

**Margie Kelk "Layers and Secrets: Oil Paintings and Constructions",  
The Propeller Centre for the Visual Arts April 21  
– May 2, 2004 by Adam Lodzinski**

For Margie Kelk, an acknowledged major source of inspiration is the work of British painter Howard Hodgkin. Hodgkin is perhaps best known for his abstracts evoking the somewhat paradoxical experience of memory without detail; that is, the experience of recall infused with little else but emotion.

Like Hodgkin, Kelk is interested expressing the phenomenological through abstraction. Four key elements make up her visual language: geometry, figuration, colour and gesture. Kelk deftly combines these elements in imagery that suggests, rather than renders, three dimensions thereby reflecting the enigma of inner life. Geometry and figuration create the perception of depth and help frame and focus our attention. Bold colours are laid down in thick brush strokes of impasto, and are then scraped in places to reveal layers. Layers evoke a sense of the passage of time as we know that time must pass before one layer can be applied over another.

Kelk's abstract landscapes - psychological landscapes as it were - serve as an apt metaphor for the psyche: layers refer to secrets rooted in time, and space reflects a quintessential characteristic of phenomenology; namely, that it is multi-dimensional, non-linear, and ultimately, never completely knowable.