

CV – Alison Fleming

b. 1976

Education

1999: The Florence Academy of Art, Drawing (one term)

1998: The University of British Columbia, BA

Group Exhibitions

2013: The Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition

2012: *Recent Paintings: Frances Thomas and Alison Fleming*, Telephone Booth Gallery, Toronto

2012: The Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition

2012: Tel Talk, Telephone Booth Gallery, Toronto

2012: TOAE Award Winners Exhibition, First Canadian Place Gallery

2011: Artist Invitational, The Moore Gallery, Toronto

2011: The Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition

2011: The Art Gallery of Hamilton, Spring Sale

2010: Whodunit Exhibition, the Ontario College of Art and Design

2010: The Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition

2010: Doors Open Exhibition, Gallery 1313, Toronto

2009: The Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition

Awards

2011: TD Canada Trust Best in Exhibition Award, The Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition

Publications

2012: Illustration for a story in *Contrivances*, a collection of short fiction by David Balzer

Collections

The Toronto Public Library Collection

Wedge Curatorial Projects

Senvest

Biography

b. 1976, Zurich

Alison Fleming grew up in Winnipeg and currently lives in Ottawa, where she paints and works as a decorative arts and paintings restorer. For the last few years, she has been concentrating on a series focussing on buildings, primarily older shops, and has recently begun another series on natural history specimens and artefacts in museums.

Artist Statement

Vernacular architecture has always been an interest of mine, but I started getting obsessed with it about five or six years ago. I initially began photographing – and eventually painting – small and/or abandoned businesses that I'd seen when travelling in other countries, but then I began to see the city I lived in and the buildings I'd taken for granted in a new way. Walks and streetcar rides suddenly became extremely interesting, and previously unexplored areas to the west, north and east of my usual stomping ground revealed themselves as far richer architecturally than I'd initially assumed.

People may not see stores from an aesthetic standpoint, as it can be hard to decontextualize a shop from its setting, what it sells, or its sheer familiarity, and appreciate it purely for its visual impact. What I find interesting about older business are their uncontrived mixtures of building materials, architectural add-ons, faded advertisements, dated fonts, and most importantly, the cumulative evidence of the selling tactics and caprices of the shop owner.

Unfortunately, a great number of the shops I've depicted have been demolished or overhauled beyond all recognition – sometimes within months of my painting them. Many of them were already on their last legs as a result of the way that commerce in general has changed, as well as the shift in the types of businesses we see on the main streets of urban centres. I hope that my paintings make people notice buildings that they might otherwise walk past - and think about their neighbourhoods and cities.