



TRANSPARENT
UNIVERSE

ORNA FEINSTEIN
MCKAY OTTO

NOVEMBER 1, 2019 - JANUARY 26, 2020

ORNA FEINSTEIN

Orna Feinstein earned her B.F.A in sculpture from the University of Houston, and a diploma in printmaking from the Glassell school of Art.

Her work is inspired by the organic and geometric in nature. Feinstein continues to investigate the printing processes using various surfaces, such as fabric, paper, concrete and Plexiglas. These experiments led her to create major sculptural installations and monoprints that move beyond the flat surface of the paper. Her most notable innovative approach to printmaking resulted in 3D monoprints that create depth as well as an illusion of optical movement.

Feinstein's work has been included in group exhibitions around the world, as well as numerous solo exhibitions in galleries and museums.

In 2014-2015 she had a retrospective exhibition *Now and Zen - Fifteen Years of Contemporary Printmaking* that traveled to several museums in Texas: the Art Museum of Southwest Texas, Midland, Galveston Art Center, The Museum of Geometric and Madi Art, Dallas, and Art Museum of The southeast Texas, Beaumont. Orna has been selected four times for the prestigious exhibitions at the International Print Center New York, and won numerous awards.

In 2008 she had a retrospective exhibition of her *Branched and Rooted Series* at the Print Museum in Houston, Texas. In 2010 she was invited to participate in the 14th Print Biennale in Taiwan, and in 2015 in the 2nd Annual Global Print in Douro, Portugal.

Feinstein's work is represented in numerous private and public collections, among them: The Museum of Fine Arts Houston, the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taiwan, Printing Museum, Houston, Texas, Skopelos Foundation for the Arts, Skopelos, Greece, Roennebaeksholm Arts & Culture Centre, Naestved, Denmark, and Venice Printmaking in Venice, Italy, Microsoft, Hilton USA, Firmospace Austin, Texas, Kendra Scot, New York.

Feinstein's work is well documented in numerous publications including: *The State of the Art: Contemporary Artists in Texas* by June Mattingly, *Contemporary American Printmakers* by Ashley Rooney, and *Studio Visit 2019*. Many of her exhibitions have been reviewed in local and art publications.

In 2018 Feinstein published her book *Treetopia* celebrating and documenting 20 years of artworks on the theme of the tree trunk. The book includes many images, and a comprehensive essay by Dena M. Woodall, Associate Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston.

Orna lives and works in the Houston area. More info at www.ornafeinstein.com.



FRONT COVER

Orna Feinstein
Tree Dynamics #173
2017
35 x 35 x 2 in

I am inspired and fascinated by the exterior and interior geometry of the organic — the concentric patterns of tree rings, and the cellular structure of a plant when observed under a microscope.

Experimenting with printmaking processes using non-traditional surfaces, such as fabric, plastics and Plexiglas allows my work to become less calculated and more intuitive, giving serendipity and chance take a role in the end result. I fuse the traditional medium of printmaking with a contemporary approach that transforms two-dimensional monoprints into intricately layered three-dimensional multimedia works. These artworks, both monochromatic and brilliantly hued, juxtapose the seen with the unseen, the external with the internal, and the real with the imagined.

Working with sculpture and printmaking led me to the creation of two and three dimensional artworks, and installations, blurring the boundaries between them. Many of the artworks create eye deceiving forms, and optical movements, demonstrating changes in nature.

