



GOULBURN REGIONAL ART GALLERY

KAYE MAHONEY

Moving Imagery

6 – 29 October 2011

EDUCATION KIT

Contents

About the education kit	3
Acknowledgements	3
Moving Imagery: An exhibition of works by Kaye Mahoney	4
About the Artist	5
About the Exhibition	6
About the Work	7
Mediums	
Themes	8
1. Music	9
Works in Focus	
Classroom Activities	
2. Different Points of View	12
Works in Focus	
Classroom Activities	
3. Time	15
Works in Focus	
Classroom Activities	
4. Chance, randomness and the unplanned	18
Works in Focus	
Classroom Activities	
Vocabulary	20

Cover: *2.5 Dimensional Composition #1*
2011
41 x 35 cm
Oil on Plexiglas

About the education kit

This education kit was developed for the exhibition Kaye Mahoney Moving Imagery at Goulburn Regional Art Gallery October 6 – 29 2011.

The education kit highlights important themes and artworks in the exhibition and provides teachers of preschool, primary school and high school students' ideas for art making and theory lessons. The kit provides background information on the artist, the exhibition and works.

This education kit was compiled by Michelle Stuart, Education and Public Programs Officer Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, thankyou to Kaye Mahoney for her time and providing the information and imagery for this education kit.

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MOVING IMAGERY: AN EXHIBITION OF WORKS BY KAYE MAHONEY

GOULBURN REGIONAL ART GALLERY OCTOBER 6 -29

Piano music unfolds through aqueous dabs of red, blue and yellow paint, they float on a sheet of staves before dissolving evanescently together like musical chords...

Artist Kaye Mahoney will be exhibiting a cross section of her work including paintings on Perspex, stop motion videos, music, sound and a multi media installation at the Goulburn Regional Art Gallery from 6 to 29 October. *Moving Imagery* is the artist's first major solo exhibition since returning to Australia in 2009 after being based in New York for 15 years.

In *Moving Imagery* Kaye Mahoney explores the visual and sensory interpretation of sounds, music and events. The artist invites audiences on a rich visual sound journey that resonates with her engagement in 20th century abstract art (ranging from Malevich to Minimalism and colour field abstraction) and the strategies of the 60's Fluxus movement and John Cage.

Moving Imagery includes videos of unfolding paintings accompanied by musical tracks by Satie and contemporary Australian composer Tim Smith. Kaye Mahoney's paintings convey a sense of harmonised unity, an uncomplicated singularity and wholeness. Panoramic abstractions such as *Mountain Air* and *Riverline* hover between musical score, landscape and aerial view. Her luminous highly chromatic double-sided paintings on Perspex are deliberately verging on 3D.

The installation, *An Arrangement of Notes*, is an array of source materials, tools and artworks purposefully arranged in a Perspex grid. Jars of pigment are sequenced in a chromatic scale alongside text based works, assemblages, experimental pieces, videos and art by fellow collaborators from the artist's circle in New York and the south of France.

Blending classical techniques, modern aesthetics and contemporary materials and technologies, Kaye Mahoney's work delivers an energising, thought provoking vision of depth and beauty.

- Jane Cush, Director Goulburn Regional Art Gallery & Brian Mattlin, independent Curator

About the Artist

Born in Thailand in 1959, Kaye Mahoney spent her formative years in Canberra and Rome. After 20 years living and working in New York, Mahoney is now primarily based in Sydney and the south of France. In recent years Mahoney has exhibited in solo and group shows in Dillon Gallery and Emily Harvey Art Foundation (New York), Gallery Infinart and Gallery@28 (Australia), Galerie Singuliere (Nice, France), the Salle Artisanale (Vieux Pierrefeu, France) and La Porta Gallery (Tuscany, Italy).

Mahoney's visual impulses draw from 20th century abstract art. Her compositional approach is influenced by the some of the strategies of the 1960's Fluxus artists and John Cage. Mahoney has an MFA from the New York Academy of Art and studied Fresco and Mural Techniques with Leonetto Tintori at Il Laboratoria per Affresco in Tuscany Italy.



