong interest in curatorial issues and museology, of which this virtual gallery is but the latest instance. Jed was also my first big art influence, and I am still continuously amazed by the richness and variety of his pictorial strategies. Although this exhibition is focused on *A Lifetime in Art*, for me it also represents a lifetime of friendship; of many years of visits, conversations, and of exposure to Jed’s wide range of intellectual interests, wit and compassion.

This show would not have been possible without the dedicated work of Evy Wessel, Jed Irwin’s wife and partner in life.

– *William Elston, 2023*



ARTIST STATEMENT JED IRWIN

My early painting influences were the pioneers of lyrical abstraction Klee and Kandinsky, the surrealists Ernst and Matta, and the mid-century organic abstractionists Gorky and Tobey. Despite their many differences, these artists had at least two major commonalities which attracted me to them: the consistent and effective use of line (eschewed by many other modern painters) as a formal and expressive component; and the compelling need to reveal a private personal vision (Kandinsky's "internal necessity") through a process-conscious relationship with the working media. I also greatly admired - among others - Jean Debuffet and Alfonso Ossorio, both of whom pushed tactility beyond painting, into assemblage. All of these influences have been assimilated and continue to inform my work, but there have been other, different ones as well, most notably the visual wit, so closely linked to language, of Duchamp and William Wiley, which slants painting toward criticism (of art or culture history or of the art making process itself); and also the High Modernist minimalism of such artists as Robert Ryman and Brice Marden, whose work can be seen as the ultimate glorification of purely formal values in painting. Perhaps it is the mixture of the two groups of influences - the first subjective-intuitive, lyrical and visceral, the second rational, intellectual, relatively disengaged - that gives my own work and unsettling feeling of ongoing struggle, of edginess.

But isn't this just another take on the old dualistic discourse on the classical and the romantic, the Apollonian and the Dionysian? I have always been comfortable with and interested in notions of dualism in art, in psychology and in life. The union of opposites - especially order and chaos - is the goal of art. The artist functions much like the alchemist, who sought pure illumination at the intersection of magic, science and religion (ostensibly to turn base metals into gold - an early and ambitious attempt at recycling). We push coloured mud around with a hairy stick, in search of the shapes of memory and dream that when rightly balanced will bring into focus a resonant new image of interior reality.

I am very interested in the surface of a painting - how the paint forms a "skin" on the picture plane. My paintings don't usually have much sense of spatial recession, or depth: forms and colours tend to sit on or advance forward from the picture plane. My colour is not bound by drawing, but is used as a more independent element for the creation of shape and pattern. There is a range of colour, and colour relations are not always kept harmonious.

In my work - with certain exceptions - what the painting is "about", in my mind, emerges as the painting develops, not before. It is the result of the interaction of two primary factors: process, (how the actual tools and materials are employed and manipulated, through both conscious and subconscious impulses); and happenstance (the intervention of seemingly arbitrary or gratuitous experiences external to the studio process). The intervention of happenstance can be a revelation that focuses process, giving an additional layer of meaning. In turn, the painting gives meaning to experience. Therefore, for me the business of painting is an end in itself, an access route to discovery rather than a means of reproducing an experience already completed.

Since I prefer not to utilize explicit imagery, I can only hope that the paintings evoke in the viewer something curiously familiar, some general sense of narrative action, a frozen moment in an archetypal dream.



Concise Resume of JED ANTHONY IRWIN

Personal Data

547 Rainbow Way
Parksville, BC, Canada V9P 0G8

tel: (250) 586-0245
email: jirwin@ucalgary.ca

Born: New York, N.Y., February 26, 1941.
Canadian Citizenship 1975

Education

M.F.A., Mills College, Oakland, California, June 1966. Major in Painting
under Rafael Canogar Minor in Art History under Alfred Neumeyer

B.F.A., Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia, February 1964. Major in Painting
under David Pease Minor in English under Gerald Stern

University of Rochester, 1959-1960. Major in English.

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| November 2018 | The Hive Gallery, Gabriola Island, BC |
| June 2006 | Comox Valley Art Gallery, Courtenay, BC |
| February 2005 | Oceanside Gallery, Parksville, BC |
| April 2004 | Devonian Gardens Gallery, Calgary, AB |
| February 2002 | Afrikadey Gallery, Calgary, AB |
| July 1999 | The New Gallery, Calgary AB |
| November 1997 | Mark Ruschman Art Gallery, Indianapolis, Indiana |
| June 1997 | Domino Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic |
| February 1997 | Deacon Ulrich Fine Arts, Calgary, AB |
| June-Sept. 1995 | Czech Republic, Three Cities Traveling Exhibition |
| April 1995 | Maya Plastic Art Centre, Istanbul |
| February 1994 | Triangle Gallery, Calgary AB |
| March 1992 | Haynes Fine Arts Gallery, Bozeman, Montana |
| December 1991 | Galeri MD, Istanbul |
| June 1987 | Pitt International Galleries, Vancouver BC |
| March 1987 | Virginia Christopher, Calgary AB |
| May 1984 | Langham Cultural Centre, Kaslo, BC |



September 1983	National Exhibition Centre, Castlegar, BC
January 1983	Virginia Christopher Gallery, Calgary, Alberta.
March 1981	David Thompson University Centre Gallery, Nelson, BC
January 1981	Surrey Art Gallery, Surrey, BC
April 1979	Malaspina College, Nanaimo, BC
March 1979	Media Gallery, Victoria, BC
March 1978	Vancouver East Cultural Centre, Vancouver, BC
September 1977	Open Space, Victoria, BC
May 1977	Malaspina College, Powell River, BC
April 1970	Grassroots Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan.
November 1968	Zalamea Gallery, New York.