-Orna Feinstein

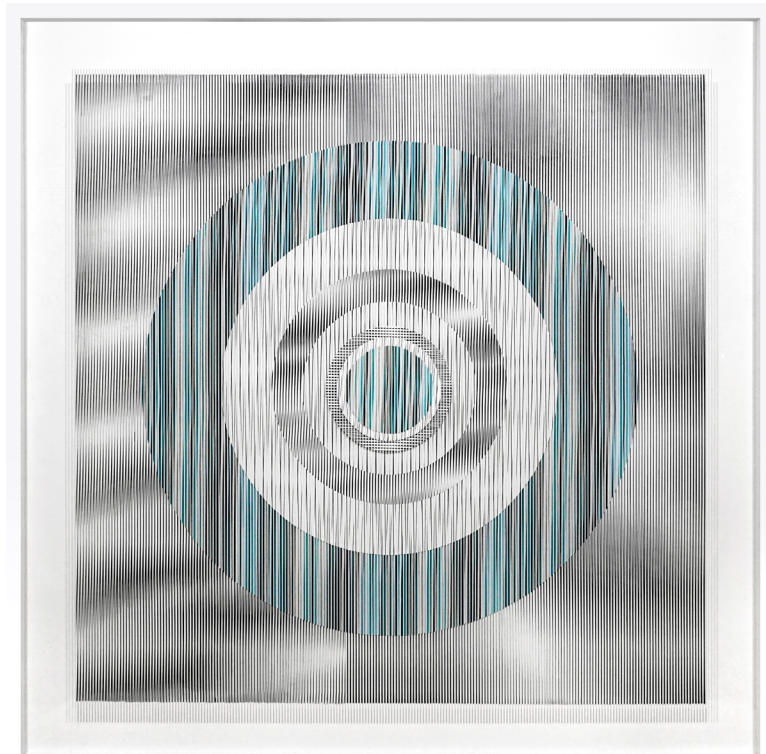


LEFT

Orna Feinstein
The Other Side Of The Forest
2019
Dimensions variable



Orna Feinstein
Tree Dynamics #148
2017
30 x 66 x 2 in



Orna Feinstein
Tree Dynamics #183
2019
35 x 35 x 2 in

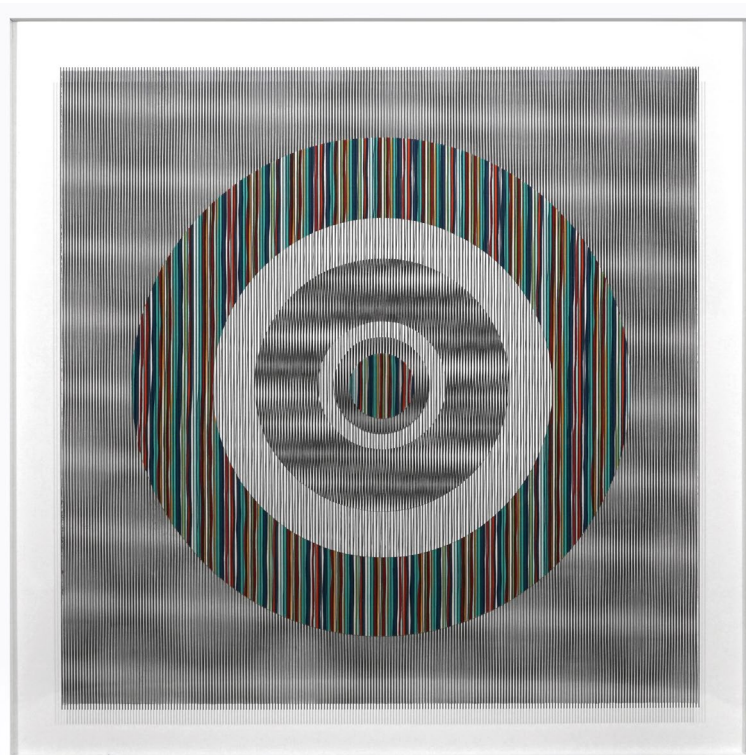
Orna Feinstein
Treetopia #36
2017
24 x 22 x 5 in





Orna Feinstein
Treetopia #40
2018
22 x 22 x 5 in

Orna Feinstein
Tree Dynamics #180
2019
35 x 35 x 2 in



Luminous Translucence

Geometry, symmetry and harmony. While these elements form the core of the work of Orna Feinstein and McKay Otto, it is the organic rhythm of nature that defines Feinstein and the rhythm of the universe that defines Otto. Showing as they are in a museum dedicated to geometric art, there is a sense that their work would reflect pure, hard-edged abstraction. In fact, the opposite is true. Though working in different media, the beating heart at the core of Feinstein and Otto's respective works are serene surfaces that invite contemplation and introspection.

