

An abstract painting with a complex, layered composition. The colors are primarily earthy tones like brown, grey, and black, with accents of blue and green. The brushstrokes are visible and expressive, creating a sense of movement and depth. The overall effect is one of organic complexity and dynamic energy.

SOUND SEED

BORN FROM MUSIC

Nancy Newton



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#24 23" X 23" Acrylic on Canvas

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#33 23" X 23" Acrylic on Canvas

INTRODUCTION

Sound Seed is my third exhibition of work inspired by *Dream-e-scape*, a twenty-minute composition by Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer. Preparing artist talks for the first two exhibitions, *Sound Space* (2016) and *Sound Scape* (2018), gave me time to reflect on my historical interest and involvement in music's relationship with visual expression.

Initially, I did not predict my immersion into this music in 2012 would inspire my creative life for the next eight years. Studying the sounds in depth and responding intuitively to the music was a process that encouraged me to learn more from other creative learning endeavours. As a result, I more closely examined my experience as an art educator and facilitator of workshops that aim to foster the creative imagination in others.

Sound Seed, Born from Music attempts to give insight into my experience with the creative process. Hopefully it illustrates how innate interest, experience and memory feed into the completion of a body of work. It is a winding path – one that presents many obstacles, uncertainties and an unclear destination.

I would like to thank my friend Marilyn Cade for inviting me to the concert at Koerner Hall in Toronto where *Dream-e-scape* was performed. Marilyn knew I admired Schafer's music. My only expectation was to have a lovely evening enjoying a concert. Little did I know how this event would influence my art practice for years to come.

I have great appreciation for the ongoing interest and support provided by family and friends over the years since I had my first exhibition in 1991. Mary-Ann Kokoska, Professor of Drawing at Colorado State, continues to be a mentor as well as my son Adam Newton, giving valuable feedback when work is in progress in the studio.

I also must thank Austin Clarkson, Professor of Music Emeritus (York University) and Mary-Ann Kokoska, who read the document and gave valued feedback. I also have former student Tariq Sami to thank, who completed the catalogue and layout design in addition to Joey Ness, who acted as editor.

And finally, I want to thank R. Murray Schafer for sending me the CD of *Dream-e-scape*. In the accompanying note he hoped I would be inspired. I think it's safe to say this was a grand understatement.

Nancy Newton, 2020



SOUND SEED

On January 27, 2012, I attended the performance of R. Murray Schafer's musical composition *Dream-e-scape* at Koerner Hall in Toronto. Schafer's music takes the audience on a sound journey into a space of mystery and awe that I have often found otherworldly. Musically, *Dream-e-scape* is full of contrasts - with variations in pitch, tempo, dynamics, use of instrumentation and intervals. While some passages relate to natural phenomena like violent storms, rustling wind and birds flying (not unlike Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*), *Dream-e-scape* goes beyond the confines of the earthly realm. At the end of the powerful twenty-minute performance, speaking as a visual artist, I turned to my companion and said, "I think I can do something with this."



ARTISTIC INCLINATION

Historically, inspiration for my painting has come from spending time in dramatic Canadian landscapes and visually rich environments. The use of gestural mark-making and the influence of music are prominent in my work, weaving in and out of my contemporary landscapes. Interpreting the sounds and ultimately the essence of a musical composition like *Dream-e-scape* would allow for the exploration of space in an unfamiliar realm. It would not be tethered to reality, which is better aligned with my current interest in abstraction.



BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

to the Music of R. Murray Schafer

A music course I took at York University in 1981 led by Dr. Austin Clarkson surveyed Canadian music from Indigenous cultures to modern concert music. I liked his approach of incorporating all aspects of the arts: sounds, visuals and movement in the lectures and presentations. Over time, I have come to realize his expertise in understanding the creative process.

At the conclusion of the course I had the opportunity to respond objectively and subjectively to the music of Harry Freedman, John Weinzweig, Harry Somers and R. Murray Schafer. In addition to analyzing their compositions musically, a creative response such as drawing, painting or writing was required. Although I had read about Kandinsky's early exploration with sound and visual mark making in his *Improvisation and Composition* series, this was my first attempt at interpreting specific sounds visually.

Schafer's atonal compositions relating to the natural world particularly captured my attention. As a major assignment for the course, I chose to compare Schafer to the Canadian painter Lawren Harris. I was interested to learn that Schafer had considered becoming a painter. His musical scores illustrate his drawing skills and creative approach. Although their modes of artistic expression differed, there was a kinship in Harris and Schafer's early background experiences, values and aesthetic. They were both drawn to the spiritual world and the pursuit of universal truths. Harris remarked, "If expression is clear and deep it will become universal."

RESEARCH/ESSAY

Comparing Musical Composer and Visual Artist

Schafer and Harris both spent time in Germany and were exposed to the revival of mysticism, Theosophy, and Bauhaus teachers like Kandinsky and Klee. In *Concerning the Spiritual in Art (1912)*, Kandinsky wrote that in order to express the spirit, a non-material form of expression was needed. This was the beginning of non-objective painting. Music was considered an entrance to the soul and it would lead to Kandinsky's abstract series, including *Compositions and Improvisations* at the beginning of the 20th century. Kandinsky's early experimentation with abstraction would open up the possibilities for artists and composers to continue in this direction, as seen in Harris' and Schafer's later works.

Both artists valued the creative expression of other cultures as well as the search for spiritual unity. They also shared a similar view on the mythology of the North and its unique importance in shaping the Canadian identity.

PRESENTATION

Schafer's *String Quartet #1 Made Visible*

Preparing for a class presentation regarding the relationship shown between music, sounds and visual expression, I found Harris's depictions of northern landscapes did not visually describe Schafer's composition *String Quartet #1*. His paintings were serene and quiet, particularly his later hard-edged abstractions. In contrast, the music was agitated, with wide swings in pitch, density and dynamics. Since *String Quartet #1* would be played during the presentation and synchronized with paintings describing the ambiance and sounds, more expressive Canadian artists had to be chosen. Vigorous brushwork, vibrant colours and exaggerated imagery could be found in the work of Alfred Pellán, Emily Carr, Jack Shadbolt as well as West Coast Indigenous artists.

When I began the process of visually analyzing the music, I started by listening to the individual sounds from beginning to the end of *String Quartet #1*. The sounds were transcribed with calligraphic strokes on paper, from left to right, indicating pitch, tempo, sustained or broken sounds, and so forth. This drawing created the visual sound scape to analyze and then match paintings or sculptures from the artists to describe the musical passages of *String Quartet #1*. Seventeen images were selected.

The methodology described here to transcribe or record sounds would be used for *Dream-e-scape* thirty-two years later.

MUSICAL INSPIRATION

Classroom Experience

Concurrent to my studies at York University, I was teaching visual arts in a secondary school in Toronto. This provided the opportunity to expose students to musical selections by a contemporary Canadian composer, as well as observe their visual responses to the pieces. I chose two compositions by Schafer, *Epitaph for Moonlight* and *Miniwanka - Moments of Water*. The grade twelve class was already experienced in handling abstraction; they had been studying Abstract Expressionist artists such as Pollock, Gottlieb and Frankenthaler to find their own expressive visual imagery via watercolour and acrylic painting on canvas. Now, the challenge was to create a non-objective painting inspired by music that would capture the essence of a natural phenomenon (i.e. moonlight, water) that the class had collectively experienced.

Throughout this process the students and I learned how significantly music could enhance creative visual expression. Many remarked that painting was made easier when sound was “entrained” with the body. This is a phenomenon achieved when vibrating energy found in every cell can be influenced by vibrating sound energy, be it through noise or music.

The resulting imagery in their paintings, inspired by Schafer’s two musical compositions, was direct and surprising, and their interest and enthusiasm fueled mine. The concept of music informing visual mark-making had been reinforced.

