



*'mingled with all kinds of colours'*<sup>1</sup>

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Fine Arts In Painting

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<sup>1</sup>Carson, Ann, trans., *If not, winter: fragments of Sappho*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Distributed by Random House, 2002

## Artist Statement

My work is about the exploration of everyday-life, colour and the imagination. Making paintings is my way of understanding the dynamic and ever-changing sociological, cultural, and digital fabric of North American society. My practice involves creating a poetic network of images that utilize a range of styles to create representations reflecting my own experience through 'the everyday.' The everyday can be as simple as looking at a pair of running shoes or looking at the sunlight as it moves across the snow. But the everyday is also about the patterns and rhythms that unfold and exist in the activities and social spaces we move through and inhabit. For instance, the painting titled 'looking into the commemorative water fountain at ground zero, NYC', points to the complex relationships that have developed across large parts of the planet, which continue to have significant consequences for how governments behave and how communities deal with important issues that address their personal and social lives.

My work investigates both representational and abstract forms of painting. To be more specific, I am interested in the connections and meaning I find between nature, observed reality and abstraction. I explore these aspects of my practice with colour, line, form, shape, scale and materials. I often use photographs with the intention of re-interpreting the photograph using colour, scale and medium. An example, is the painting titled 'a group of young women looking at a sculpture with docent outside the institute of contemporary art, Boston. In the painting, is a group of figures and patterns of form and colour. The use of colour and form moves the eye across the surface, rather than using line and perspective. The composition is also off-centre which creates further movement.

The paintings with 'Jenny and Jasper' are inspired by my interest in the imagination and finding a way to make a visual narrative about social and cultural issues. In many paintings Jenny and Jasper are in their vehicle, driving along and observing the world outside their window. The background in these works often depicts abstract spaces that I have made intuitively, using line and colour. In the work 'driving around the garden of cupid and psyche' Jenny and Jasper are seen driving around a space full of colour and movement. I like the idea that Jenny and Jasper are living in a virtual universe.

Along with the Jenny and Jasper paintings, I pursued my interest in representation, and the use of paint, colour, and photography. I select photographs to paint based on their composition and content. An example is the painting, 'mother and daughter standing in front of an installation at the metropolitan museum of art, NYC.' In this work, we see through the eyes of the mother and daughter who are looking at an image. We also are looking at a painting - an image. The image seems to pose a question about the value and the role of the art object: what is it the viewer wants or desires to see?

The use of colour throughout the paintings has to do with colour's lack of definition. Colour allows the painter and the viewer to expand their relationship to what they see, to use their imagination, to see further possibilities. Through colour, beauty becomes more than just an object or entity but a way of interacting and seeing other things. The painting 'swatches' focuses on colour and materiality, both in the painting itself and as the subject of the painting. The image is taken from a photograph I took of a panel of swatches during my visit to the Jewish Museum (NYC) to see an exhibition of haute-couture fashion. The swatches are part of not only a complex global industry but have a role in the creative process of fashion design.

The intention of my painting it is to evoke a sense of being and agency. The imagination is necessary part of this because it's a space of play. Through my art, I hope to spark the imagination of the viewer, to see and perceive what is happening in their surroundings, to derive meaning, and to see how things can change, to move forward.

Adrian Emberley



emberley\_001, view of front room of the Fine Arts Building Art Gallery, University of Alberta, 2017



emberley\_002, book, **Jenny and Jasper driving along**, 20 pieces, pencil crayon, acrylic ink, watercolour, acrylic, silk thread, photocopy paper, on paper, 15" x 18", 2016