For the past 20 years, Feinstein has been exploring the nature of trees through drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture and installation. Bisected, concentric rings reveal a tree's age, while vertically sliced trunks create a linear pattern, replicating a million forests that are held within. Monoprints from Feinstein's Tree Dynamic and Treetopia series, featured in this exhibition, highlight her meticulous technical ability, which pushes the medium beyond the two-dimensional and into three-dimensional microcosms.

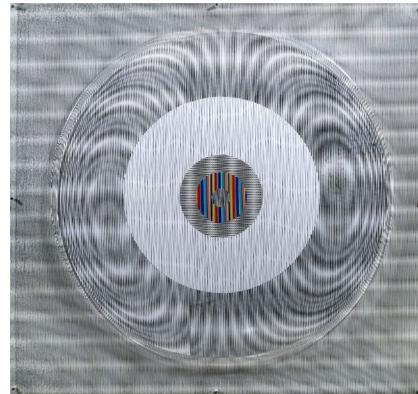
In the Tree Dynamic series, Feinstein uses a board support to layer her monoprints. Here, repetitive vertical lines are punctuated by concentric circles. The incorporation of brightly colored fabric, echoing the same vertical patterning, acts as a counterbalance to the monochromatism of the printed striations. Together they create a visual vortex. Feinstein then repeats the lined pattern, printed on plexiglass. The effect of placing the plexiglass inches from the picture plane creates an additional dimension to the work. In a sweeping glance across the image, its lined surface seems to waft, as if a gentle breeze is blowing across it.

That Feinstein would look so closely and explore so deeply is part of her nature. With a background in chemistry, she has an innate curiosity as to how nature works. And with the inquisitiveness of a scientist, she draws upon the primal symbol of a tree, which has long represented humanity's connection between earth and heaven, past and future, as she propels the ancient technique of printmaking into a new direction.

Feinstein's arboreal explorations continue to evolve as does her exploration of materials. Her Treetopia series still plays upon the effects of light and movement while being accented with wisps of color. The supports for these come from claybord, a durable backing that can then support the shaped plexiglass that covers them. Working collaboratively, she specifies the size, shape and placement of these bubbled areas, which are realized through the application of heat. The visual effect is dazzling, giving additional optical movement to the layered prints beneath this shaped covering.

Out of the rigidity of the geometric forms from these works, Feinstein also creates immersive site specific installations. Using printed panels and fabric, she creates fluid spaces through which viewers can meander. The sense of walking through a forest is heightened by the optical impression of tree limbs in the wind. Feinstein's frequent collaborations with dancers has brought her works off the walls and into a multidimensionality that reflects its organic origins.

CONTINUED PAGE 12



Orna Feinstein
Treetopia #37
2018
32 x 34 x 8 in

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

McKay Otto's work has the sense of being in a dream. The perception is one of appearing to us full blown, from deep within the subconscious. As a result, these paintings feel more as though they are collaborative works between artist and viewer. Looking deeply is its own reward as ideas of what is or should be begin to form. They are places of meditation, refuges of quiet in a noisy world. And, as with any meditative form, they become reflections upon what each viewer brings to them. They evoke fragments of memory of time, place, as well as sensory memories of scent and even touch.

Subtly painted horizontal bands begin to emerge, ultimately shining forth from the background. Through gossamer veils of paint, there is an ethereal sense of infinity. Like a snapshot, they are contained within the confines of the picture plane though we intuit that they extend infinitely in each direction. The light within the work radiates, offering multiple dimensions that change based upon the direction one is looking. With the dual purpose of shielding the delicate background and then slowly revealing it, translucent ribbons of white stretch across the picture plane. These bands ripple across the surface as the prana, or life force, that rhythmically exhales this overlay of pure light layered over the inhaled bands of color.

