

EQUINOX GALLERY  
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## **Gordon Smith: Collage Paintings**

September 8 to October 14, 2017

Equinox Gallery, Vancouver

Reception for the artist: Thursday September 7<sup>th</sup>, 6 to 8pm

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Equinox Gallery is pleased to present ***Collage Paintings***, an exhibition of new works by Canadian icon Gordon Smith. This is the artist's 23rd solo exhibition with the gallery and highlights Smith's ongoing relationship with collage as a means of incorporating found objects into painting to explore and reconsider the artist's evolving language of abstraction.

Throughout a career spanning over eight decades, Gordon Smith has explored the potential of painting as a way to expand and complicate how the natural world is rendered into pictorial space. The works in ***Collage Paintings*** are contradictions, illustrating Smith's ongoing exploratory artistic nature. Always a consummate modernist, these new works see Gordon Smith actively embracing postmodern ideas of fragmentation and mediation.

The works in ***Collage Paintings*** use a distinct language of abstraction in which loose, spidery lines and spontaneous drips and drizzles are layered and interwoven with torn magazine and newspaper pages. The looseness of form in the brush marks brings with it imagistic consequences that produce a vertiginous viewing experience in which our expectations of dark and light, foreground and background are unseated and rearranged. The surface should appear fractured but Smith's brush marks come together with the collaged elements, unifying his mode of expression. The incorporation of collaged text-based elements creates jumps and visual ruptures between brush strokes and "found" objects where the tattered edges of the paper develops its own vernacular in relation to Smith's abstract language. The unexpected connections reflect Smith's playful and complex response to the tension between textual and pictorial representation and the ambiguous relationship between material and ethereal, sign and object, idea and description. As Smith brings these contrasting visuals together, we are reminded of the ways in which language and paint exist to represent ideas.

Born in 1919 in East Brighton, England, Gordon Smith has worked continuously to expand the dialogue between abstraction and representation. Smith immigrated to Canada in 1933 where he attended the Winnipeg School of Art. Upon his return from fighting in WWII, he settled with his wife Marion in Vancouver, and graduated from the

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Vancouver School of Art. His many major achievements include the creation of the Gordon and Marion Smith Foundation (2002), Order of Canada (1996), Audain Prize for Lifetime Achievement in the Visual Arts (2007), and the Governor General's Award in the Visual and Media Arts (2009). Gordon Smith's work is included in numerous public collections, including the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa), Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto), Museum of Modern Art (New York), Victoria and Albert Museum (London), and the Vancouver Art Gallery. Mr. Smith's work is also featured at the High Commission of Canada (Canada House) at Trafalgar Square in London, UK. A 340-page monograph on the artist was published by Black Dog Publishing in 2014. A major solo exhibition entitled *Gordon Smith: The Black Paintings* is planned for October 2017 at the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Gordon Smith lives and works in West Vancouver, Canada.