



Gershon Iskowitz

Miriam Shiell
and the Estate of Gershon Iskowitz
invite you to an exhibition of

Gershon Iskowitz
Paintings from the 1980's

Opening Saturday, October 14th, from 2-4pm
through to November 4th, 2006.

Gershon Iskowitz was born in Kielce, Poland, in 1921. Although he demonstrated a keen interest in the visual arts at a very young age, he received no formal training during his youth. With the outbreak of World War II, his dreams of studying fine art at the Warsaw Academy were never realized. After surviving nearly six years of internment, during which he continued to sketch secretly, his youthful vision bears witness to the brutality of daily life in the concentration camps and the horrors of the Holocaust. It was not until after the war that he received his first formal art training at the Munich Academy in 1947. Iskowitz was quickly disillusioned by the highly traditional methods of teaching at the Academy, however, and it was the private instruction of the great Austrian artist Oskar Kokoschka that formed the most important aspect of his training.

In 1949, Iskowitz immigrated to Toronto. Over the next decade, his artistic vision would evolve from the depiction of bleak images of horrific wartime memories into a new and optimistic expression of his experience in this country. Gradually, the artist's depiction of the painful events of his past was transformed into a dynamic representation of the present through landscape. Iskowitz's unique and personal perception of the Canadian landscape found its expression in an exuberant and joyful use of colour and light. From the mid-1960's onwards, the northern Canadian landscape would become the primary inspiration for his painting, while the dynamism and immediacy of colour would become the artist's principal mode of self-expression. For Iskowitz, the act of painting became in itself the creation of his own experience. Despite the highly expressive nature of his painting, he often stressed the representational nature of his work: "My paintings are not abstract, they are real, they are very very much real, I see those things... I paint what I see." The singularity of his painting can be found in its ability to reconcile two seemingly opposing levels of reality – the reality of outward experience and the reality of personal expression – through the act of painting itself.

Beginning in 1964, Iskowitz exhibited his work regularly at Toronto's Gallery Moos. From 1967-70, he taught at the New School in Toronto, during which time his Spadina Avenue studio was a popular place to visit amongst young artists. The artist received national recognition in 1972, when he was one of two artists chosen to represent Canada at the XXXVI Venice Biennial. An Iskowitz retrospective was held in 1984 at the Art Gallery of Ontario, which traveled throughout Canada, as well as to Canada House in London, England. Each year, the Gershon Iskowitz Foundation, established by the artist in 1985 in association with the Canada Council, awards the Gershon Iskowitz Prize – one of the most important visual arts awards in Canada.



Blue Violet C (B71), 1983, oil on canvas, 24 x 39 inches

Cover image: Painting F (B128), 1983, oil on canvas, 68 x 55 inches



Painting H (B149), 1983, oil on canvas, 68 x 55 inches



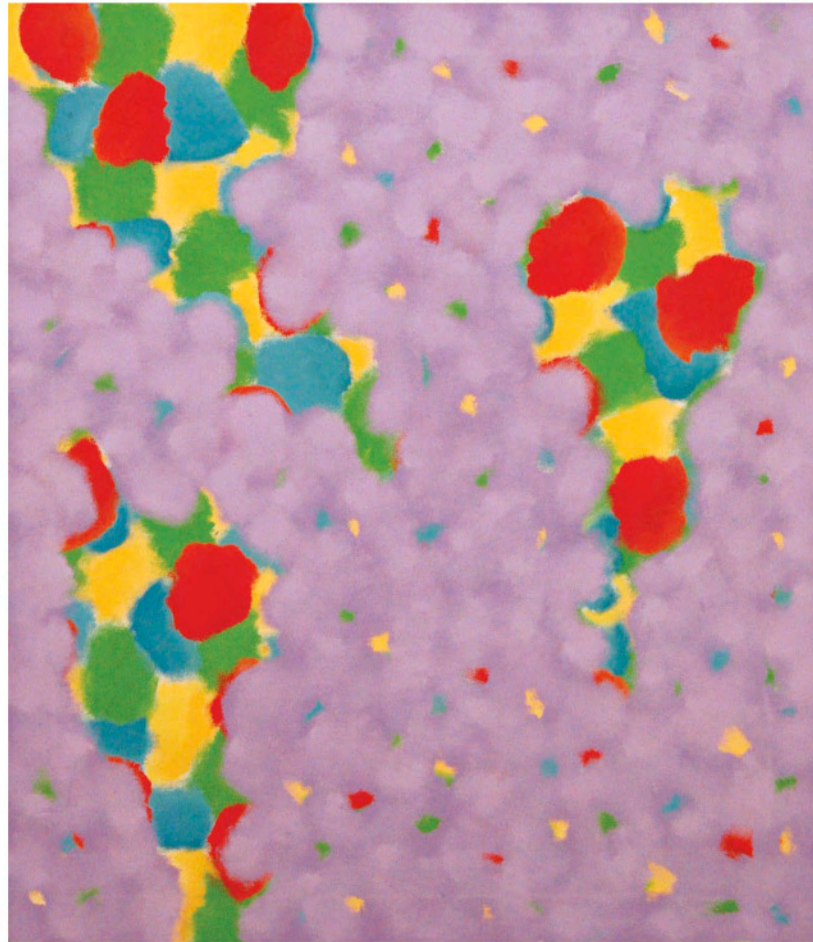
Violet C (B106), 1981, oil on canvas, 60 x 48 inches