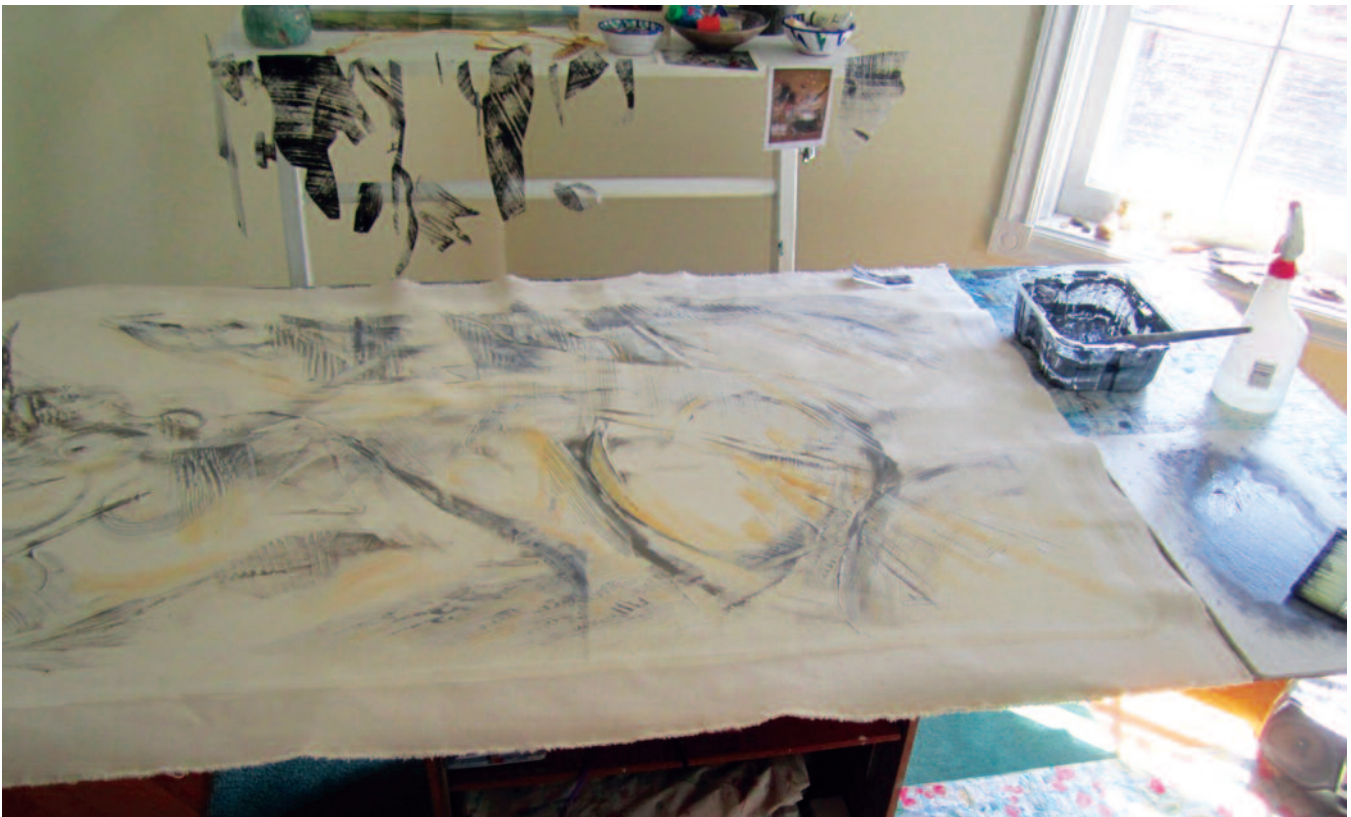


Musical Inspiration - Classroom Experience - Student Response to *Epitaph for Moonlight*

TRANSITION from Visual Arts Teacher to *Exploring Creativity in Depth* Facilitator

In the role as a visual arts teacher, my intention was to encourage students to resolve the challenges found with project making in a creative, personal way. This was done within the parameters of following a curriculum. It wasn't until after retiring from teaching in 2000 and reconnecting with Dr. Austin Clarkson (the music professor who introduced me to Schaefer's music) that I started to better understand what facilitates the creative process.

Austin initially developed *Exploring a Painting in Depth* for the Art Gallery of Ontario, which evolved into a program that touched thousands of participants in Toronto elementary schools called *Exploring Creativity in Depth*. Both titles describe a methodology via dialogue for guiding the eye and mind into a work of art. The latter title took the process a step further to involve the hand in creating a response. In *Exploring Creativity in Depth*, the initial exploration of an artwork inspired pastel drawings by each participant. Over many years I was one of the facilitators that helped children on their journey to unlocking their creative potential. The description outlines the approximately four hour workshop.



Studio - *Acoustic Romp* in progress, 2019

Exploring Creativity in Depth (ECID)

Focusing Exercise - Art Gallery

ECID participants explore the work displayed in the gallery and then choose an artwork to focus their attention for approximately twenty minutes. While seated and guided by a dialogue, they carefully examine and reflect on the artwork. For example, children are asked to pick a spot in the painting and imagine what they would see, feel or hear from that place. Nearing the end of the focusing exercise, they are directed to choose one shape and one colour from the artwork. This choice provides a starting point for beginning a pastel drawing in an adjacent studio.

Pastel Drawing - Studio

A second scripted dialogue instructs the child to cover the white paper with the chosen colour and place the shape in the middle of the page. Ideally, every child has started to engage their mind and body in the process by this point. After a few minutes the child is instructed to do "anything they want", which allows them to bring their own ideas and imagery into the composition. In my years of witnessing this process I did not hear a single child utter, "I don't know what to do". Upon completion, the children sit in a circle in small groups with their facilitator back in the gallery. As the facilitator holds up each pastel drawing, the children first describe what they see in the work. Then the artist explains how they created their composition while making reference to the original artwork that inspired them.

Second Pastel Drawing - Studio

After a break, the entire process is repeated, but this time the children focus on their first pastel composition on the floor beside their desk. Again, a dialogue guides the exploration of their pastel drawing. Finally they are directed to start the second drawing by choosing a different colour and two shapes. After completing the drawing, the children gather in small groups with their facilitator to bring observations, reflections and possibly meaning to each participant's drawings. The discussion then expands to compare and contrast the first and second compositions. Responses from the children are directed to the artist first and then the creator explains their intention, meaning and so on. Often, the insights of others can reveal what is not conscious to us. The discussion is not a critical aesthetic judgment of their work but rather a response to an authentic creative experience. I witnessed children being accepted, validated and empowered by sharing their images and stories. It is a powerful experience for everyone involved.

Later, I will explain how my experience as a facilitator influenced my creative practice as it relates to my exploration of Schafer's composition *Dream-e-scape* through drawing, painting and ceramic sculptures.

An abstract painting of a human face, rendered in a highly textured and expressive style. The face is the central focus, with visible brushstrokes and a mix of colors including beige, blue, green, and brown. The background is filled with similar textures and colors, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall effect is one of intense emotional expression and artistic freedom.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

VISUAL INTERPRETATION OF MUSIC

In 2006, I had the opportunity to respond to music played by the Orchestre Symphonique de Montreal for their 2006 calendar, *The Enchanted Orchestra*. Using the same method I had employed earlier for *String Quartet #1* in the music course, *Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks* by Mussorgsky and *Fairy Garden* by Ravel were translated visually. I interpreted the sound passages as an abstract painting of marks on paper for each musical composition.

The final compositions illustrate how the visual elements of colour, line, texture and shape contribute to capturing the musical essence of the piece. The accompanying descriptions were included with the calendar images for each month.



Emerging Energy - May (Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks by Mussorgsky) 27" x 35" Acrylic on Paper

The fast-paced ascending melody line was translated into 'flicks' of the brush and dominates the final composition, as it is repeated several times. The heavier swaggering sounds in the middle passages make up the background.



Fairy Garden Fling - July (Fairy Garden by Ravel) 27" x 35" Acrylic on Paper

After repeated and active listening, I interpreted the sound passages as an abstract composition of marks. The final work intends to capture the essence of the movement, from its softer dream-like beginnings that build slowly to its dynamic climax.

