



## MEDRIE MACPHEE

THE WEIGHT OF MATTER    APRIL 1 - 24, 2021

Nicholas Metivier Gallery is pleased to announce *The Weight of Matter*, an exhibition of new paintings and works on paper by Medrie MacPhee. The exhibition will open on April 1<sup>st</sup> and run until April 24<sup>th</sup>. This is MacPhee's first solo exhibition at the gallery.

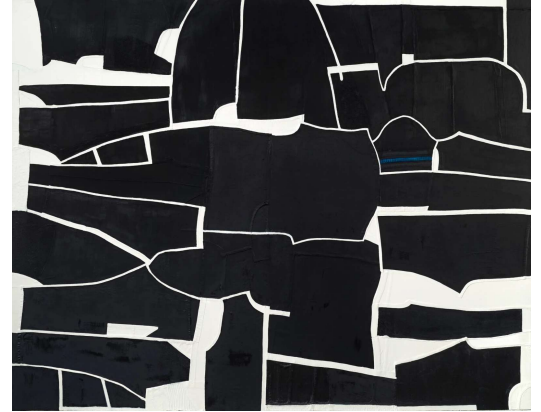
A recorded talk with Medrie MacPhee and Sarah Milroy, Curator of the McMichael Collection of Canadian Art, will be released on Thursday, April 8<sup>th</sup>.

*About five years ago, Medrie MacPhee began to rethink her paintings. She jettisoned her swirling, unstable compositions, whose tangled forms, derived from architecture, often hung, Surrealist style, in empty space. She found, as many painters do as they mature, that she could do more with less. She started collaging parts of cutup garments to her canvases, fitting them together like puzzles, letting their welted seams define taut shapes that now extend edge to edge. She replaced a familiar illusionism with an adamant, witty physicality.*

– Roberta Smith, The New York Times

Medrie MacPhee's innovative approach to space, colour and form is widely admired and respected in both Canada and abroad. Over the years, her work has evolved from architectural landscapes to abstraction, with the concepts of construction, momentum, collapse and renewal remaining central to her practice. A significant shift in MacPhee's process occurred when she began adhering ordinary materials — clothing, zippers, buttons and fabric — to her canvases. The resulting chromatic patterns she creates using this framework are entirely abstract and yet reference their origins in the subtle presence of human-body derived shapes and contours.

Central to this exhibition is an 8' by 10' painting titled, *Dark Matter* (2020). The title came to MacPhee during the making of the work when she learned about the



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the palette to black and white except for a small blue stripe in the top right quadrant. The simplified palette and bold composition recall the work of Paul-Émile Borduas and Robert Motherwell.

Other works in the exhibition, such as *Zest* (2020), have been inspired by moments in her recent memory like the specific quality of light she experienced at an artists' residency, The Bogliasco Foundation, on the Ligurian coast near Genoa in 2019. *Social Distance* (2020), on the other hand, memorializes an extremely fruitful and concentrated period of working in her studio without the distraction of a social life. MacPhee notes that, "for those of us privileged enough to just stay home and concentrate on whatever vocations we had there was a strange silver lining to the isolation."

MacPhee is also widely recognized for her works on paper that employ various abstract motifs composed of acrylic transfer, pumice, transparent velum and oil stick to create a unique visual language. Her work in this medium was the subject of an acclaimed two-person exhibition at the New York Studio School earlier this year, *Inner Workings: Works on Paper by David Humphrey and Medrie MacPhee* curated by Karen Wilkin.

To view the virtual exhibition walkthrough, [click here](#).

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