Riverline pause
(from *Riverline*)
2010
100 X 290 cm
Oil on canvas

About the Exhibition

Moving Imagery, the show, is a cross-section of my artistic practice ranging from works made in the last five years to the present. It includes major works on canvas, seminal and current works on Perspex and videos, and a wall installation (that includes painting+video 'books' and an assemblage of creative source and reference materials and objects).

Like musical composition, also a non-verbal form of communication, my works more about expressing ideas and feelings than depicting places or things. As such, the "language" of music is very much a part of my artistic practice - a practice that centres on an expression of balance rhythm and harmony, consciousness and reflection. Visually the works evoke the elemental phenomena of life: air, water, sound, light and energy, and are in tune with much that is embedded at a fundamental level in nature, physics and biology. But it also embraces universal forces that are structured and chance elements that are random.

I am attracted to concepts of fluid temporality and coexistent universes (as in universes outside our own, but also those within our phenomenological world). Just as no two beams of light hit a surface in quite the same way, no two people ever see quite the same painting. This is both a physical and a metaphysical truth. So in viewing my work, I encourage an independent improvisational way of seeing. We all learn, intuitively, from an early age how to listen to music that contains different yet simultaneous sounds and a complexity of rhythmic motion, tonalities and harmonies, with elements hard and soft, loud and quiet, very near, in a middle ground and far, far away. I like people to approach my artworks with their eyes and minds in the same way they might listen to a symphony or a song; to find in them the rhythms, the motion, the ebb and flow, the elemental themes and their echoes and harmonies.

Though some works are nominally static and others are clearly animated, all are, for me, moving imagery. In the end as in the beginning, in whichever medium, I convey the vibrations of life, the timeless, infinite and energetic possibilities of the worlds we may inhabit, discover, or create.

– Kaye Mahoney

About the Work

Mediums

Canvases: Mahoney's canvas are a culmination of many, often translucent, "veils" of paint, pushing the boundaries of techniques drawn from traditional oil and fresco painting. As light moves through and across the layers of pigment it creates vibrations of colour and movements in shades of bright and dark. Conceptually, each layer represents its own moment in time and its own universe of interpretation and experience—all of which are contained in the final work.

Videos: The videos are like canvases unbound, with their many layers and individual moments in time sequentially on view— an indexical record of a painting's personal history (and its often surprising evolution). Where a painted canvas holds within itself many iterations collapsed into a single instant of time, the videos invoke a series of unique moments in its history, unfurled over many instances of time. This is more than just an explication of the paintings from which they are created. This is its own unique way of seeing, of engaging with the process and product of the work.

Perspex: If the videos are a kind of exploded diagram of the canvases, then the 2.5 Dimensional paintings on Perspex are somewhere in that first second or so after the 'bang' of creation: Akin to the canvases in their ostensibly static form and their direct application of pigment on substrate. Yet, with their dimensionality and motion more overtly on view, these works move out towards the third dimension, just as the videos step out into the fourth.

- Brian Mattlin, independent curator

Themes

There are 4 primary themes that Kaye Mahoney's work can be clustered into: music, different points of view, time and chance. Her art works can be representative of one or more of these themes, they can easily move between themes and fit into more than one simultaneously. For the purposes of this education kit Kaye has selected works that demonstrate each theme most effectively.



Potential, 2003
30 x 20 cm
Oil on canvas
Collection of the artist

1. Music

"A lot of my art is about making music or sounds visible. Sometimes, when I listen to music or hear sounds, in my minds eye, I see colours, shades of colours, vibrations, shapes and lines that move. So much so that I am moved to paint them. I know when my painting is finished when it feels "in tune".

I have my own visual "code" for the elements of music. Here is a simplified outline of parallels that I draw between the musical and the visible."