SEED – GERMINATION / 2013

After hearing the performance of *Dream-e-scape*, the idea of responding to the music lingered, but I could not find the CD and almost abandoned the idea. By the end of April, I overcame my hesitation of contacting Schafer directly. I had met Schafer earlier through a friend in the Peterborough area. Following our introduction, he sent me some material we had discussed, including his address. I wrote a letter, told him my intention and asked if I could purchase a CD from him. He replied that he “hoped it would inspire me - no charge, artist to artist.” Soon I was listening to *Dream-e-scape* over and over, parsing the sounds so I could respond accurately with marks. Seven drawings using black and silver ink were completed in this initial series.

Sound Staff #1 is the final (and most accurate) attempt of recording sounds from the first three minutes and twenty-three seconds of the composition, whereas *Sound Staff #7* describes the last three minutes and twenty-three seconds. There is an obvious difference between the first and last examples. The contrast in tones, as well as broken and sustained sounds describing the energy and dynamics of the music is visually evident.



Sound Staff #1 29" x 35.5" Ink on Paper



Sound Staff #7 29" x 35.5" Ink on Paper

This intense exercise in conscious listening was my attempt to get to know the music. Unlike visual technology, it is impossible to stop a musical composition and view the frame. After completing the seven sections I could see the sounds: the intervals, pitch, volume and density.

Following this exercise, I needed to get away from the restriction of recording sounds as accurately as possible to just respond freely to the music. Using drawing materials like India ink or conte, I turned on *Dream-e-scape* and responded intuitively to the music. A series of smaller works as well as larger drawings were created.

In conjunction with this exploration, I was already preparing for an exhibition in 2014 entitled *Land Vibes*, which abstracted the Canadian northern landscape. Some of the visual responses to *Dream-e-scape* were transformed into landscapes with the addition of collaged Japanese paper, as seen in *Syncopation*. Alternatively, *Sound Space #1* and *Percussion Passage* are examples of drawings based solely on the sounds.



Syncopation 33" x 39" Mixed Media Collage



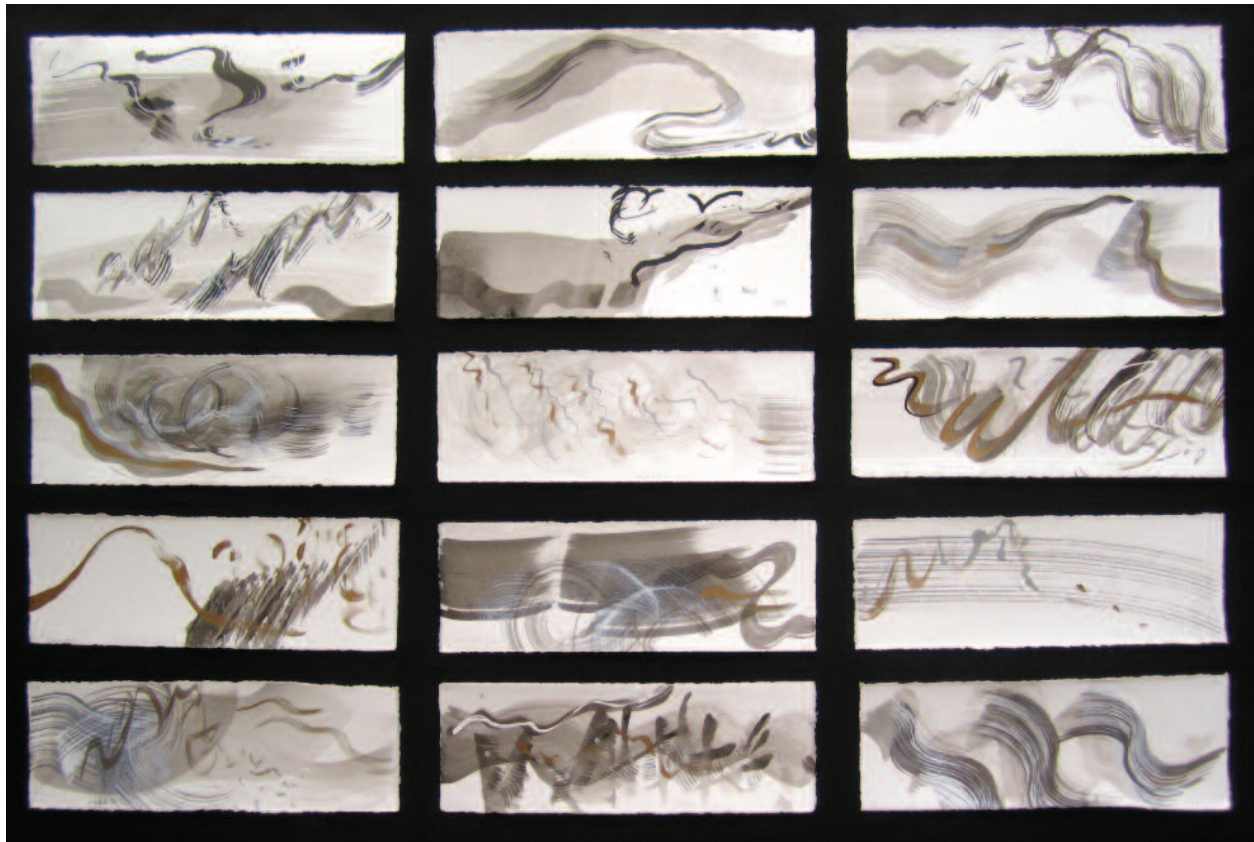
Sound Space #1 29" x 35.5" Mixed Media Collage



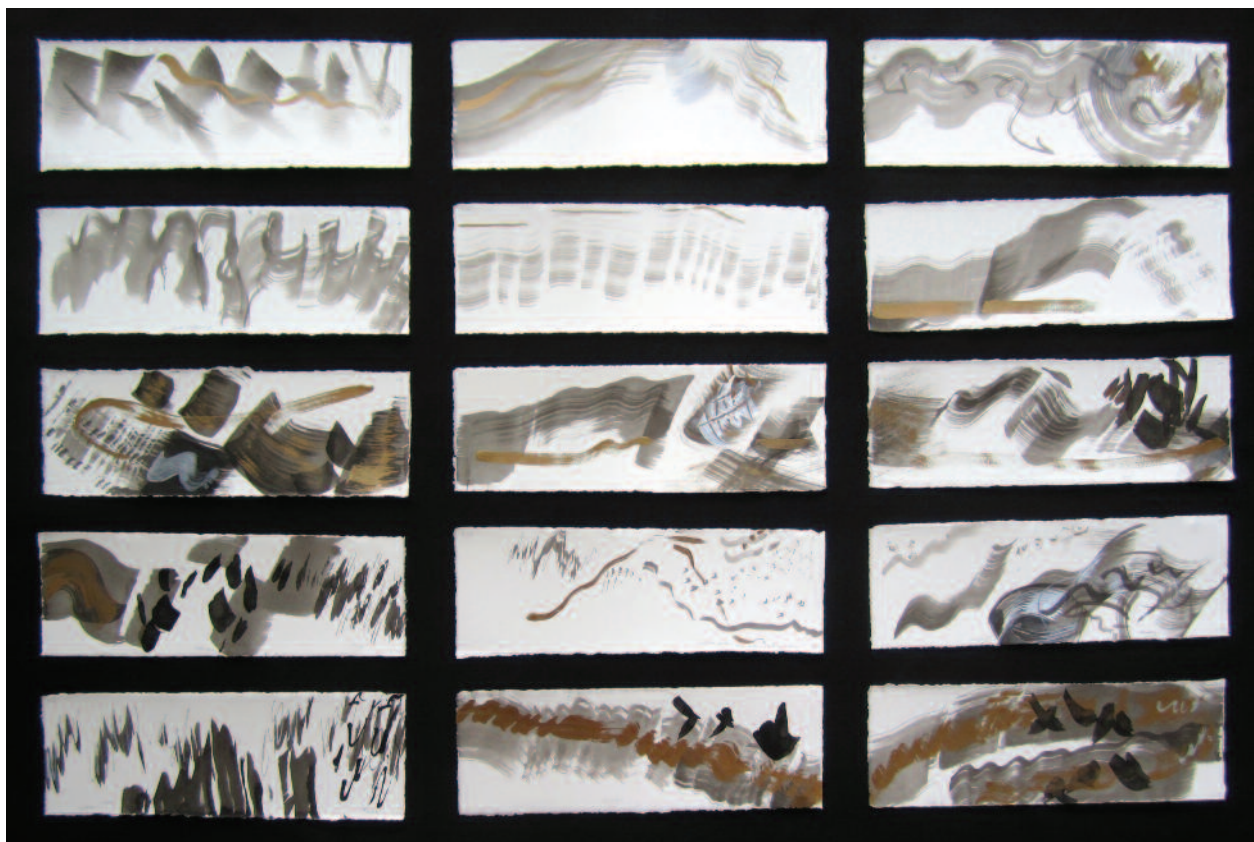
Percussion Passage 20" x 29" Mixed Media Collage