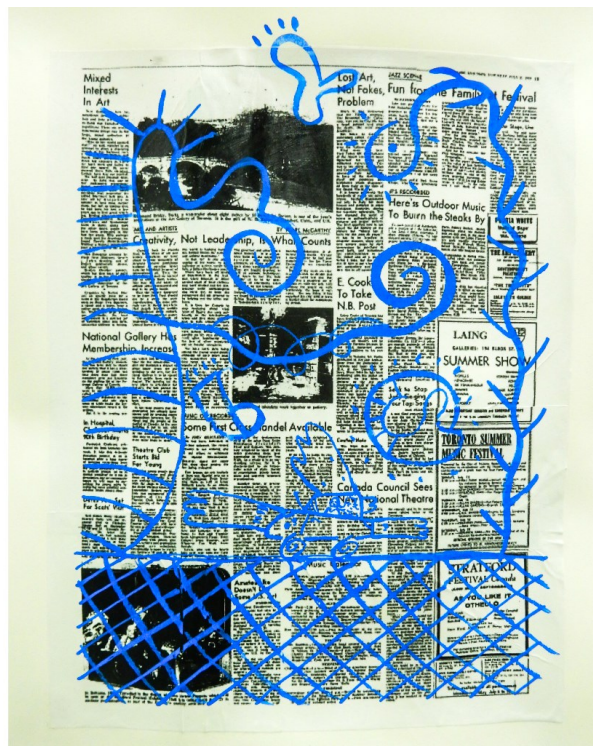
emberley\_003, page from book, **Jenny and Jasper driving along**, blue pigment powder, ink, watercolour, acrylic on paper, 15" x 18", 2016



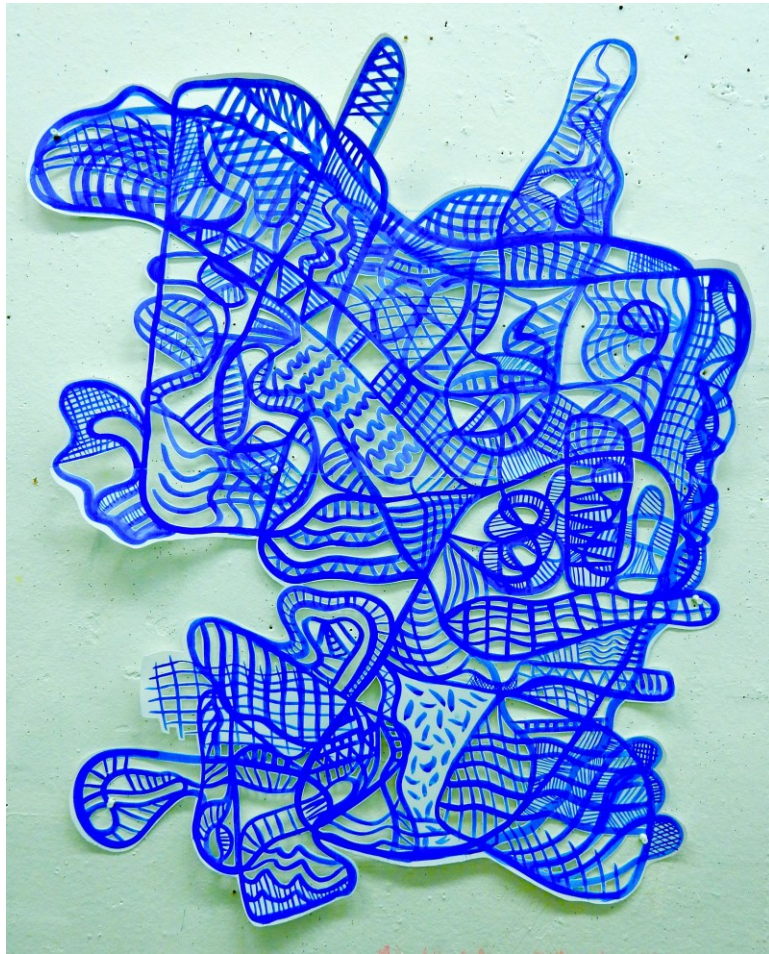
emberley\_004, page from book, **Jenny and Jasper driving along** ink, watercolour, acrylic on paper, 15" x 18", 2016



emberley\_005, page from book, **Jenny and Jasper driving along**, ink, watercolour, acrylic on paper, 15" x 18", 2016



