

James Lash – *My View*

Visual Description

This exhibit is of 8 paintings by James Lash. I will describe 4 of the works. The paintings are all in a 38" x 46" format and are unframed. They are acrylic on stretched canvas. They are arranged one to a panel on the large, freestanding gallery panels. There are four double sided panels, covered with a beige carpet-like material, stacked in a line, running north-south. The panel faces also point north-south. The panels are numbered 1 through 8, with 1 being the northernmost panel, 2 being the south facing panel on the rear side of panel 1, and so on, through panel 8 being the southernmost panel.

James has always been drawn to sketching the world around him. He is an accomplished painter, photographer and potter. His biggest passion is landscape painting, and his heroes include The Group of Seven, Emily Carr and Vincent Van Gogh. James has worked through the PotteryWorks studio for 20 years.

Panel 1 – Night Crossing

This painting is a night view across the Fraser River from New Westminster to Surrey. The river takes up the bottom half of the painting and the sky fills the top half. The colours are dominated by a deep and ombré blue (fading to black at the top and bottom of the painting) of the sky and river. It is a clear night and the water is relatively still, and we can see reflections in it. The viewpoint takes in three bridges crossing the river. Closest to the viewer is the SkyTrain bridge, with the Patullo Bridge behind it and a train bridge further away still. The SkyTrain bridge, has its distinctive triangular towers topped with red illuminated from below. The Patullo Bridge has numerous small lights along its length, which may be cars or lamp standards. The train bridge also has a few lights on it. The lights are surrounded by a light halo. Each of these lights is also reflected in the river below, with long streaks of coloured light – some orange, some pinkish, and some even light blue. On the far shore of the river, there are large trees and bushes, and in the foreground, we can see the edge of a sidewalk or boardwalk and some tufted dried grass just in the bottom left hand corner.

Panel 3 – Summer Lane, Surrey (landscape orientation)

This painting leads the viewer down a rural driveway flanked by trees in the height of summer. The eye is drawn down the drive directly in front of the viewer which leads out through a dark but open gate. Beyond the gate we can see more roadway and trees. The driveway is lined by the trees in irregular groupings and by two very straight wooden fences which pass behind the trees and border two pasture areas. The pasture on the left is very green and the pasture on the right is yellowish. The trees along the drive have straight trunks topped by bushy foliage which has highlights (yellow) and lowlights (dark green or black). Some branches reach across the drive, and some even appear to be coming from behind the painter into the foreground. There is mottled shade on the surface of the drive, which appears to be unpaved and is a purplish brown with a patch of redder earth on the left. The sky which we can glimpse through the trees in the centre and to the right is a bright turquoise blue.

Panel 4 – Yellow Deciduous Trees (portrait orientation)

This painting features some thin, deciduous trees with yellow and orange leaves that reach up and beyond the top of the painting. The sides of the canvas are also painted and the autumn leaves can be seen above and on the sides of the picture. The leaves are painted with thick paint and look as if they are moving in the breeze and reflecting a bright sunlight. In front of the trees is a sandy or bare earth in hues ranging from peach (on the right), through pink (in the middle) and blue (on the left side). At the bases of the trees are some grasses or small bushy plants, as well as a horizontal tree trunk. Beyond the trees is a small, still pond in a pale blue colour. Beyond the pond is more bare earth shoreline, then some darker green undergrowth, which leads to a stand of

thin deciduous trees that have already lost their leaves (these are mostly blue in colour with some hints of white and black bark, so possibly a stand of birch) in the left background, and some dark, indistinct vegetation on the right. In the far background are two mountains that are a pale greenish blue colour.

Panel 7 – Vines at River Bend (landscape orientation)

The final painting is of agricultural land with rows of grape vines running away from the viewer and over the crest of a hill and then down and away across the land. Directly in the centre is the space between two rows of crops with black earth dominating and framed by the two rows of green vines on either side. Similar rows are seen on both sides which become less and less distinct the further away they are from view. In the background we can see a body of water – either a narrow lake or a river – and more rolling hills covered in green and a deep peach colour. There appear to be some cliffs on the edge of the water. In the very far background, we can see what might be a highway bridge. The sky is mostly a pale mauve colour, and looks like a mix of high cloud and clear sky.