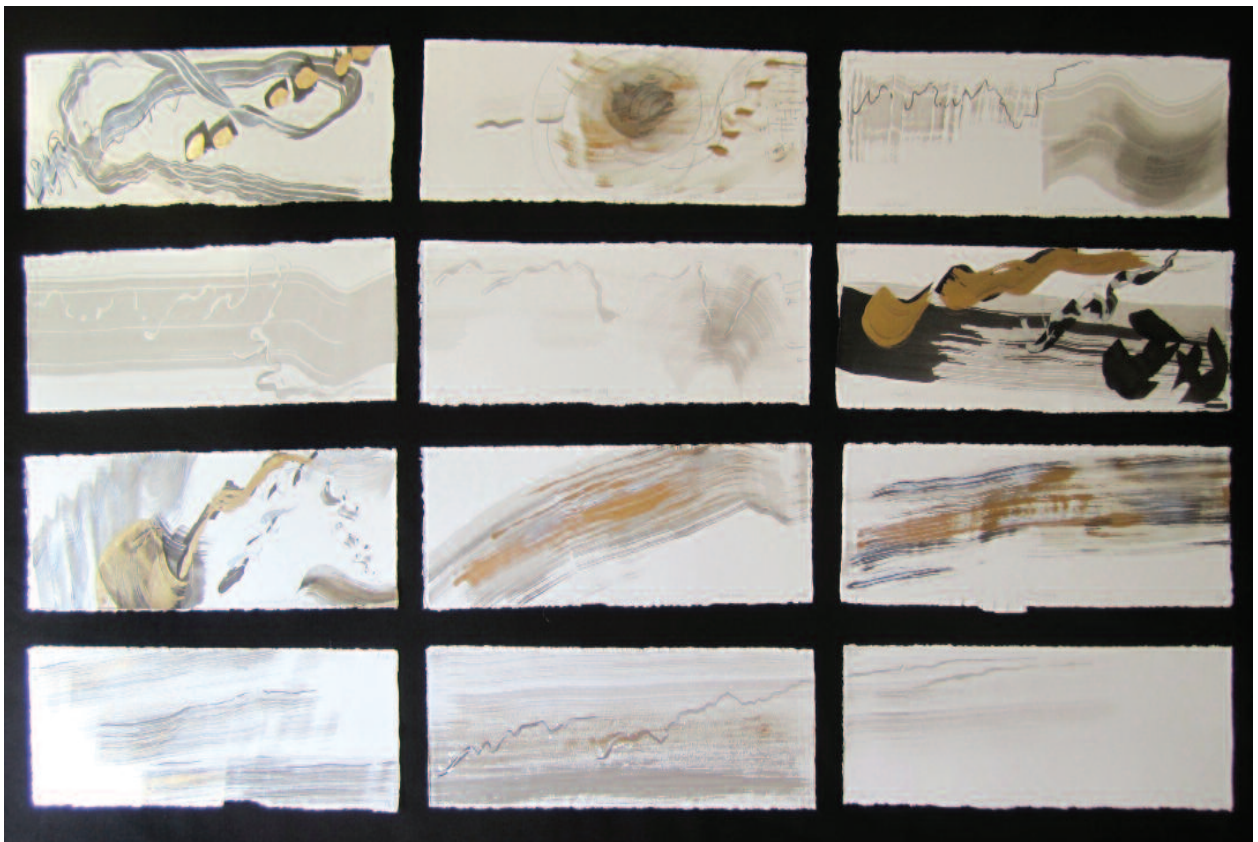
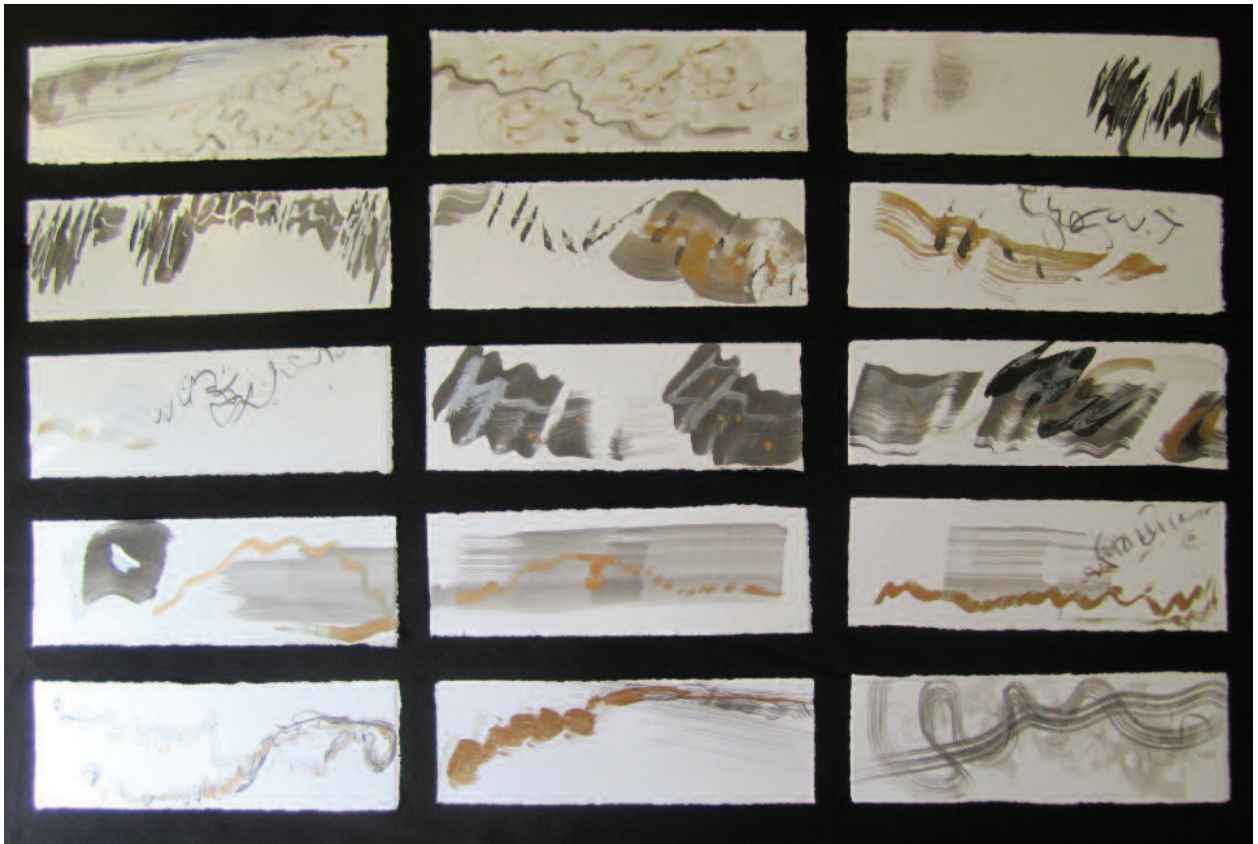
The compositions were spontaneous responses completed quickly and then considered. For example, adding collage pieces to carry the movement and implied sound beyond the original rectangular border enhanced the dynamics of the composition.

However, I was still not certain that I could develop the work further on paper and canvas to my satisfaction. My previous practice was to develop ideas on canvas inspired by paperwork. Once again, I returned to active listening of *Dream-e-scape*, stopping and starting the music to record the sounds as I had done previously with the *Sound Staff (1-7)* series into shorter time frames. Working on smaller paper cards (3.75" x 11.25") and capturing a few seconds on each, the twenty-minute composition took fifty-seven cards to complete.



