



SCULPTURE

Stranger and More Interesting: Bayne Peterson's Layered Abstractions

April 23, 2018

At first glance, [Bayne Peterson](#)'s work demands attention, using a colorful and layered technique to create abstract shapes. They're also polished so finely that it might take a moment to realize what material they're even made of, at which point they begin to invite more curiosity regarding their origin. Initially, it may not be clear that his work draws from a rich artistic tradition, but upon further inquiry, it's clear that Peterson's extensive academic study of historical Inuit art has laid a contextual framework for his elaborate, elegant sculptures. He creates something of the current moment, but respects and acknowledges that which came before. We're hyped on him, so we asked some questions to get a small peek into the process and background of his work.



KRISTEN LORELLO

Where are you from and when did you start making art?

I was born in Palo Alto, California but grew up in Arlington, Massachusetts. I've been making art since I was a little kid. I would always carry around a sketchbook and draw pretty much every day. My mom used to take me to museums where I would spend hours sketching sculptures and ancient artifacts.

When did you start making your sculptures like you make them now?

Partway through graduate school, around 2012, I started to become more focused on woodcarving. As part of my thesis, I researched carving traditions from around the world and especially 19th and early 20th century Inuit sculpture carved in walrus ivory. In my studio, I began carving sculptures in wood relating in some way to this research. For example, I made a series of sculptures based on a walrus-ivory sculpture of a kerosene camp stove from the 1930s. The more I worked with carving, the more excited I got about it. It's a very free way of working and I like how open-ended and organic the process can be. It's often hard to see exactly what the result will be from the start, and sometimes I notice something along the way that changes the entire direction of a piece.

I also attribute my current approach to a shift I took in 2014 towards pure abstraction. Prior to that year, most of my work was in some way representational or narrative-based. Once I removed the necessity to always ground the work in concrete references, it suddenly felt much more open. That year, I also started carving dyed plywood, which created new possibilities for optical effects arising from relationships between color, pattern, and form.



KRISTEN LORELLO

What material are your sculptures? And what's a rough picture of how you make them?

I work with many different materials, but my primary material right now is plywood. My work is mostly done by hand, occasionally with some digital fabrication mixed in. I work with a variety of power and hand tools, like grinders, rasps, files, and a lot of sanding.

Did you go to art school? If so, what's your progression been like since leaving there?

I didn't go to art school for undergrad; I went to Vassar College and majored in Art, focusing mostly on painting and printmaking. Later on, I decided to go to art school for an MFA in Sculpture at the Rhode Island School of Design. I got a grant from RISD the year I graduated, in 2013, to travel to Canada to continue researching Inuit art. So, the summer after graduating, I drove to Quebec to research in the special collections at the Canadian Museum of History where they have a huge collection of Inuit art. The grant also allowed me to spend some time on Baffin Island, where much of the art I was interested in was made. It was an amazing experience, and gave me a lot of ideas for new sculptures, as well as some writing. After traveling in Canada, I decided to move back to Rhode Island to focus on my work, where I've had a studio ever since.



KRISTEN LORELLO

What kind of work would you make if money wasn't an issue?

I would like to make more large-scale work. Lately, I've been working mostly small-scale, but last Fall I made a six-foot-tall plywood sculpture with a large vessel form in the top filled with sand, in which several smaller sculptures are "planted." It was great to work at this scale, and I would like to make more like these and even larger.

Who's one artist today that you think is on "another level."

[Nadia Haji Omar](#). I love her approach to color and pattern. The level of minute detail in her work is amazing.



What's your relationship to color? How do you choose colors and how do you get them just right?

At the start of a sculpture I usually have a general idea in mind of an overall color effect, made up of a mixture of colors, like pixelation. When planning this mixture, I like to throw in odd choices that might disrupt what would otherwise be a purely harmonious effect. This can make a color combination stranger and more interesting.

What was the last album you listened to?

The soundtrack to [Koyaanisqatsi](#) by Philip Glass.

What are some of your recent shows?

I was recently in a two-person show with [Graham McDougal](#) at [Providence College](#), and before that I had a solo show at my gallery, [Kristen Lorello](#) in New York.

<https://www.juxtapoz.com/news/sculpture/bayne-peterson-s-layered-abstractions/>

BIG RED AND SHINY



A Dialogue on Distortion: Graham McDougal and Bayne Peterson

By Rain Belleau on January 22, 2018

With its walls hung with Graham McDougal's dizzying prints, and pedestals scattered across the floor with Bayne Peterson's undulating sculptures perched atop them, Providence College's Hunt-Cavanaugh Gallery takes on the feeling of a television set between channels, a physical manifestation of the vibrating static and whirring buzz. With the exception of a pair of large knot-shaped sculptures and a print depicting a monochrome gallery space, the works in *A Dialogue on Distortion*, curated by Jamilee Lacy, are all abstract. The linear compositions of McDougal's prints are mirrored in the plywood from which Peterson has carved his amorphous sculptures. McDougal's layered digital and screen prints and wood blacks remind me of the refraction that happens when you take a digital photo of a computer screen, the image distorted with water stain-like pixelation. Peterson's sculptures share this quality. They seem to be organic forms created by digital means as if he had taken a 3D scan of a lava lamp.

Both artists seem interested in the division between the digital and the handmade. McDougal's work has elements of digital processes layered under manual processes. Like silkscreen of a digital print, or a screen print (a process that now leans heavily on digital tools) added to with gesso and varnish, materials more often associated with traditional painting techniques. His works sometimes become monochromatic in the layers of bright color. It reminds me of when I was a kid and I would sit so close to the TV that I could see the red, green, and blue bars that made up all the colors, even the black and white of old movies.



