

To digest the vast and varied career of Anna Yuschuk in a single sitting is to swallow a four course meal in one gulp. From the provoking vulnerability of her early figurative work, to the hypnotic colour fields of *Passage* or the delicate mandalas of her most recent series, *Oscillations* - Yuschuk's visual lexicon is continually, and remarkably, changing. But the apparent incongruity of Yuschuk's formal aesthetics over the years speaks not to the artist's fickle whims or the ebb and flow of collector preference, but the genius of her process and the sincerity of her artistry.

Born in Lviv Ukraine, Anna Yuschuk received her MFA in architecture before immigrating to Canada in 1990. Among her earliest work shown in Canada, Yuschuk's *Waiting Room* series was boldly subversive and quintessentially post-modern consideration of representational meaning. Described by Carly Butler as "transitional bodies," *Waiting Room*'s viscerally naked female figures would undergo a series of incarnations in Yuschuk's subsequent bodies of work; toy soldiers, man-made structures in the urban landscape and intricately rendered objects of domestic life all functioned as stand-ins for the human form; signifiers in Yuschuk's semiotic discourse. More than merely substituting one form for another, however, each evolution of the figure in Yuschuk's oil paintings moved closer and closer towards the dissolution of form entirely. When the Gaussian blur that distorted the park benches and landmarks of her *Stills* series finally obliterated form in favour of the open fields of colour and light (*Passages*, *Silence*) the artist had not just undergone a formal shift but a shift -a transcendence- in consciousness.

*Oscillations* is, in this way, both an affirmation of this transcendence and a re-birth of Yuschuk's process as a whole. Indeed, the title of the series reveals what the artist herself describes as a reversal, a return to form. Born through a philosophy of constantly circulating energy, *Oscillations* no longer documents the artist's process of reconciling meaning, form and representation, but instead meditates upon its realization. Loose spirals of light and colour and meticulously rendered webs of line belie a deeper form and truer meaning in *Oscillations*. This meaning, or "truth" as Yuschuk describes it, is neither represented nor symbolized through form but *felt* through a connection forged in contemplating beyond the canvas' surface.

The "time-released" meaning of *Oscillations*' mandalas emerge, thus, slowly, meditatively and imbued with a sense of enlightenment that so nearly straddles the artistic and spiritual it's tough to imagine where Yuschuk will go from here.

~ AJ Lloyd, 2010