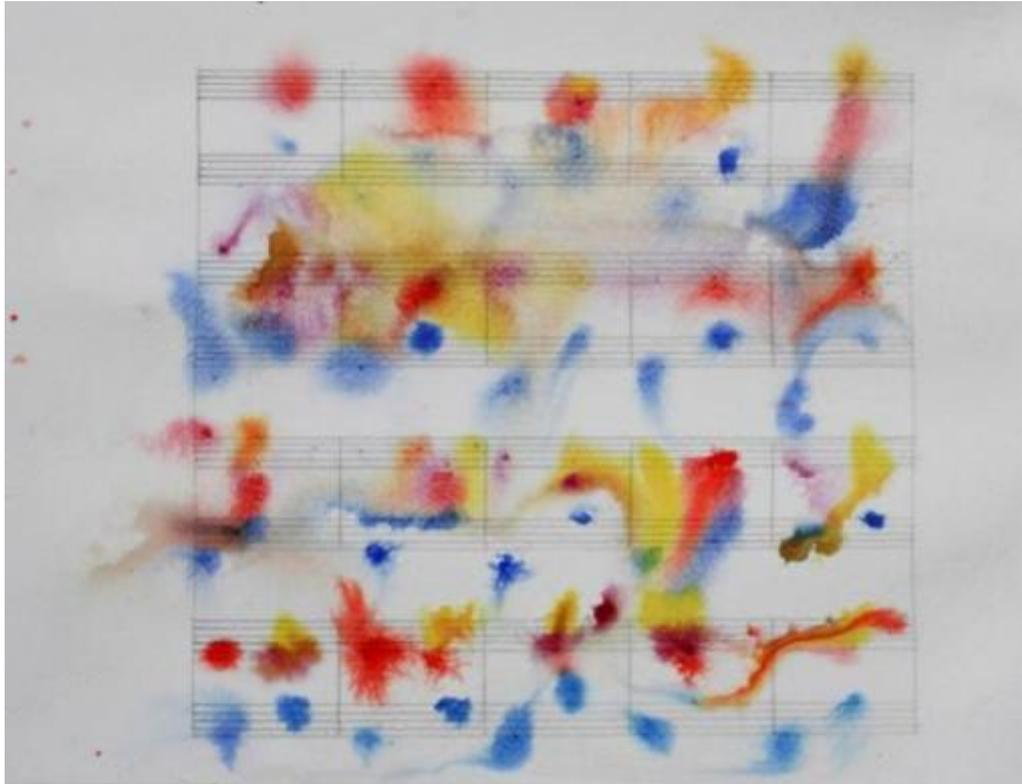
Musical element

Visual element

Volume (loud and soft)	Light and shade/ shifts in tone, scale
Chords	Thin veils of paint superimposed on top of each other.
Notes	Dots and small shapes that vibrate visually
Emotion	Colours
Lyrics/words	Line
Rhyme	Forms, curves or shapes that recur
Vibrations	Blurred edges
Mood	Warm / cool colours
Melody	Variation in colour
Vibrations and reverberation	Reflections of shapes
Tintinnabulation	Sparks of light
Percussion and rhythm	Repetitive dots in a pattern
Underlying soundtrack	Background

- Kaye Mahoney

Work in Focus



Gymnopedie, 2009
Video progression
Music by Erik Satie
Collection of the artist

Video of *Gymnopedie*, 2009 (with music: "Gymnopedie 1")

"This is a painted "performance" of a beautiful piano piece by the French composer, Erik Satie. A few summers ago I decided to "conduct" this performance. I visualised the musical notes coming to life on a sheet of staff paper (used for writing music). I asked my fellow artist friends to paint the actual notes of this piece of music on wet paper while recording it with stop action photography. The dabs of red, blue, yellow and purple are the musical notes. They float over the page and dissolve into each other just in the same way that notes on the piano do when they are played together."

– Kaye Mahoney

Activities

Preschool

Provide a large piece of paper on a table. Provide blue, red and yellow paint. Play music in the art area and encourage children to paint using their fingers.

Ask children

What sounds can you hear?

What do you think music would look like?

What colours do you think music would be?

Primary School

You will need: paper, coloured pencils/crayons, water colour paints, music without lyrics and a water spray bottle.

Set up a piece of paper and a coloured pencil or crayon for each student. Play the music for the class and ask children to draw what they hear. This activity is best done with closed eyes; the marks represent what is heard.

On another sheet of paper, dampened with water, use water colours to represent notes, bass and melody. Before starting ask students to write down what colour they think would represent beat, melody, high notes, low notes, use these colours to make another work.

High school

The above activity could also be run at high school. Along with creating the artwork students can create a video of a work being produced. Set up a video camera over the area to be worked on or pin the paper up on a board. In groups (each person selecting one colour and one note) paint the music onto the paper.