Using acrylic and fabric stretched across wood, Otto's grids have been inspired by his tutelage under Agnes Martin. His work, however, has a dimensionality and dramatic tension quite different from his mentor's. In Otto's work, it is light that forms the grids. While each has an inherent structure, they are also a study of opposites. Within these layered confines, universes emerge. The work is at once confining as well as liberating. It is constricted in that it fits within the proscribed boundary of its picture plane but it is freed by the limitless of its horizon, offering the viewer the opportunity to get lost within them. In their expansiveness, they tap into the unconscious to radiate divine energy.

Within this series, there is a constant state of refinement. With each iteration, Otto's backgrounds continue to become more complex while maintaining a consistency of surface. In these newer works, the palette has become increasingly subtle while cultivating the same power of tapping into the collective unconscious. In short, they celebrate the pure joy of abstraction while evoking a sense of living, breathing entities. Ultimately, they create their own hypnotic experience whose energy eventually pulses in sync with our own heartbeats.

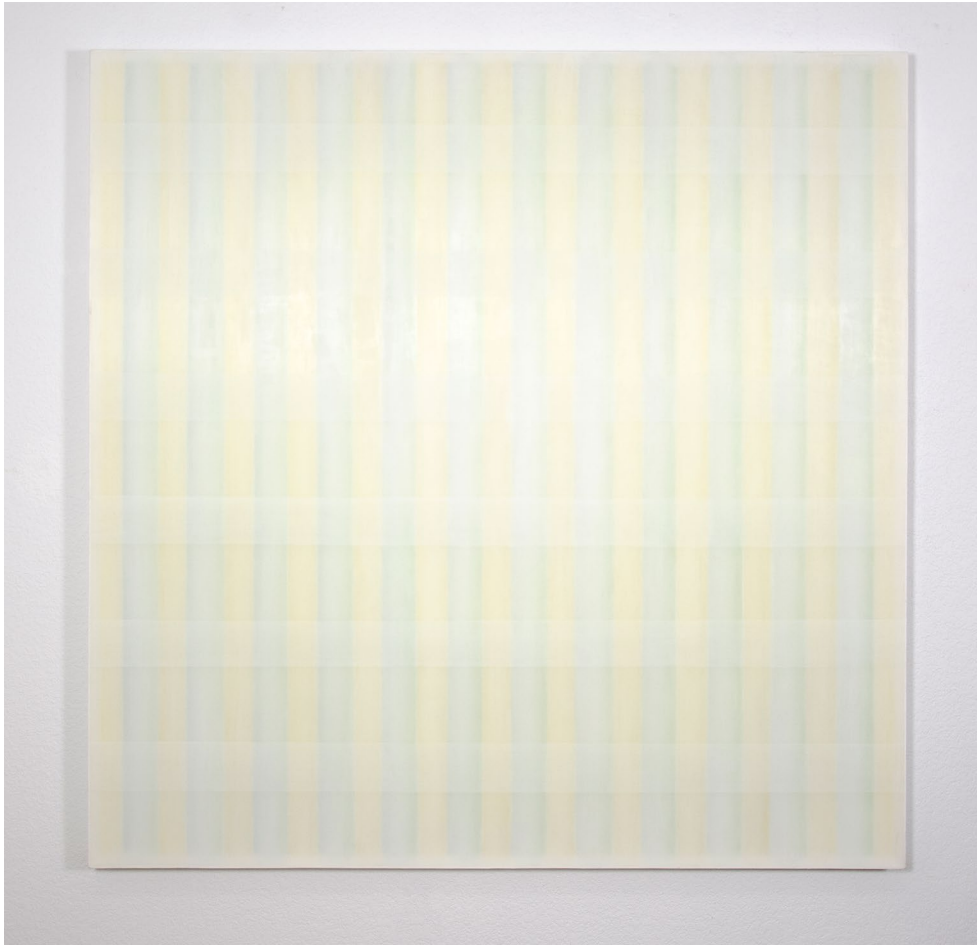
Taken together, the work in this exhibition glows with translucent light. Both artists have managed to take the immaterial elements of wind and breath to create immersive environments in print and paint. Geometry, symmetry and harmony, drawn from trees rustling in the wind to the breath drawn from our inner beings, Feinstein and Otto capture the natural world through the concrete elements of ink and paint and deliver to viewers places of repose and rejuvenation.