A Dialogue on Distortion installation view. Courtesy of Providence College Galleries.

Peterson's process involves dipping back and forth between digital and physical techniques: a hand-carved sculpture is scanned, manipulated, printed in gypsum like a tiny architectural study, and then recreated through hours of carving and sanding. Using this process it feels like he could continue a life's work from one sculpture and its digital file. Peterson's sculptures, like digital files, have an uncanny relationship to scale. As a computer file, any object, no matter how large or small, is confined to the borders of the screen, creating an artificial perception of size. In the gallery, the physical objects do something oddly similar. From the almost human-sized wood carving made entirely of laminated plywood to a set of pink and blue plywood sculptures standing mere inches tall atop a large grey pedestal, they all feel like their scale will be determined at some later date as if he could edit their data and adjust them at will.

The concept of distortion is one that goes hand in hand with technology, electronics, and digital methodologies. The two artists have harnessed the aesthetic side effects that occur when technology is tinkered with or simply doesn't work as intended. But, before there were computers or Xerox machines or even radio static, there were mathematics and fractals, the kinds of tools once employed by Bridget Riley and other Op Art masters. Riley's jittering and undulating yet crisp, clean lines and were made before computer programs were accessible to creative consumers. Fittingly, it is now that these kinds of optical anomalies are an aspect of our daily lives that artists like McDougal and Peterson no longer have to strive to make clean lines in order to achieve similar visual effects. Instead, they are reintroducing the artist's hand, uploading it, printing it back out and recreating it again in both digital and manual forms. The results are like those Magic Eye games that require you to cross your eyes, look close while slowly backing the picture away. When you uncross your eyes the image ups forward. The digital is only made clear through human processes and the biological structure of the optic nerve.

KRISTEN LORELLO



A Dialogue on Distortion installation view. Courtesy of Providence College Galleries.

A Dialogue on Distortion: Graham McDougal and Bayne Peterson is on view now until February 24th with a public reception on February 15th.

<http://bigredandshiny.org/38241/a-dialogue-on-distortion-graham-mcdougal-and-bayne-peterson/>



winter 2018

moving forward //graduate class notes



Bayne Peterson

MFA 13 SC

More of the table-top-sized, intricately layered and colored dyed plywood and epoxy sculptures Bayne began making several years ago were featured in *Still Life*, a fall solo show at Kristen Lorello gallery in NYC. He teaches at RISD and in 2017 also had work in *Underlying system is not known*, a group show at Western Exhibitions in Chicago.

left: photo courtesy of the artist and Kristen Lorello, NY

Please email class notes submissions to: risdxyz@risd.edu.



September 19, 2017

Bayne Peterson at Kristen Lorello

Bayne Peterson's dyed plywood sculpture brings to mind an abacus, cairns, written script or a kid's bead and wire toy. Now more complex in their patterning and overall shape, Peterson's new sculptures at [Kristen Lorello Gallery](#) on the Lower East Side also owe their inspiration to still life painting and historical vessels. (On view through Oct 14th).



Bayne Peterson, Untitled, dyed plywood, dyed epoxy, 15 1/8 x 21 1/2 x 5 1/4 inches, 2017.

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Bayne Peterson at Kristen Lorello



Merrily Kerr

October 3, 2016

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art, art tour, artist, bayne peterson, curves, gallery, gallery tour, kristen lorello, lower east side, lower east side tour, metal, modernism, new york, providence, sculptor, sculpture, tour, wood

Titled 'Curves,' Bayne Peterson's solo show of wood and metal sculpture at [Kristen Lorello](#) channels sensuous forms of the mid-20th century modernists (Barbara Hepworth, Henry Moore) in dizzying color. At front left, 'Apollo' shares a name with the Roman god of music, appropriately, as the sculpture recalls a giant ear resting on a receiver. (On the Lower East Side through Oct 16th).



Bayne Peterson, installation view of 'Curves' at Kristen Lorello Gallery, Sept 2016.

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Bayne Peterson at Kristen Lorello



Biomorphic abstraction becomes even more a treat for the eyes under the hand of Rhode Island based artist Bayne Peterson as he morphs materials like plywood dyed in layers and powdered granite into sensuously curvy sculptures at Lower East Side gallery [Kristin Lorello](#). (Through Nov 1st).

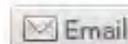
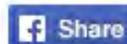
Installation view of Bayne Peterson and Nadia Haji Omar at Kristin Lorello. Foreground: Bayne Peterson, Untitled (Greens, Wood and Stone), dyed plywood, dyed epoxy, powdered granite, resin, 10.5 x 6 x 8 inches.

Merrily Kerr, Sept. 27, 2015
<http://newyorkarttours.com/blog/?p=4611>

KRISTEN LORELLO

artcritical
the online magazine of art and ideas

Monday, September 7th, 2015



Labor Day Shout Outs: Selected Shows Opening in New York

by THE EDITORS

Nadia Haji Omar/Bayne Peterson at Kristen Lorello

Since opening her gallery in April 2014 after serving as a director at Eleven Rivington, Kristen Lorello has proven herself to be an adroit curator with an eye toward the unexpected – such as a revival of the Southern California art scene fixture Malcolm “Mac” McClain and a NADA booth featuring cerastone-coated

sculptures by Rachel Higgins. Her two-person show of Nadia Haji Omar and Bayne Peterson represents an intriguing juxtaposition of media that centers on delightfully intricate colors and patterns. WILLIAM J. SIMMONS
195 Chrystie Street 6th Floor , thru' November 1