2. Different Points of View

I am intrigued by how we are able to communicate with each other so well and yet how we can look at the same object, event or statement and see it differently. My works often reflect the many viewpoints that we can have in the one view. – Kaye Mahoney

Works in Focus



Mountain Air, 2011
162 x 365 cm
Oil on canvas

Mountain Air, 2011

“This panoramic painting shows how we are able to see many different viewpoints in the same image. It is about the way we see and how we can see, not just with our eyes, but with our minds, memories and experiences. If you have experienced reading music you can obviously bring that experience to this painting – there is a musical score: the yellow marks that vibrate are like notes and the lines are staves and you can see music. At the same time you can perhaps glean a mountainous landscape that you would typically see if you are standing on the ground or driving through the countryside. On top of this, the painting may prompt you to recall an aerial view much like what you would observe if you were flying - or a map like view. Moreover, if you look at the dabs, dots and details up close, they may remind you of small cells or simple organisms under a microscope. Or more than anything might just appreciate pure line, shape, tone and colour, patterns and the sensations or memories they evoke.” – Kaye Mahoney



Massively Grave, 2005
20 x 25 cm
Stretcher bars, heart
trinkets, sand
Collection of Jane
and Jimmy Barnes

Massively Grave, 2005

"In this work I assembled old heart shapes and trinkets that I found at flea markets and second hand shops around the world. People are drawn to this piece because hearts are obviously a symbol of love. However, if you look at how the hearts are piled on top of each other in the ground and when you see that, although they are all hearts, they are unique and special in their own way, with their own history, you may see other messages - perhaps about life and "death"? You may glean another meaning from the title. For me this piece is a "bittersweet" statement. Whatever you think this piece means, is valid." – Kaye Mahoney

Activities

Preschool

Introduction to the concept that images have meanings, look at pictures and talk about what they mean. For example:

- Look at Kaye Mahoney's work, what do you think a heart shape means?
- What do you think the circles mean in the work *Mountain Air*, 2011?

Primary School

Introduction to the idea that images have more than one meaning:

Look at the image *Mountain Air*, 2011 write a paragraph about what you think the image may be about. Swap your paragraph with someone else in the class.

Does their paragraph say the same things as yours did?

Can you see how the other person may see the work differently?

What did they see that you did not?

Make a list as a class of all of the different ideas that the class has come up with for *Mountain Air*, 2011.

High School

How important is order and placement in the work *Mountain Air*, 2011?

Look at the work *Massively Grave*, 2005, how has Kaye Mahoney used signs and symbols in her work?

3. Time

“One of the reasons why I enjoy visiting galleries and museums is that they are places where I can shut out the conventional demands that require me to measure my life out in seconds, minutes, hours and days. I can look at a work of art and suspend any notions of time ticking away. My art sometimes explores how we can experience time differently or in another context.”

– Kaye Mahoney

Works in Focus



2.5 Dimensional
Composition #4
2011
41 x 35 cm
Oil on Plexiglas

2.5 Dimensional Composition #4, 2011

“These pieces are titled this way because they are not just two dimensional images and not quite three dimensional images – they are somewhere in between. They are not simply still and yet not actively moving (like a video) either. One possible reason for this is that, in terms of time, the works are made up of many different layers painted on different days and painted on both sides of a transparent surface. The separate layers are quite clearly visible. For me they represent many “snap shots” or different “slices of time” that I can view all at the same instance – simultaneously. I can see the first layers of paint and the last and I can see the painting’s history and its life – all at once. I can see that the beginnings of the painting are just as important as the final layer.” – Kaye Mahoney



Interior Progression – centre

“This video explores time because it makes you conscious of many different items and processes unfolding at different speeds; the way things look changes at different rates, all in the same scene. In the video:

- § Some artworks (like the linear painting on the top and the fresco at the bottom) are static and do not change;
 - § The quartz crystal on the right refracts light from the window, changing with the intensity of the light that shines through it at the rate that the light changes;
 - § The rotating discs in the “Rouge/Vert” are driven by a clock mechanism moving at yet another speed;
 - § The scene through the windows outside is also changing at its own speed with the ebb and flow of sunlight outside and with the impact of my reflection as I move back and forth to paint the centre canvas;
 - § The animated painting again is evolving at yet another speed determined by my own action and the pace of painting and photography;
 - § And (if you take cue from its title) the “White Lie” painting is taking years and years to slowly turn grey.”
- Kaye Mahoney

Activities

Preschool

Painting over time, collaborative work:

Day 1: Set up a large piece of paper on a table for 4 children to work on at one time. Using one colour allow children to paint on the paper using brushes. After the session hang the painting on the wall and look at the work.