Beginning to End – Visual Interpretation of Dream-e-scape – 57 Sound Cards read left to right





Now I had fifty-seven sound cards, illustrating a few 'seconds of sound' on each card, to provide a starting point for the canvases. The following paintings were each inspired by one sound card. The title of the painting (i.e. #24) reflects the corresponding sound card number (not visible on the sound card illustrated).



#24 23" x 23" Acrylic on Canvas



#33 23" x 23" Acrylic on Canvas

Painting #13 developed very quickly once initial strokes of black gesso were added to the tonal underpainting. Immediately, the feeling of depth was suggested, which I continued to accentuate along with the up and down spiralling movement. It was one of the most exciting images to spontaneously emerge from the entire canvas series. In contrast, #14 adheres more closely to the sound card.

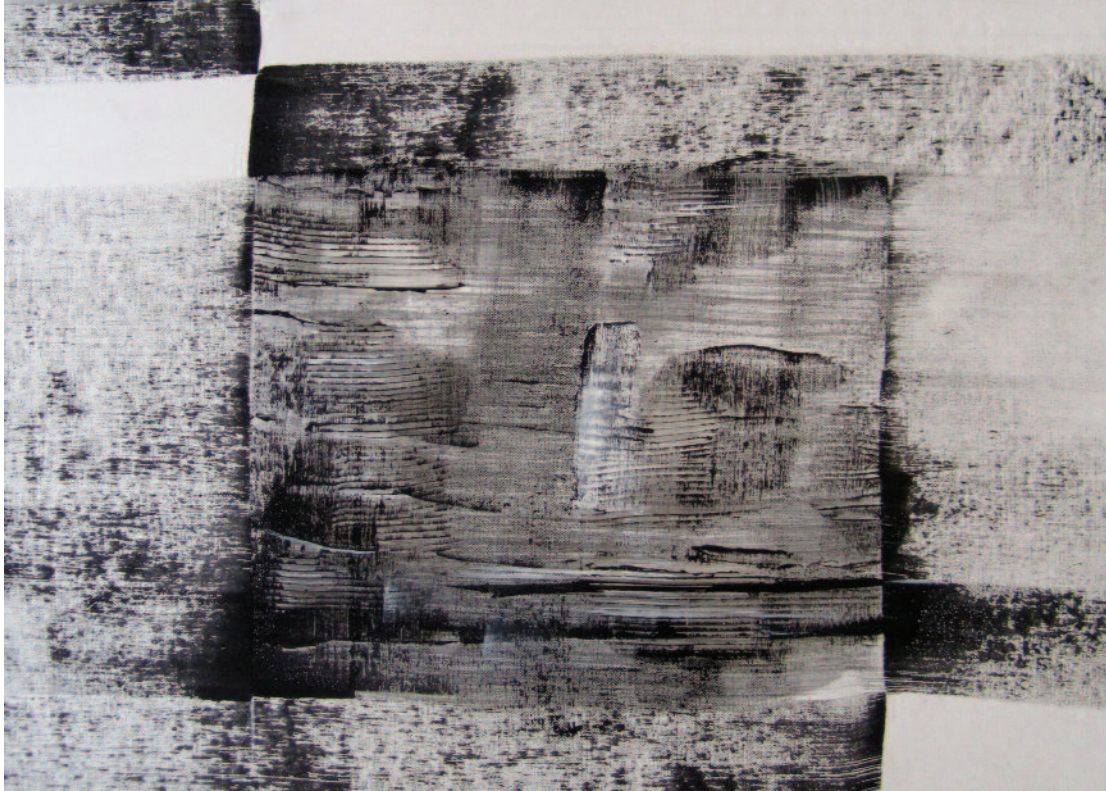


#13 33" x 48" Acrylic on Canvas

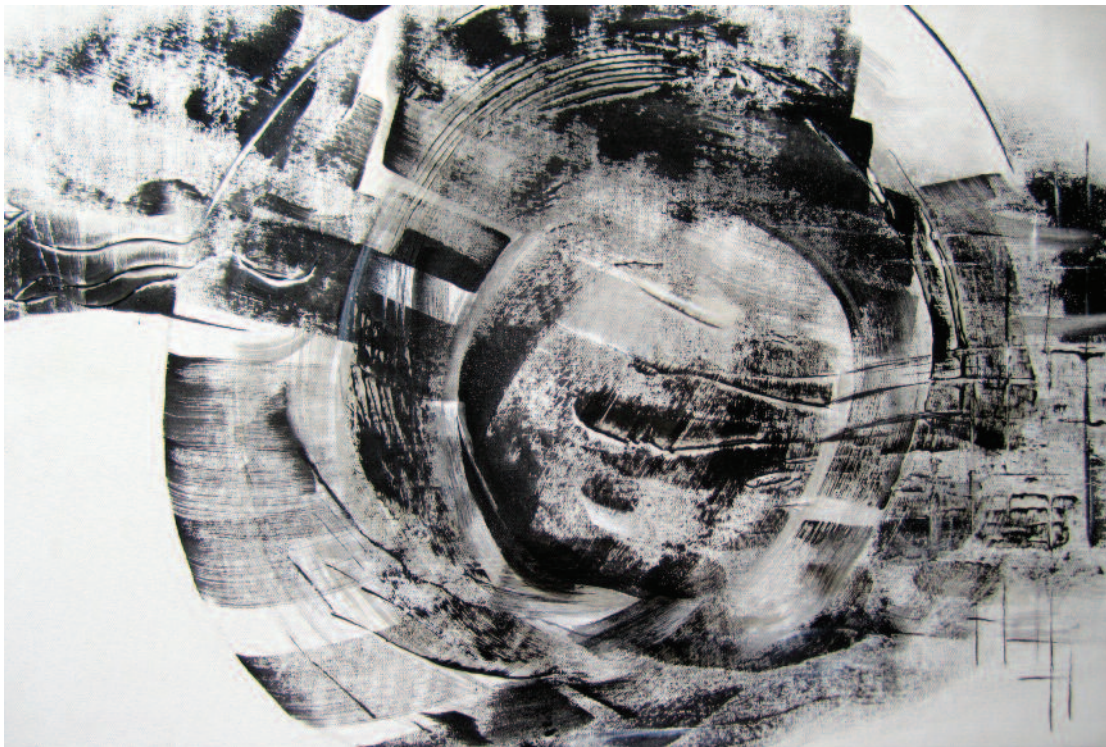


#14 29" X 48" Acrylic on Canvas

Painting #15 retains the repetitive flowing movement as described in the sound card, but it also develops beyond specific inspiration into a more complex sound environment. The initial dark foreground suggested the surface of a moving river from which other sounds emerge, ascend, morph, and then finally fade into the distance. This canvas looks forward to developing paintings in the next series beyond the specific sound scape of the music.



#42 17.5" x 24.75" Acrylic on Canvas



#47 21" x 30.5" Acrylic on Canvas



#15 52" x 42" Acrylic on Canvas

SOUND FORMS

After the paperwork and canvas were completed I worked with clay to create three-dimensional 'sound forms' to further extend the *Sound Space* theme. Here the numbering relates to their order in the series.



