

**Working Title:** Urban Observation: The shape of 'The Commute'

**Research Question:**

Through the use of abstract shapes, textures, and colour relationships collected from urban environments in Tamaki Makaurau how can a painting and printmaking practice capture the banality and mundane nostalgia of the daily act of the commute and other monotonous rituals of capitalism.

**Aims for this Research:**

While my practice sits under the umbrella of abstraction, a lot of my source material comes directly from the world and the environments I'm travelling through. I'm interested in textures associated with the past, like the backgrounds of school portraits, retro Formica countertops, the stains of old paper, and how I can use paint and print techniques to recreate them. I'm also interested in architectural shapes, the ephemeral forms of fleeting shadows, and strange edits to the concrete paths I travel on as a means for finding shapes that act as the figure in my work.

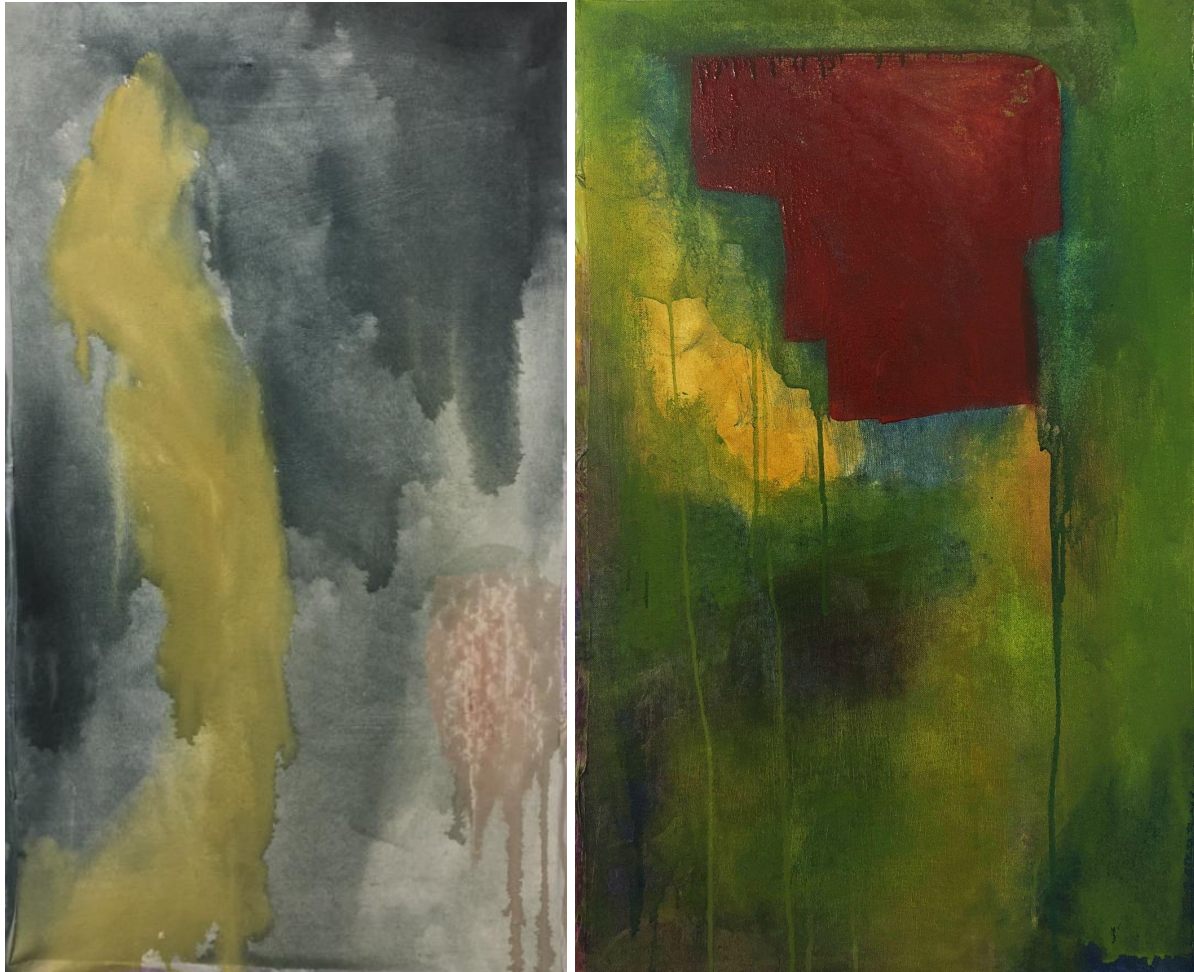
Using painting and printmaking methods, I will be drawing on a growing archive of photographs of shapes and shadows from my daily commute to university as sources for the imagery and forms used in my work. Through this research, I will be expanding my toolbox to translate these direct references to the world into abstraction. One of those ways is through gesture and mark making with fluid paint and ink that allows me to explore the atmosphere and depth in the painted field that often mimics the haziness and nostalgia of memories, and another through the serial possibilities of printmaking.

Using the monotony of 'the commute' as both a practice and a concept, I will be exploring the potential of texture and abstraction to reimagine the banal process of travel from the home to the workplace and back again. Printmaking will allow me to create work serially and produce many copies of the same work, though they will all be ever so slightly different, as no two days in the city are the same. Looking at researchers like Gerhard Kleining & Harald Witt who wrote about Qualitative Heuristics<sup>1</sup> and 'The Four Basic Rules to Optimize the Chance for Discovery' when applying heuristic methodology, as well as Kurt Varnedoe who wrote about the affective qualities of abstraction as a tool for a new language of communication<sup>2</sup>, I will be finding new ways to reframe 'the commute'.

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<sup>1</sup> "View of The Qualitative Heuristic Approach: A Methodology for Discovery in Psychology and the Social Sciences. Rediscovering the Method of Introspection as an Example | Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research," accessed April 14, 2021, <https://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1123/2495>.

<sup>2</sup> Kirk Varnedoe, *Pictures of Nothing: Abstract Art since Pollock*, The A.W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts 2003 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006).



**Key Words:**

Archive, Documentation, Journeys, Nostalgia, urbanness, the banal and unnoticed.

**References:**

<https://beckssite.art.blog/bibliography/>

Varnedoe, Kirk. *Pictures of Nothing: Abstract Art since Pollock*. The A.W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts 2003. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006.

“View of The Qualitative Heuristic Approach: A Methodology for Discovery in Psychology and the Social Sciences. Rediscovering the Method of Introspection as an Example | Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research.” Accessed April 14, 2021. <https://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1123/2495>.