

JOANNE MATTERA ART BLOG

GUARANTEED BIASED, MYOPIC, INCOMPLETE, AND JOURNALISTICALLY SUSPECT

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6.29.2009

Marketing Mondays: Career Q&A with Jackie Battenfield

As promised, I'm back with a short interview with Jackie Battenfield, whose new book **The Artist's Guide**, was the subject of a **Marketing Mondays** post two weeks ago. If you've leafed through the book, or even simply read my report, you know that Jackie is a strong advocate for artists taking control of their careers. Since Jackie **interviewed me** for her book, I thought I would turn the tables and interview her for my blog.



Jackie signing copies at her book launch at the Cue Art Foundation in New York City on June 18. Pics below are from the same event

JM: Jackie, what has changed most since you started helping artists take control of their careers?

JB: When I first started lecturing there was no Internet. I think that [change] is huge. More than ever before in history, artists can connect with potential audiences. Also, the art world has expanded in that artists are engaged in more media work, video installations, combining media, erasing the boundaries between disciplines. It's all melded.

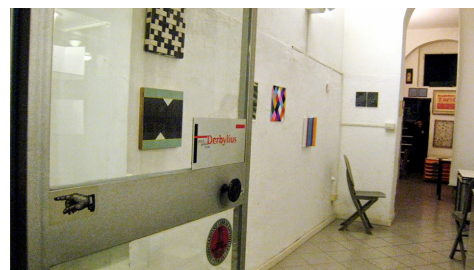
JM: Yes, but recently the art world has shrunk financially

LOOK UP! I've updated this blog with pages to events and projects.

PROJECTS

[Current Exhibitions](#)[Resume](#)[Facebook Page](#)[Website](#)[Int'l Encaustic Conference](#)[ProWax Journal](#)[Two Artists Talking \(Archives\)](#)

THROUGH JUNE 20



"10 Ways," a ten-artist exhibition at Derbilus Libreria Galleria in Milan, curated by Lorenza Sannai, is up through April 16. Click pick for more info and images

JUST PUBLISHED!

JB: That has affected artists, but artists are pretty accustomed to living on margins. Not to underestimate how difficult it is to lose part-time job opportunities or a support network, but I'm hoping artists will use this time do the kind of planning they need to do to get through the future ups and downs. My book is about making a living in any economy.

JM: How?

JB: Hopefully every chapter of my book pops one myth after the other. For instance, the idea of supporting yourself only from sales of your work is a myth. Even very successful artists diversify their income, turning it into real estate or investments. Artists with successful gallery careers are teaching or doing freelance work.

JM: You talk a lot about 'multiple income streams.' There's a great little drawing in your book showing a woman on a platform supported by many poles: art sales, teaching, investments, residencies, grants, bartering, freelance.

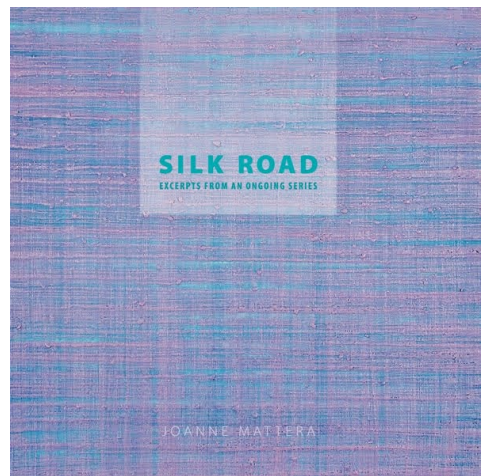
JB: Multiple income streams ease out the big ups and downs. Very few artists are comfortable with a 24/7 studio practice. It's very isolating. They have other talents and needs. Turn those into a source of income.

JM: For example?

JB: For example, I love working with other artists, so lecturing on career issues satisfies part of my personality, fulfills part of my income stream and it gives back. My tax preparator is an artist who loves numbers, my yoga teacher is an artist, and many of my friends have turned different skill sets into part-time work.