Sound Form #1 15" x 12" Ceramic, Black Acrylic



Sound Form #2 16.5 x 8.5" Ceramic, Black Acrylic



Sound Form #3 18" x 7" Ceramic, Black Acrylic



Installation - *Sound Space* - 2016

SOUND SCAPE 2017 - PAPERWORK

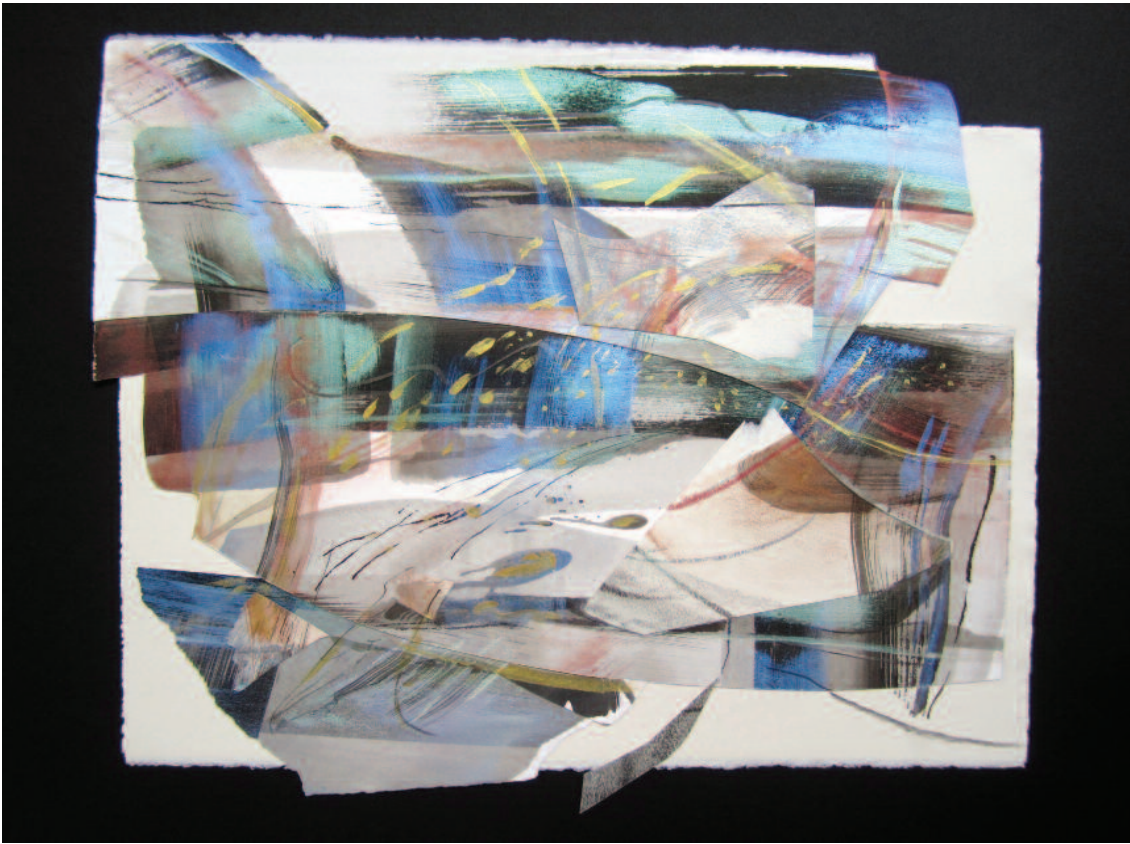
Following the *Sound Space* exhibition, I returned to reworking smaller paperworks. These had been created during earlier periods when I responded freely to the music informed by active listening. Compositions were dismantled and reworked with cut or torn paper fragments. I also drew with a variety of media including metallic pastels. Looking forward to larger paperworks and canvases, I wanted to expand the black and white palette to include metallic colours.

Now the challenge was to begin new and larger format sound scapes. Previously in the initial *Sound Space* series, I had focused on responding visually to 'seconds of sounds' based on the fifty-seven cards. At this point, I wanted to capture the essence of the place where the music took me.

As a starting point, I returned to the last drawing from the first series of seven drawings: *Sound Staff #7*. The horizontal striated strokes, from left to right, were an initial backdrop for the intuitive sound scapes that developed. Similar to the small works, other papers were collaged onto the surface and reworked as the music played. New possibilities appeared with drawing or collage pieces added or removed to unify the composition.



Sound Study #2 19" x 21.5" Mixed Media Collage



Sound Study #2 19" x 21.5" Mixed Media Collage



Sound Scape #2 29.5" x 36.5" Mixed Media Collage



Sound Scape #3 29.5" x 36.5" Mixed Media Collage



Sound Scape #5 29.5" x 37" Mixed Media Collage

SOUND SCAPE - CANVAS

The next question was how could the canvases capture the essence of the music without being copies or derivative of the paperwork?

In an attempt to maintain a similar approach, I decided to focus on specific areas of interest from the paperwork as a starting point or sketch. If I was beginning with striated horizontal strokes, as I had in the paperwork, how could the negative spaces be maintained? A material called 'frisket film' was beneficial. One adhesive side could be temporarily adhered onto the gessoed canvas to block out the brushed black acrylic strokes. Shapes that echoed the negative spaces were individually cut and then pressed onto the canvas. After one or more layers of paint were applied, the frisket was peeled off to reveal the base coat on the canvas. Emerging negative spaces would help maintain an airy, floating quality. *Sound Passage* illustrates this effect. The base coat is maintained without a lot of over-painting. In contrast, *Sound Flight* and *Acoustic Adventure* have many layers, with little of the original base coat remaining.

In the early stages of layering up the paint onto the canvases, *Dream-e-scape* was continuously played in the background. At times the brushwork would spontaneously be informed by the music. As the paintings developed and became more complicated by the repeated process of layering on washes, the music was turned off. Each developing canvas had a life of its own informed by the initial sketch and developed without any additional musical interference.

As well as depicting a sound environment, *Dreamy Moment* describes a beautiful, recurring passage of violins, which is evident in the mid section of my first sound exploration illustrated in *Sound Stall #1*.



Sound Passage 30" x 48.25" Acrylic on Canvas



Sound Flight 35.75" x 43.5" Acrylic on Canvas



Dreamy Moment 52" x 42" Acrylic on Canvas



Acoustic Adventure 48.75" x 48.75" Acrylic on Canvas



Sound Journey 40.5" x 63" Acrylic on Canvas

REFLECTIONS ON *SOUND SCAPE* CANVASES

This series of canvases has resulted in the most involved and layered painting I have created to date. Some were more challenging to resolve and required working the canvases from all four vantage points with many revisions over an extended period of time.

Movement and a feeling of three-dimensional space are characteristic of all of the paintings, but the ambiance of *Sound Journey* reminds me of the Italian Futurist Movement prior to the World War 1. There is an urban, mechanical suggestion in the foreground with vertical lines and patterning. The Futurists created art for a fast moving, machine propelled age. In this painting there is a similar dynamic sensation of motion. Similarly, *Sound Flight* has a strong directional path, but the movement is circular. Also, there is an airier feeling, as if observing the sound scape from far above. There are many places *Dream-e-scape* has taken me, as illustrated in this series of paintings.



Installation - *Sound Scape* - 2018

NEW BEGINNINGS, 2018 *SONIC SERIES / PAPERWORK*

After the *Sound Scape* exhibition I was confronted with the task of revisiting paperwork that had developed early on in the process beginning in 2012. This was when I intuitively responded to the music in between the active listening exercises (*Sound Staff* and *Sound Cards*) described earlier.

There were some interesting areas within the paperwork, acting as descriptions of sound passages from *Dream-e-scape*. In general, though, they were too busy and dense. Cropping, cutting, rearranging and pasting began on blank paper. Drawing materials such as ink, conte, pastel, plus metallic acrylic paint were used to integrate the new smaller paperwork into what I call 'land notations'. To me they suggest fragments of a fantasy landscape, whereas the 'sonic' series on larger paper describes a vast space. The addition of frisket cut into lines and shapes that I reused from previous canvases were occasionally incorporated into the composition. They had striated marks created by diluted black gesso passed over with a large brush, which provided a contrasting surface. Many became aerial views or sound bites from faraway sonic landscapes.



