



CONTRARY ELEMENTS



Meredith Knapp Brickell, *Tanks (detail)*, earthenware, wood, milk paint, 2007



Stuart Ober, *Salt Marsh with Island*, oil on panel, 2010

*Works by Meredith Knapp Brickell
and Stuart Ober*

Wednesday, February 2 - Thursday, March 3, 2011

Artists Reception: Friday, February 4, 6:30-8pm

Gallery Talk: Saturday, February 5, 2011, 10am



Lamont Gallery

Frederick R. Mayer Art Center • Phillips Exeter Academy

11 Tan Lane • Exeter, New Hampshire

<http://www.exeter.edu/arts/8160.aspx> • 603.777.3461

Gallery Hours: Monday 1-5pm, Tuesday-Saturday 9am-5pm

Closed Sundays and school holidays

Contrary Elements

February 2 - March 3, 2011

Lamont Gallery presents *Contrary Elements*, an exhibition of oil paintings and ceramics by artists **Meredith Knapp Brickell** and **Stuart Ober**.

An artist who practices a self-taught interpretation of representational painting, Ober describes his work over the last 30 years as “dealing with everyday life and objects in a way that searches for an intersection with the sometimes uneasy world of emotion.” He combines “a deadpan illusionism with a not quite fathomable psychic undertone.”

Ober realized his fascination in oil paint while a senior math major at Tufts University. Graduating in 1970

with a bachelor’s degree in mathematics, he began his career-long exploration as an artist. Since 1995, Ober has taught oil painting at the New Hampshire Institute of Art. His works have been exhibited at Gallery NAGA, Boston, MA; the Art Complex Museum, Duxbury, MA; the Currier Gallery of Art, Manchester, NH; and the Tyler Gallery, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA.

“All my paintings begin with a strong emotional reaction to an object, a situation, or a media image, or a juxtaposition of commonplace objects seen for an instant while walking through a room,” Ober says. “This emotional response to the ordinary in life provides the energy to translate an image into a painting. This emotional reaction can



Stuart Ober, *Salt Marsh With Island*, Oil on canvas

center on the inner glow of fully saturated color, on the soft diagonal and horizontal lines of open marsh, on the shape of sunlight through a window at a certain point in the day. The emotion is what will sustain my concentration as I paint, and, in the end, what I want the observer to sense when looking at the painting where it hangs on the gallery wall.”



Meredith Knapp Brickell, Detail from the installation *Tanks*, Ceramic

increasingly interested in the complexity of imperfect landscapes ... I appreciate the many interconnected layers that make up these places—people, architecture, urban planning, abandoned sites.” In ceramic and mixed-media sculpture, Brickell’s experience of place is conveyed in deeply-rooted and instinctive ways through minimal form, subtle lines and color. In Brickell’s series *Tanks*, she describes it as a “simple arrangement of rustic vessels elevated on scaffolding,” which is often associated with pools of deep, still water and sensations of floating. Another installation piece, *Bones*, is a collection of objects referring to the realm of the handheld—toys, tools, trinkets—the things carried from place to place. The arrangement follows the process of sorting through personal objects after a death. The ceramic forms represent the memory of an object rather than the actual object itself, consequently allowing the ambiguous forms to exist in a murky place between the familiar and unfamiliar.

Brickell received a bachelor’s degree from North Carolina State University, a master’s degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and studied at Penland School of Crafts in Penland, NC. Her recent solo exhibitions include the Philadelphia Clay Studio, Philadelphia, PA, and Dubhe Carreño Gallery, Chicago, IL. In 2008, Brickell was awarded the silver prize for her piece *Gather* in the Taiwan Ceramics Biennale. She teaches art and art history at DePauw University in Greencastle, IN.

Describing herself as “sensitive to her surroundings,” Brickell says that observation of place has been the consistent element in her art. After growing up on a farm in New Jersey and attending college amid Nebraska prairie land, she found her perspective changing when she relocated to a studio in downtown Raleigh, NC. The industrial neighborhood offered new energies. “The urban landscape has been a new source of inspiration, even though it is a very different aesthetic,” Brickell says. “For a long time, I was interested in beautiful, isolated, rural spaces. But [now] I am