

Exploring Collage

If you find yourself without a clay studio, collage may be a good way to continue working and exploring your ideas. Using easily found materials, you can explore a wide range of visual ideas that can be related to your work in clay in the future.

In this section we'll use the medium of collage to continue exploring key components of visual language. These ideas can be applied to three dimensional work as well as two dimensional and can be directly related to relief sculpture. Another related art form is assemblage. Collage and assemblage are similar in that they combine elements/materials into a unified work. Assemblage uses three dimensional elements.

This presentation is lesson one looking at formal aspects of the visual language. It was prepared in conjunction with an online group discussion for Lisa Chicoyne's Spring Term Paperclay class. As a group, we chose to work in the medium of collage while for many working with clay was not an option. Some supplemental content from the discussion may not be presented in this power point presentation but the essential information is here.

Materials

Support Layer:

wood, cardboard, watercolor paper, canvas, mat board

Adhesive:

Mod Podge, White glue, glue sticks, rubber cement, spray adhesive, acrylic matt medium, tape

Image Creating Materials:

Magazine clippings, newspaper clippings, packaging, colored paper scraps, old drawings, etc.

Photocopies, transferred images*, old photos, fabric, natural materials, decorative paper, tissue paper, velum, etc.

Painting and drawing materials:

Watercolor paint, acrylic paint, gouache, pencil, charcoal, pastels, india ink, etc.

Cutting tools:

Scissors, Xacto Knives, etc.

Flattening Tools:

Brayers, bone folders, wooden spoons, metal spoons, ceramic ribs/tools (all kinds!)

Thinking About Composition

Composition is the arrangement or placement of elements in a work. This applies to all art forms be it music, painting, collage or sculpture. It's not the subject of a work but it's placement.

Why is composition important?

- It controls the way the eye moves through the work
- It gives order to the elements
- It supports and reinforces the meaning in the work
- Means for establishing balance in an image
- Understanding composition is like knowing how to make coherent sentences.

How does composition support the meaning in the work?