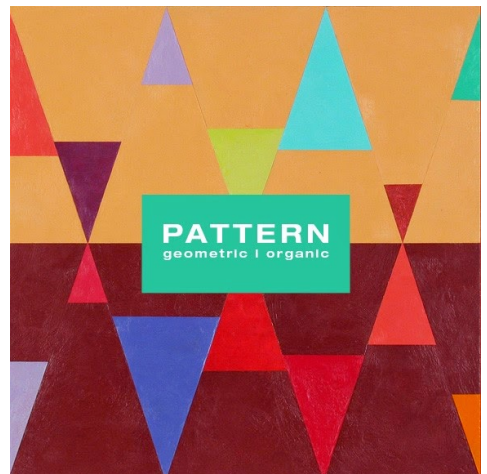


An animated Jackie and her rapt audience at Cue



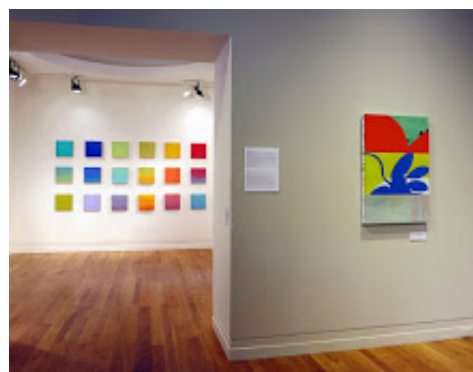
"Silk Road: Excerpts From an Ongoing Series" has been published to mark 10 years of my involvement with one series, whose aesthetic I describe as "lush minimalism." You can view the 56-page book in its entirety online at no charge. Click pic to view. The book is also available for purchase

JUST PUBLISHED!



I'm having a great year of exhibitions and catalogs. This volume, published by Space Gallery, Denver, on the occasion of the exhibition, "Pattern: Geometric|Organic," is viewable online and available for sale as a hard-copy volume. Click pic for exhibition info and a link to the catalog. That's my "Chromatic Geometry 29" on the cover

THROUGH MAY 31



"Formal Aspects: Visual Dialogue in Structure" is a six-artist exhibition at the Cape Cod Museum of Art, up now. Curated by artist Sarah Hinckley, it includes Erica H. Adams, Emily Berger, Joanne Freeman, Hinckley, Mira Schor and myself. Click pic for the exhibition blog, which contains info about the show and each artist, as well as installation shots and links to the museum. Above, an installation of my work with Hinckley's painting in the foreground

JM: You also talk about generosity.

JB: You can give advice and time, and it may not come directly back from that person, but the generosity of spirit comes back. If you know of an opportunity and you don't share the information with others, don't think you'll be the only person who applies. If we model ourselves on generosity, others are more likely to be generous too.

JM: What was your biggest surprise researching the book?

JB: How difficult it was to turn the information I had been teaching for so many years into a readable text. It's one thing to give a talk and make up a one-page handout, quite another to turn it into a whole chapter in a book.

JM: What advice would you offer to artists?

JB: Artists often see No where there is no No. I noticed this when I was running the Rotunda Gallery [in Brooklyn]. An artist would approach me during an opening or on the street and ask me to come up and see their work. I'd say, 'Call me next week and we'll try to set something up,' and nine times out of ten they never followed up. I was pretty shocked at how often artists didn't follow up.

JM: Speaking of No, you've got a great line in the book: "If I'm not being regularly rejected, it means I'm not pursuing opportunities." Would you talk a bit more about rejection?

JB: Rejection isn't personal. It's not an indictment of your work. Just because someone likes and respects your work doesn't mean they want to represent it or curate it into a show. There are a lot of other reasons why the work might not be selected. I don't mean to say that rejection is not painful, but you have to keep at it. One Yes wipes out a hundred Nos.

JAMES PANERO REVIEWS
DOPPLER SHIFT



Writing in The New Criterion, Panero calls Doppler Shift "a smart group show," noting the work of "artists who interest me most these days." There's a nice shout out to Mary Birmingham, the curator; to Mel Prest, who originated the concept; and to me, among others. Click pic for the review