Nancy Cohen Israel

October, 2019

McKay Otto
Ever Come Softly Ever
2019
35 x 35 in





McKay Otto
Ever The Path To Silence Ever
2019
60 x 60 in



McKay Otto
Ever Almost Where Ever
2019
35 x 35 in



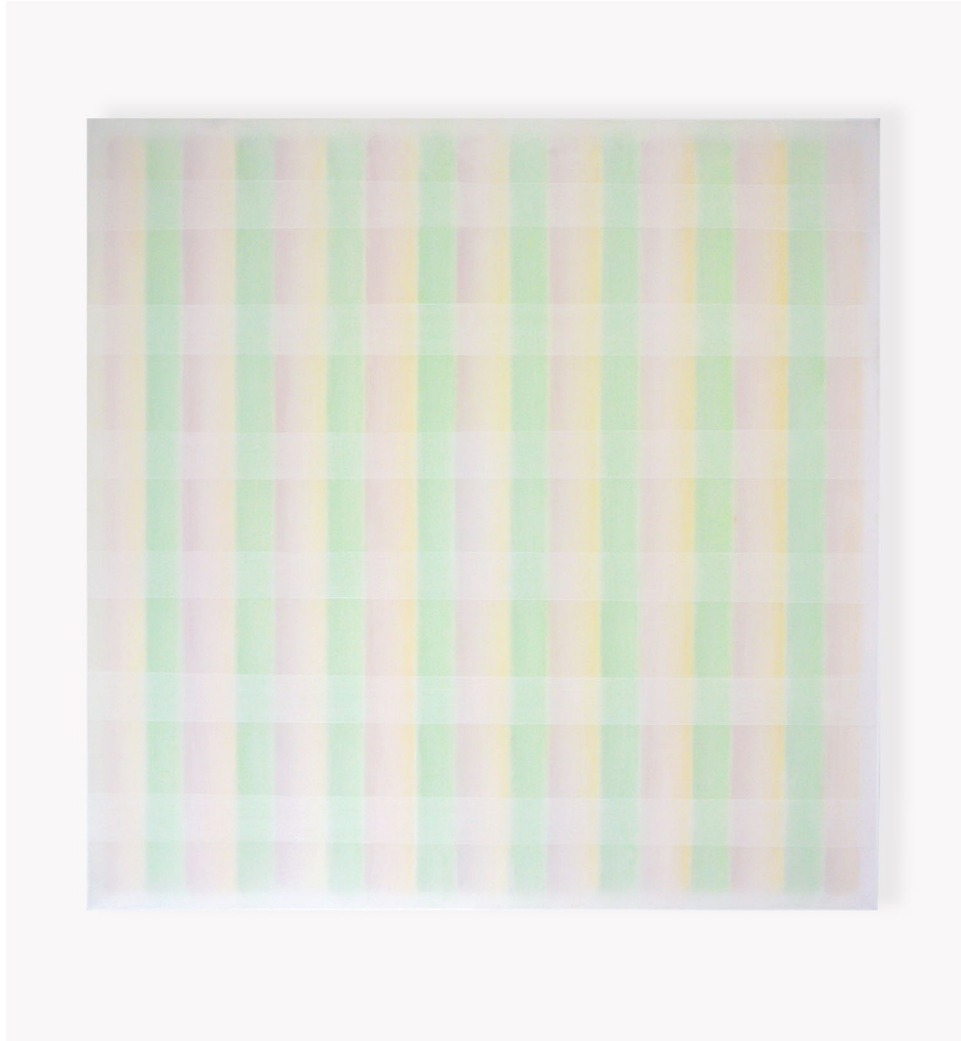
McKay Otto
Ever Inside The Moon Ever
2018
60 x 60 in