Basic “Rules” of Composition

Rule of Thirds

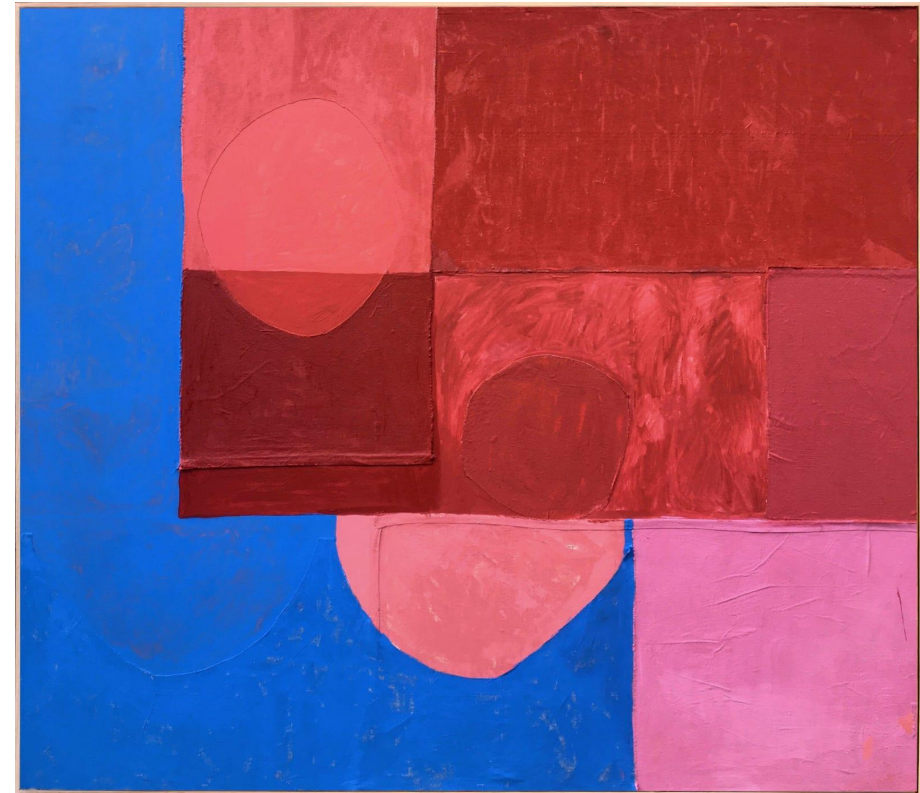
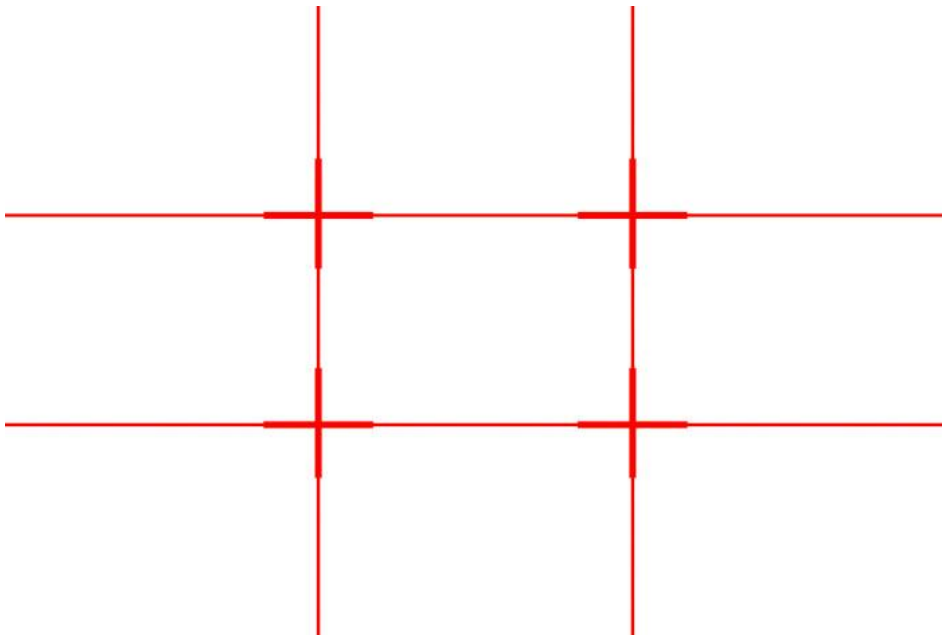
Center Rule

Allover Composition

Open vs Closed Composition

Rule of Thirds

Divided your picture into thirds vertically and horizontally. Position your focal point or main subject at an intersecting point (see the thicker red marks in the image on the left). Where is the focal point in Galina Munroe's collage on the right?



Center Rule

If placing main subject in the center it should be positioned just off center.

The image to the right by Randel Plowman, the image of the figure is placed just off center.



All-Over Composition

When there is no clear point of emphasis or subject.

All elements need to work in harmony to make a balanced image.

The image to the right by Shelton Walsmith is an example of this type of composition.



Open vs Closed Composition

In an open composition the edges of the visual elements extend to the edges of the ground. In a closed composition the elements are contained within the space of the ground. These two images were created by the artist John Rosis. The one on the left is an example of an open composition, on the right, closed.



Well Known Collage Artists to Explore

Kara Walker

Man Ray

Romare Bearden

Hannah Hoch

Matisse

Rauschenberg

Kurt Schwitters

Raoul Hausemann

Nancy Spero

Lance Letscher

Hollie Chastain

Peter Sacks

Ruth Root

Lesser Known Collage Artists we'll look at today

While looking at these images try to identify which rules of composition are being used in each image.