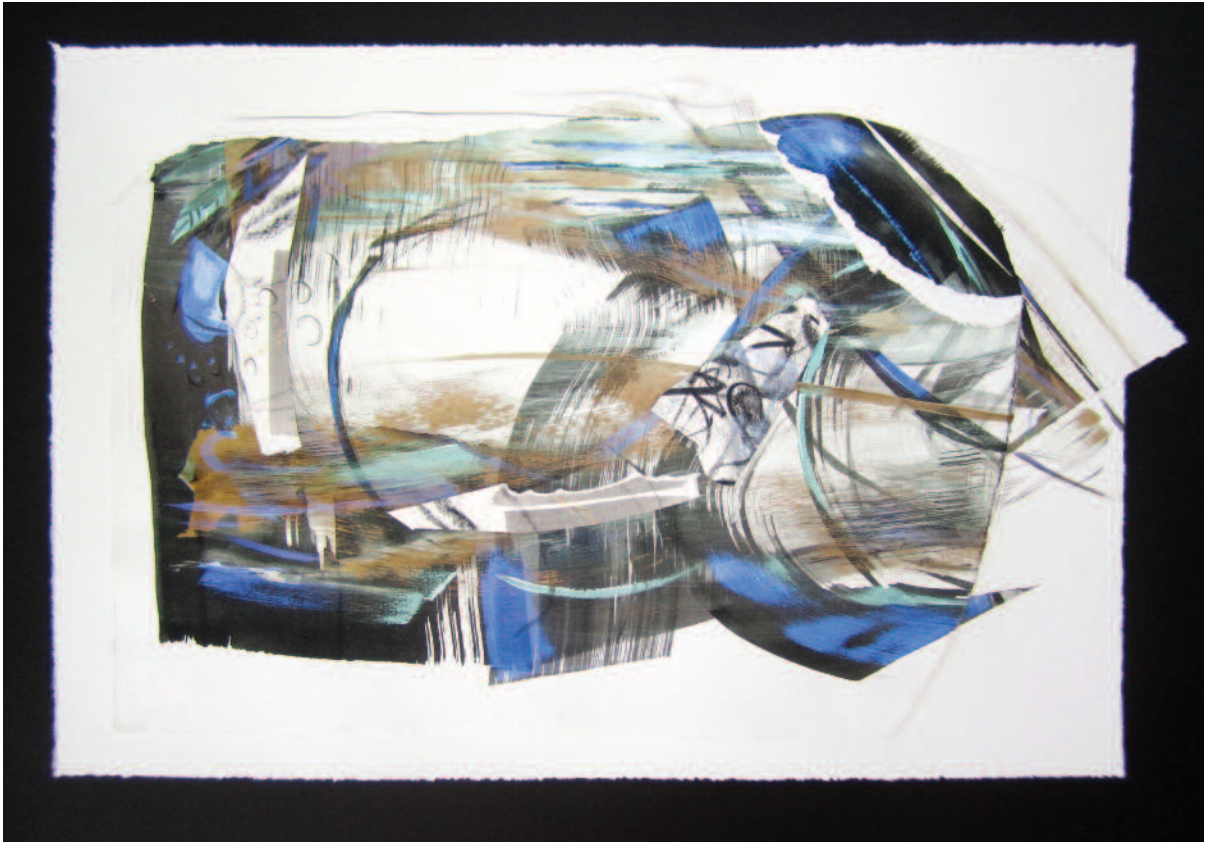
Land Notation #1 19" x 21" Mixed Media Collage



Land Notation #2 19" x 21" Mixed Media Collage



Sonic Flow #1 21" x 28" Mixed Media Collage



Sonic Flow #2 21" x 28" Mixed Media Collage



Sonic Situ #2 29.5" x 36.5" Mixed Media Collage



Sonic Flight #3 36.5" x 29.5" Mixed Media Collage

CONSIDERATIONS FOR *SONIC SERIES* CANVASES

Although I enjoyed the challenge of wrestling out a composition with the *Sound Scape* series, I observed that some of the canvases became very complicated and dense. *High Pitch* was an exception. A sonic view occurs from above, created with negative space, with the effect of providing breathing room.

I also examined the use of negative spaces that worked with the collage fragments in the paperwork. The paper pieces were placed to create the illusion of being suspended in space, similar to how sound can fill a room or trail off into the distance. Thinking about the canvases to follow, I wanted to cultivate a similar feeling in my future work. This approach would contrast the compositions from the *Sound Scape series* (i.e. *Sound Flight*, *Acoustic Adventure*). Both paintings had many successive layers and changes. The main objective of the *Sonic Series* was to be more direct in the application of the paint. The aim was to achieve a lighter suspension of sound manifested via shape, line and metallic colour touches.



High Pitch 32" x 48" Acrylic on Canvas

SONIC SERIES CANVASES

The first question I had to answer was, "How should I begin?" I returned to the process I followed when starting the *Sound Scape* canvases. Interesting details from the paperwork were reproduced and cropped. Ten examples were chosen to become the starting point for establishing an initial compositional structure on the canvas.

Using the thumbnail details as my guide or sketch, I applied a textured layer of modelling paste over the surface of the unstretched canvas. This was covered with gesso and base coat. Shapes and lines, cut out of frisket, were adhered to the canvas. After the initial washes dried, the frisket shapes and lines were removed to reveal the base coat. In addition, some of the washes were painted out with the base coat in an attempt to clarify an evolving structure and feeling of space.

As the work progressed, canvases were worked on from all sides. They alternate between dark and light tones, with some areas of ochre added to the base coat and finally, metallic paint was applied. Layers of paint were added and subtracted over an extended period of time until a compositional structure emerged and then developed. After completing the canvases there was little to nothing in common with the original sketch. Rather, the intuitive washes and marks evolved while *Dream-e-scape* played and each work took on a life of its own.



Below and Beyond Dreams 36" x 61" Acrylic on Canvas



Sonic Flux 42" x 52" Acrylic on Canvas



Dream Flight 45" x 60" Acrylic on Canvas



REFLECTING ON THE CREATIVE PROCESS

Speaking as an artist, educator and former workshop facilitator, I feel that the phrase “each work takes on a life of its own” sums up the magic that can happen if one relinquishes control and engages the active imagination.

As a facilitator of workshops exploring the creative imagination, I witnessed the look of surprise and wonder on the face of children as young as six years old. Amazed at what they have produced via a pastel drawing they would proudly declare, “I am an artist! I have an imagination!”

Similar to the lengthy process described in *Sound Seed*, this child’s discovery resulted from a carefully considered and guided process. This was a process aimed at preparing readiness, comfort and security for letting go and creating spontaneously, without conscious thought intervening. Being creative can happen in seconds but to create with intention, from my observation and experience, is a process that evolves over time.

FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

I have learned that creativity is a deep well that never ends, unless we cease to breathe. Where could I go from here? Other than the metallic colour used on top of black, colour has not played a role in the *Dream-e-scape* journey. The sounds that I heard were suspended in space and best described tonally. Exploring sound with colour is a possibility.

A few years ago, I collected and drew the intricate patterning on seashells and crustaceans found on a Mediterranean beach. I was amazed at the similarity in the micro compositions of these gifts from the sea to that of the macro images I was painting at the time, inspired by *Dream-e-scape*. They had the same metallic colouring. Based on past work, whatever I choose to explore will depict a feeling of space and perhaps motion.



Detail from *Instrumental Energy* 30" x 48" Acrylic on Canvas



CLOSING THOUGHTS CREATIVE PROCESS

Having worked at my art practice for many years, I knew about the power of the active imagination as well as the wonder of becoming a medium through which my mind and hand worked together in unison, fuelling creative flow. This creative process, as described and experienced in the ECID workshops, informed and intrigued me. It reinforced my natural inclination to let things happen with my gestural style of drawing and painting. It helped me understand why there is resistance to the creative process and the need for an incubation period for the unconscious to resolve a given problem. I more fully understand now a favourite quote of mine from over thirty years ago that would get me started in the studio: “You don’t get inspired until you begin.”

Following the ECID template, *Dream-e-scape* became the work that I carefully studied. I developed the confidence to respond, at times, with minimal conscious thought interfering. The music took me to a place where I could depict the illusion of a three-dimensional space leaning towards abstraction. I channeled its otherworldly quality as opposed to a traditional landscape. *Dream-e-scape* transported me to a place in my mind where dreams reside, higher than my past preference for aerial views of the land.

Thank-you, R. Murray Schafer, for writing such an evocative, beautiful musical composition. My gratitude also extends to Austin Clarkson for helping me foster a better understanding the highs and lows involved in committing myself to the creative process.