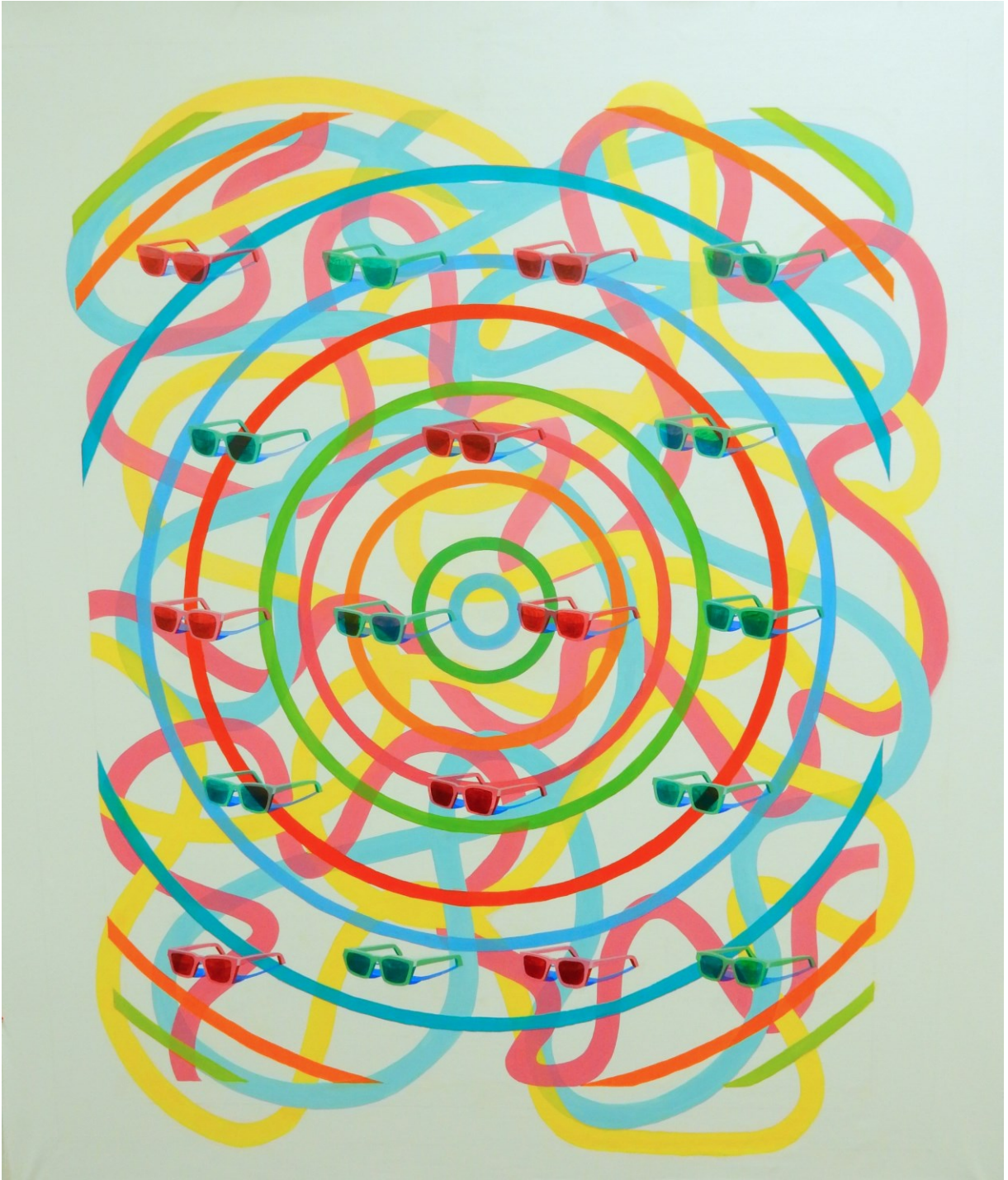
emberley\_006, page from book, **Jenny and Jasper driving along** gouache, photocopy paper on paper, 15" x 18", 2016



emberley\_007, **construction I**, gouache on paper, 36" x 48", 2016



emberley\_008, **maquette for sculpture**, watercolour and gouache on paper and board, 2016



emberley\_009, **optics**, oil on canvas, 48" x 60", 2015





emberley\_010, **bullet**, oil on wood panel, 14 x 18, 2016



emberley\_011, **picnic table**, oil on wood panel, 14 x 18, 2016



emberley\_012, parking an airplane at Pearson airport, oil on canvas, 55" x 72", 2016



emberley\_013, mother and daughter standing in front of an installation at the metropolitan museum of art, NYC, oil on canvas, 55" x 72", 2016



emberley\_014, looking into the commemorative fountain at ground zero, NYC, oil on canvas, 55" x 72", 2016



emberley\_015, **swatches**, oil on canvas, 55" x 72", 2016



emberley\_016, a group of young women looking at a sculpture with docent outside the institute of contemporary art, boston, oil on canvas, 55" x 72", 2016



emberley\_017, **looking out the airplane window at 37,000 feet**, oil on canvas, 55" x 72", 2016



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