Andrea Burgay – Brooklyn, NY

Galina Munroe – British-French artist born 1993

Jane Cornwell – Northern California

John Rosis – New York/New Jersey

Randell Plowman – Northern Kentucky



Andrea Burgay



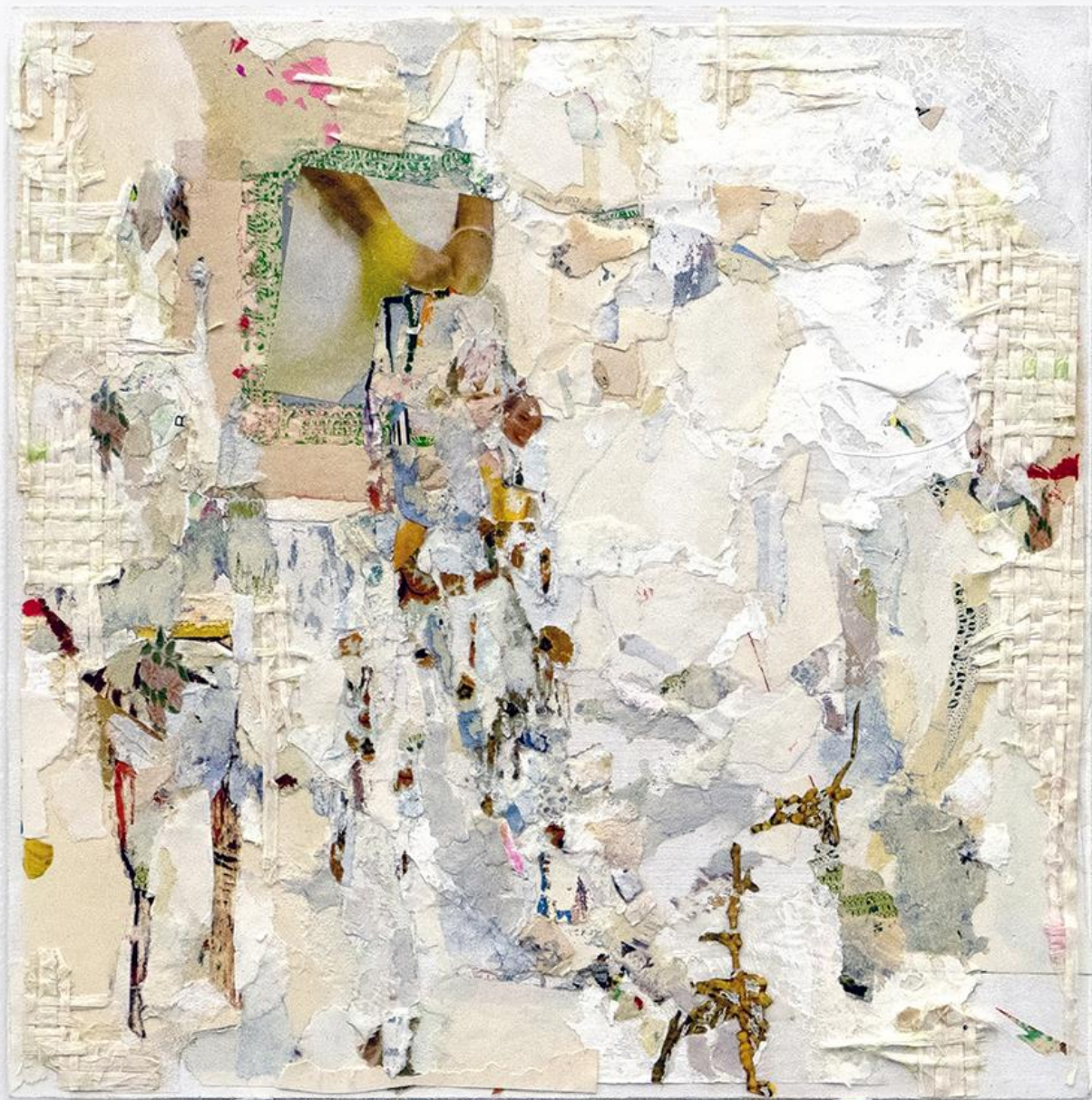
Andrea Burgay



Andrea Burgay



Andrea Burgay



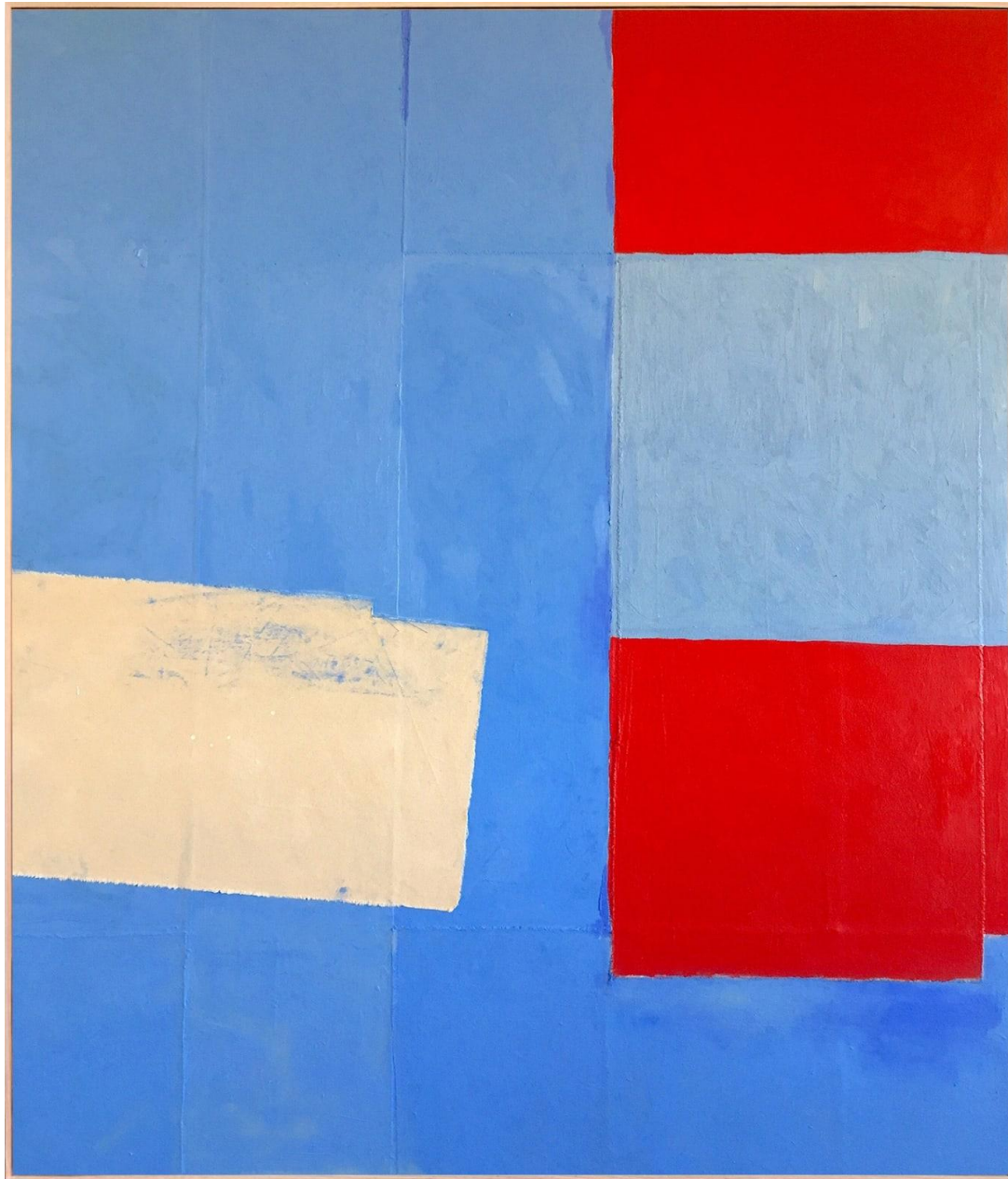
Andrea Burgay