Day 2: set up the same painting on a table, using a different colour and sponges allow the children to paint over the previous day's work. After the session hang the painting on the wall and look at the work.

Repeat for a few days, changing colour and applicators. Talk about how the work has changed each day.

Primary School/High school

Painting onto Perspex:

Painting on to Perspex allows students to see how an artwork changes over time. Using thin layers of paint, paint an image on to Perspex. You can select lines, circles and patterns. Once dry the Perspex can be viewed from two angles, one showing the work from the beginning or first layer and the other the last layer. Depending on the thickness of paint application, other layers may be seen.

High School Questions

Choose one artwork from this education kit. Do you, as the audience, feel and understand the work?

How have the above artworks been composed? What are their unique qualities?

4. Chance, Randomness and the unplanned

“For me, chance and random events are just as valid as determined, voluntary choices in my creative process. They are often more interesting. I like to allow random, unintended events, mistakes or things beyond my control to impact the way I make art. I actually believe it is a good metaphor for staying open to events in your life that you have no control over. For me it keeps me refreshed, mystified and curious and allows me to stay open to new ideas. I often view the results of my work (be it a video, a painting, a recording or an assembled piece) as the echo, index, imprint or evidence of what is left behind after I have allowed chance and randomness to take its course in the work that I perform.” – Kaye Mahoney

Works in Focus

An Arrangement of Notes, ongoing multimedia wall installation, *Spoken Passage*, 2011

“I took all the titles of the artworks in my installation, wrote them down on pieces of paper, mixed them up and randomly reordered them. I was curious to see how chance would operate on the order of the words. I then recorded the titles being read in that order. There is a certain poetry that has been authored by the play between choice and chance.” – Kaye Mahoney

“Interior” videos

“The interior videos were made by stop action photography. To make these videos, my husband sets me up with a camera on a tripod in front of the image that I am photographing. Once I make a mark on the canvas I step back. Then, either he takes the photo shot or I do. But sometimes I forget to step out of view, or I leave a paint brush or jar accidentally in view when the photo is taken. I have deliberately left these unintended shots in the video; I think it creates a certain mystery; I see beauty, interest and reality in this imperfection.” – Kaye Mahoney

Activities

Preschool

Learning about chance and randomness: Marble Painting (adult supervision required at all times)

In a tray place some coloured paint primary colours work best, for example yellow and red. Put some marbles into the tray and roll around a little to cover them in paint. Place paper on top of the marbles and move the tray around. The marbles will roll under the paper making random marks and shapes.

Primary School

Read the information about *Spoken Passage*, 2011, make list of books, CDs or DVDs in the classroom and mix them up and reorder them just at Kaye Mahoney did. Read them out loud and see what new sentences you come up with.

Randomness with ink: Put some ink or water colour paint onto a piece of paper; use a straw to blow the ink into patterns. Let the air push the paint around, what random shapes can you see?

High School

Do you think that Kaye Mahoney's work is postmodern why or why not?

How does Kaye Mahoney use technology in her work? Is it an important aspect of her work?

Vocabulary

Abstract	not representing or imitating reality or the objects of nature
Assembled	fit the parts of something together
Composition	the way in which the parts of something are arranged, especially the parts of a visual image
Fresco	a painting on a wall or ceiling done by rapidly brushing watercolours onto fresh damp or partly dry plaster
Installation	an artwork assembled by an artist that involves the arrangement of three-dimensional objects or the use of paint and other media directly on the walls or floors of the exhibition space
Linear	relating to, consisting of, or using lines
Melody	a series of musical notes that form a distinct unit, are recognisable as a phrase, and usually have a distinctive rhythm
Percussion	the group of musical instruments that produce sound by being struck
Randomness	Having no specific pattern, purpose, or objective
Reverberation	An echolike force or effect
Sequentially	in sequence, or order, one after another
Tintinnabulation	the ringing of bells
Vibration	an instance of shaking or moving to and fro very rapidly