Playful Interior 23" x 23" Acrylic on Canvas



Take Flight 21" x 19" Acrylic on Canvas

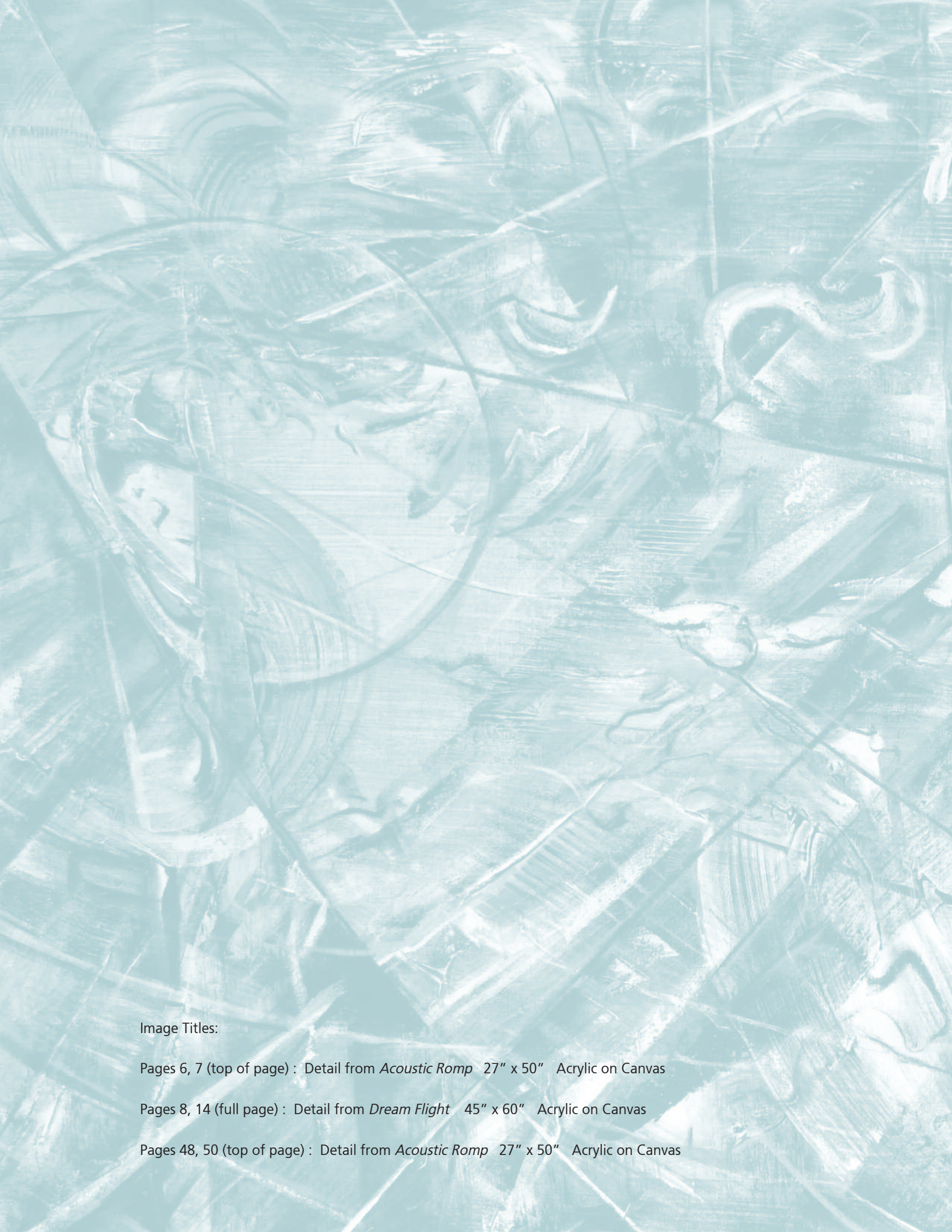
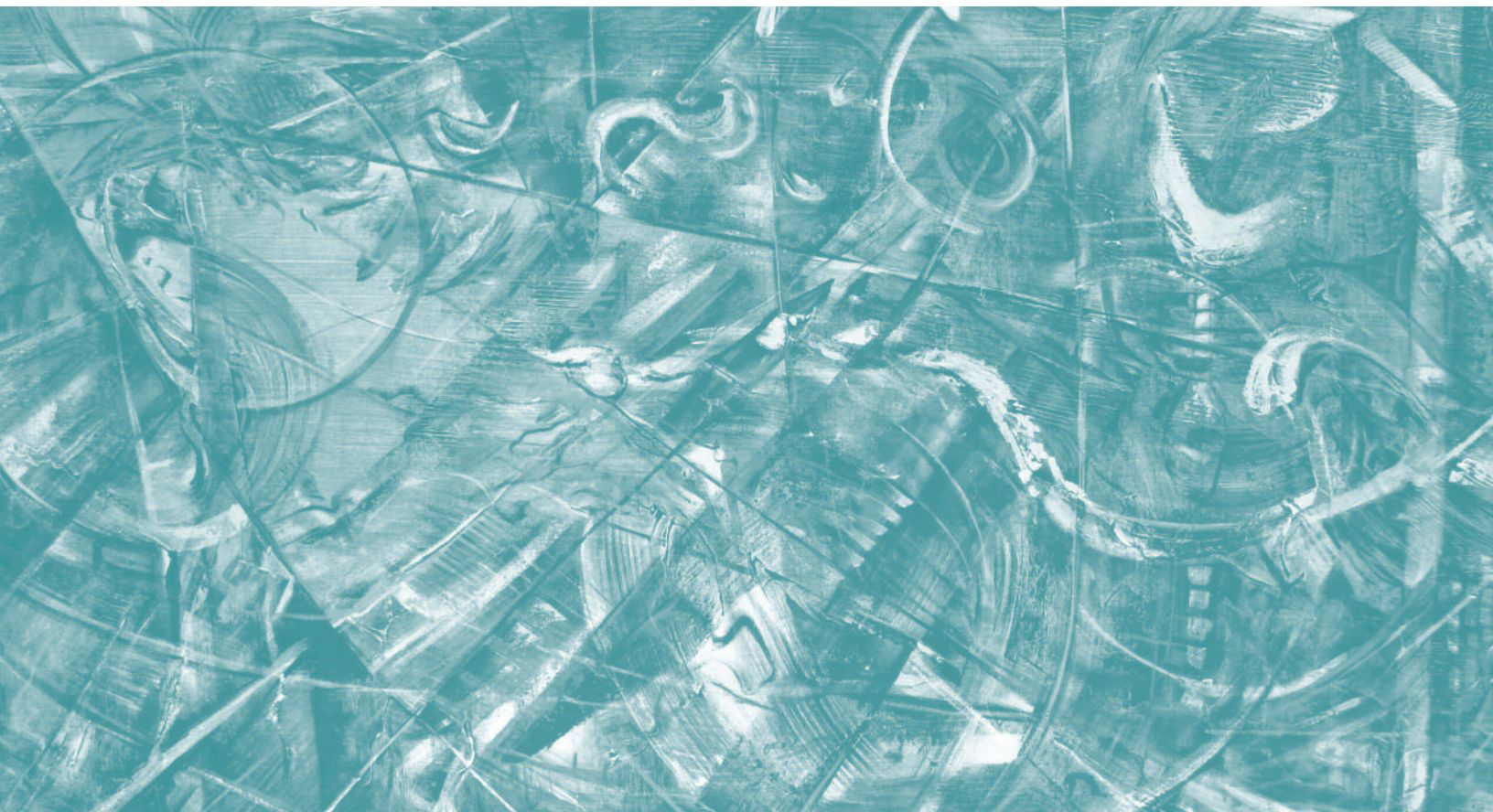


Image Titles:

Pages 6, 7 (top of page) : Detail from *Acoustic Romp* 27" x 50" Acrylic on Canvas

Pages 8, 14 (full page) : Detail from *Dream Flight* 45" x 60" Acrylic on Canvas

Pages 48, 50 (top of page) : Detail from *Acoustic Romp* 27" x 50" Acrylic on Canvas



Front and Back Cover: Detail from *Sound Journey* 40.5" x 63" Acrylic on Canvas