Represented in Public Collections

Canada Council Art Bank	Vancouver Civic Art Bank
Alberta Art Foundation	Saskatchewan Arts Board
Norman McKenzie Art Gallery	Regina Public Library Collection
Mount Royal College	Museum of Painting & Sculpture, Istanbul
Calgary Civic Art Collection	Nickle Arts Museum, Calgary
National Gallery, Ostrava,	Glenbow Museum, Calgary
Czech Republic	

Represented in Corporate Collections

Shell Canada	RGO Corp., Edmonton
MAS Printing, Istanbul	Fairmont Hotels
Eczacibasi Foundation, Turkey	Husky Oil
Air Canada	

Employment

Current: Professor Emeritus, Art Department, University of Calgary

1984-2003 Associate Professor, Art Department, University of Calgary.
Teaching painting and drawing at undergraduate and post-graduate levels.
Area Coordinator for Painting 1985-88, 1994-95. 1997-98; Graduate
Program Coordinator 1998-2000

1980-1984 Assistant Professor, Visual Arts Department, University of
Victoria at David Thompson University Centre, Nelson, B.C.



Taught Painting and Drawing at all undergraduate levels; responsible for development of new B.F.A. program

1978-1979 Part-time teaching, as follows:

University of British Columbia, Continuing Education Dept. Burnaby Arts Centre.
Peter Aspell School of Art, Vancouver.

1977-1978 City of Vancouver: Artist Employed (having been selected by city-wide
juried competition) under the Civic Art Bank program to create works for the
City's collection.

1974-1976 Central Island Arts Alliance, Courtenay, B.C.
Co-ordinator/Curator, Founding President.

1970- 1974 Self-employed, Denman Island and Cumberland, B.C.

1969-1971 Regina Public Library, Regina, Saskatchewan Curator, Dunlop Gallery.

1968-1969 Kingdom of Morocco: Artist in Residence, Fes, Morocco, federal grant

1967-1968 Self-employed, New York City: operated an independent transport
service for artists and art dealers.

1966-1967 Cheney Cowles Museum, Spokane, Washington Curator of Art.

University of Calgary Functions

2004 Guest Curator, Nickle Arts Museum, for "Visions of Paradise",
Oriental Carpet Exhibition

2002 - 2003 Painting Area Coordinator

2001 Art Fundamentals Area Coordinator

1998 - 2000 Master of Fine Arts Program Coordinator

1995 -1997 Senior Studio Coordinator and Division Representative to
Department Head's Advisory Committee

1995 -1997 Coordinator, Visiting Artist Program

1996 -1998 Fine Arts Representative to the University of Calgary
International Centre

1996 -1997 Project coordinator, 30th Anniversary Juried Alumni Exhibition



Artist Residencies

- 2002 Albuquerque, New Mexico, Visiting Artist, U.N.M.
- 1998 Heredia, Costa Rica
Self funded sabbatical residency, painting and lecturing
- 1991 Istanbul, Turkey:
Artist in Residence, Academy of Fine Arts, 4 months
- 1987 Banff, Alberta:
Residency, Leighton Artists Colony at The Banff Centre, 3 weeks.
- 1968 Fez, Morocco:
Residency, Government Cultural Centre Studios, 4 weeks

Foreign Travel

- 2019-20 NYC, Spain, Turkey, Colombia
- 2008-15 Mexico, southern US, NYC, eastern Canada
- 2009 Turkey, Mexico
- 2008 Mexico
- 2006 New York
- 2005 Mexico. New York
- 2004 Mexico
- 2003 Southeastern U.S.
- 2002 Southwestern and Northeastern U.S.
- 2001 Southwestern U.S.
- 2000 Northeastern U.S., Eastern Canada
- 1999 France, Turkey
- 1998 Residence in Costa Rica
- 1996 Ireland, Holland, Turkey
- 1995 Hungary, Czech Republic, Turkey
- 1994 Holland, Czech Republic, Turkey
- 1993 Turkey
- 1991 Residence in Istanbul; Artist in Residence, Academy of Fine Arts, Mimar Sinan University
- 1989 Britain, Western Europe, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Bulgaria
- 1979-1980 Residence in Spain; travel in Britain, Holland, France
- 1971 Mexico
- 1968 Britain, Spain and North Africa



Special Research Activities:

Artists' Colonies

- 1997 - 2003 Consultant to the Director, Centre d'Art Marnay, Marnay-sur Seine, France
- 1995 - 2003 Member, Board of Directors, Gumusluk Academy, Mugla, Turkey
- 1994 -1996 International Development Officer for the Degirmendere Project in Kocaeli, Turkey; research and development toward the establishment of an international, multidisciplinary artists' residential work center.
- 1994-97 Member, Alliance of Artists' Communities and Res Artis (an Association for International Artists' Residential Work Centres and Networks)

Oriental Carpets

- 2004 carpet Guest Curator, Nickle Arts Museum, for "Visions of Paradise", exhibition
- 1997-2002 Calgary Teaching Introductory Carpet Studies courses for University of Faculty of Continuing Education
- 1996-1997 Operated Jed Irwin Tribal Textiles, a gallery featuring changing exhibitions of textiles presented as works of art
- 1992-2003 Founding member and Vice-President of the Calgary Rug Club; Membership Secretary for the New Calgary Rug and Textile Club
- 1994-1997 and For the Calgary Turkish Canadian Cultural Association, initiated and coordinated visiting speakers, and exhibitions of Turkish Art and carpets
- 1994 Nickle Arts Museum, Guest Curator. Organized and curated the exhibition "Rugs as Art," 1994 and ancillary feature activities

African Art

- 2002 - present Independent studies in African tribal art



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JED IRWIN
Low Horizon, 2007
acrylic on canvas
60 x 48 inches



JED IRWIN
Do Not Go Gentle, 2020
acrylic on canvas
40 x 84 inches



JED IRWIN
Klunderspoons (or Klunder's Poons), 1999
acrylic on canvas
66 x 56 inches





JED IRWIN
Gumball Madness, 2002
acrylic on canvas
56 x 40 inches



JED IRWIN
Viking War Dance, 2022
acrylic on canvas
36 x 72 inches
\$ 4,500

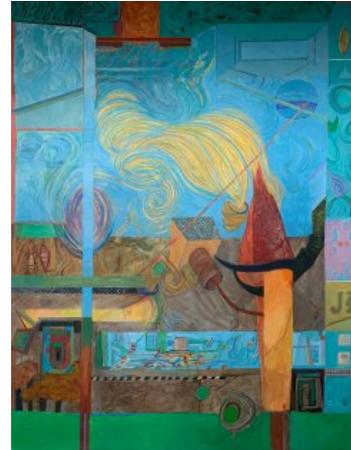


JED IRWIN
New Dream City, 2007
acrylic on canvas
55 x 48 inches
\$ 3,500





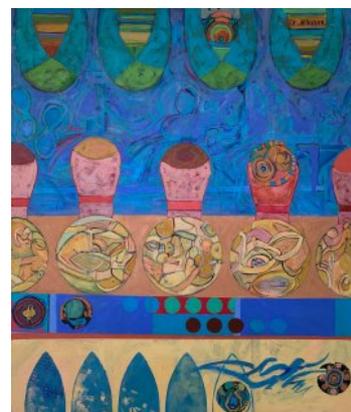
JED IRWIN
Untitled, 2015
acrylic on canvas
75 x 56 inches
\$ 4,500



JED IRWIN
Before the Carnival, 1990-2007
acrylic on canvas
56 x 48 inches
\$ 3,000



JED IRWIN
Funny Setup, 2015
acrylic on canvas
48 x 40 inches





JED IRWIN
Getting to the Point, 2014
acrylic on canvas
60 x 40 inches
\$ 4,000



JED IRWIN
Green Painting, 2023
acrylic on canvas
64 x 51.5 inches
\$ 4,500



JED IRWIN
Equipoise, 2001-07
acrylic on canvas
40 x 56 inches
\$ 3,800





JED IRWIN
Keys to the City, 2011
acrylic on canvas
48 x 40 inches
\$ 3,800



JED IRWIN
Pink and Yellow, 2002
acrylic on canvas
46 x 59 inches
\$ 3,000



JED IRWIN
Triptych, 2023
acrylic on canvas
60 x 144 inches
\$ 6,000





JED IRWIN
Double Sunrise, 2018
acrylic on canvas
36 x 24 inches



JED IRWIN
The Crowd, 2012
acrylic on canvas
42 x 66 inches
\$ 4,800



JED IRWIN
White Painting, 2023
acrylic on canvas
42 x 40 inches
\$ 4,500





JED IRWIN
My Life in the Bush of Ghosts, 2002
acrylic on canvas
72 x 54 inches



JED IRWIN
Dark Vision, 2023
acrylic on canvas
36 x 60 inches
\$ 4,500



JED IRWIN
Winter Bells, 1988-99
acrylic on canvas
68 x 60 inches





JED IRWIN

Grandfather's Song, 1995

acrylic on canvas

42 x 63.5 inches

\$ 4,800



JED IRWIN

Blue Ceremony, 2007

acrylic on canvas

60 x 48 inches

\$ 4,000



JED IRWIN

Mahone Bay Blues, 2015

acrylic on canvas

35 x 59.5 inches

\$ 3,600





JED IRWIN
First Nova Scotia Painting, 2012
acrylic on canvas
42 x 66 inches





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I can only hope that the paintings evoke in the
viewer something curiously familiar,
some general sense of narrative action,
a frozen moment in an archetypal dream.”

– Jed Irwin



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