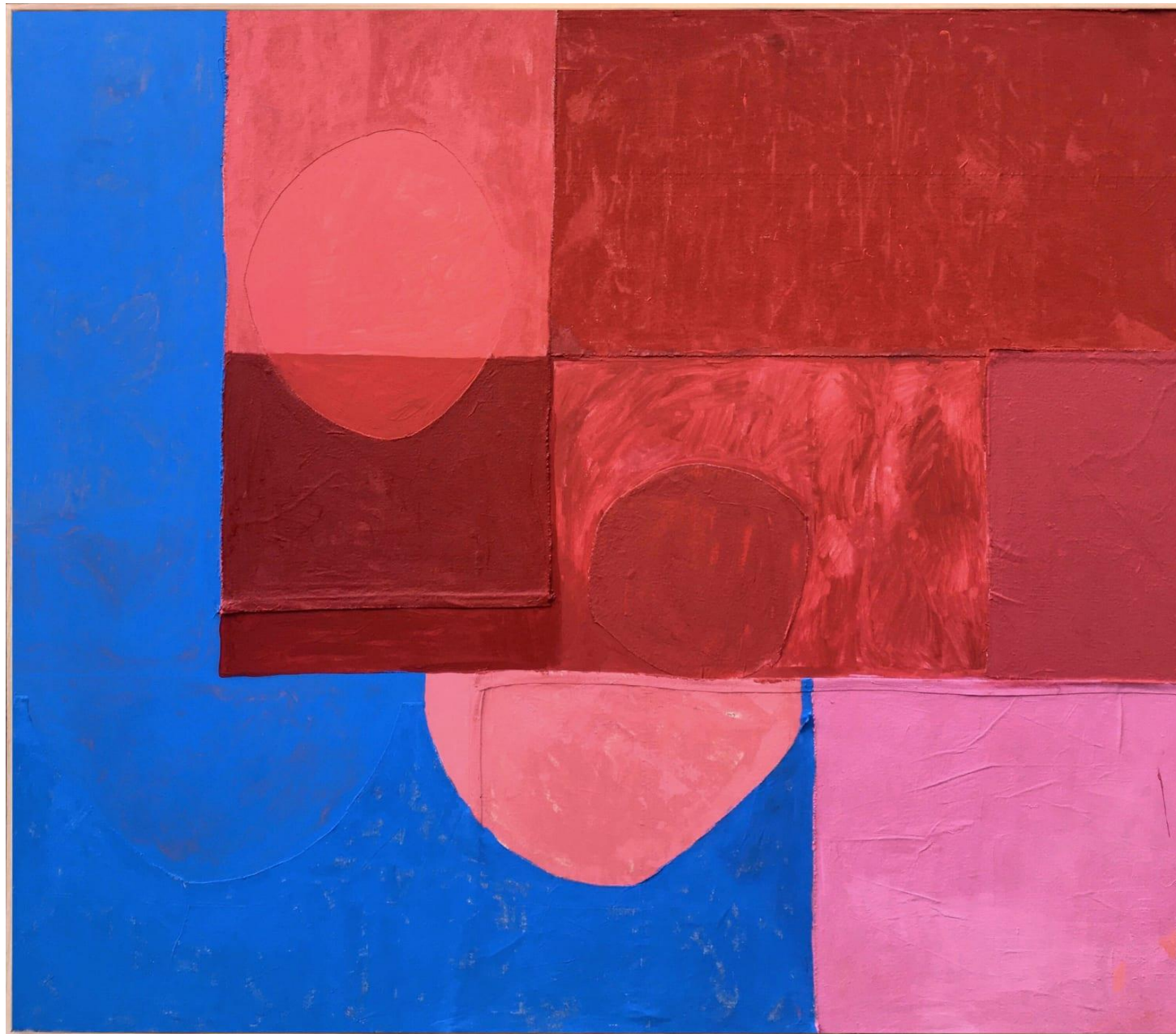
Galina Munroe



Galina Munroe



Galina Munroe



Galina Munroe



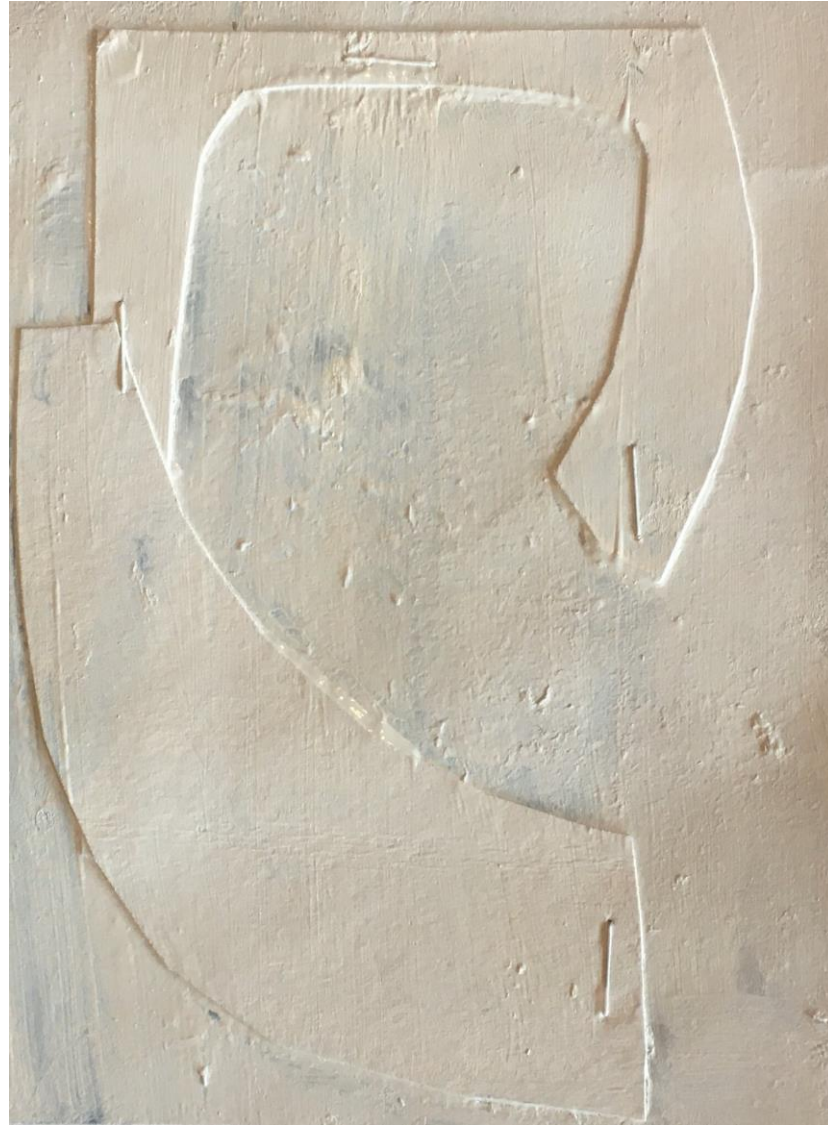
Jane Cornwell



Jane Cornwell



Jane Cornwell



Jane Cornwell



Jane Cornwell



John Rosis



John Rosis



John Rosis



John Rosis



Randel Plowman



Randel Plowman



Randel Plowman



Randel Plowman

This week's exercise:

Imposed Limits

Working with a few large shapes. Use a maximum of five distinct shapes to create a collage. Give consideration to the rules of composition.

For an added challenge – try making one using each of the five different “rules”.

Challenge question to explore: Can you break the rules and still get the composition to work?

Bonus idea:

Balance is the visual equilibrium of all the elements in a composition. What creates a sense of balance in a work of art? Is balance essential? We'll talk more about balance next week as well as some of the other principles.

Bonus Challenge:

Can you pick one image and write a Haiku inspired by the image? See my instruction on how to write haiku.