McKay Otto
Ever Power Of Love Ever
2018
60 x 60 in



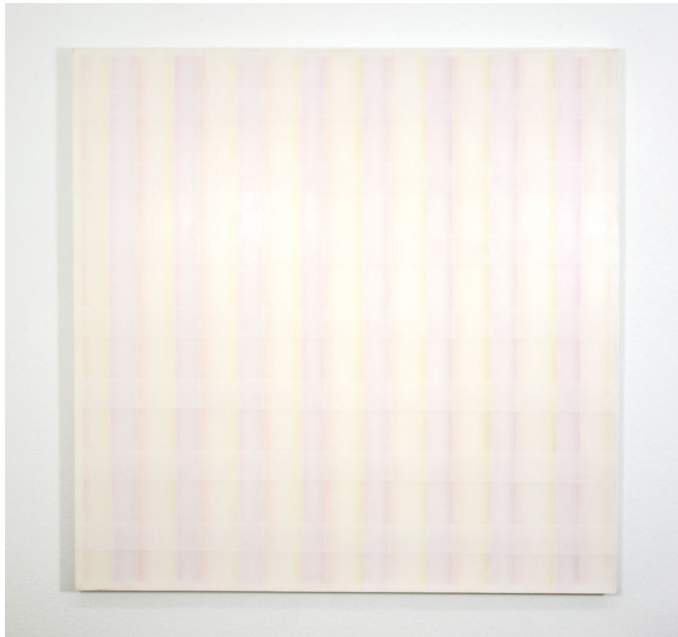
McKay Otto
Ever No End Ever
2018
60 x 60 in



McKay Otto
Ever Listen In Silence Ever
2018
35 x 35 in

McKay Otto

In consideration of the dimensional relationships that exist between drawing, painting, and sculpture, this work is concerned with freeing two-dimensionality in painting. The specially formulated transparent canvas provides the opportunity to work within and transform the traditional support of painting. As the rigidity of the planar support becomes dissolved, the circumstance arises to create works that are inwardly divisible and outwardly expanding. The implementation of the grid serves as a drawn formal structure that both stabilizes the surface of the art object while simultaneously creating passages for the viewer to literally see beyond. Despite what your eyes are telling you, the canvas is transparent, and the painting is emitting ethereal light. What we see is a shadow cast of that which we do not see. This notion of being able to see beyond the surface directly truncates the preconceived necessity of pictorial space and frees it to exist within the context of its own physical embodiment. Timelessness and a universal appeal amplify consciousness in perpetual stillness. This work may serve as a metaphor for humanity's capacity to transcend itself...



McKay Otto
Ever Speak In A Whisper Ever
2019
35 x 35 in



BACK COVER

McKay Otto
Ever Just Is Ever
2018
60 x 60 in

ARCADIA

GEOMETRIC



MUSEUM



The Museum of Geometric and MADI Art opened in February 2003. It is the first museum with a concentration on MADI art, which is always non-representational, hard-edged, and comes out of the frame. Geometric art may be in a rectangular format, which is rarely the case with MADI; usually, only prints may be rectangular. The museum shows related geometric, constructivist, and op art work.

Transparent Universe features the work of Orna Feinstein and McKay Otto. The exhibit opens Friday, November 1 with a reception for the artist and members at 5:30. The reception opens to the public at 6:00. *Transparent Universe* runs through January 26, 2020.

The museum holds workshops for students and seniors which are sponsored by members. Arcadia Salon is a wine and cheese event hosted at the museum with discussions on hot topics in art led by local and international artists.

Special thanks to Texas Commission on the Arts, the Office of Cultural Affairs of the City of Dallas, Communities Foundation of Texas and The Kilgore Law Firm.



MOODY FUND FOR
THE ARTS