Sky B (B235), 1982, oil on canvas, 50 x 45 inches



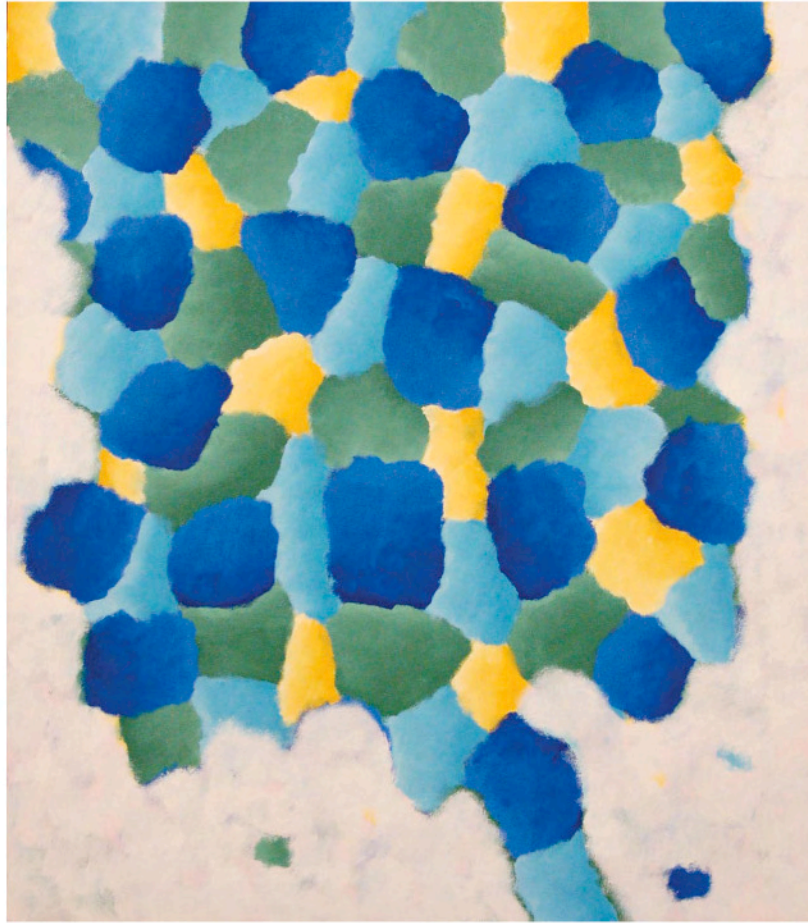
Orange B (B234), 1980, oil on canvas, 39 x 34 inches



Orange Mauve E (B95), 1980, oil on canvas, 45 x 40 inches



Autumn H (B281), 1982, oil on canvas, 54 x 45 inches



Spring Yellows D (B81), 1982, oil on canvas, 38 x 44 inches



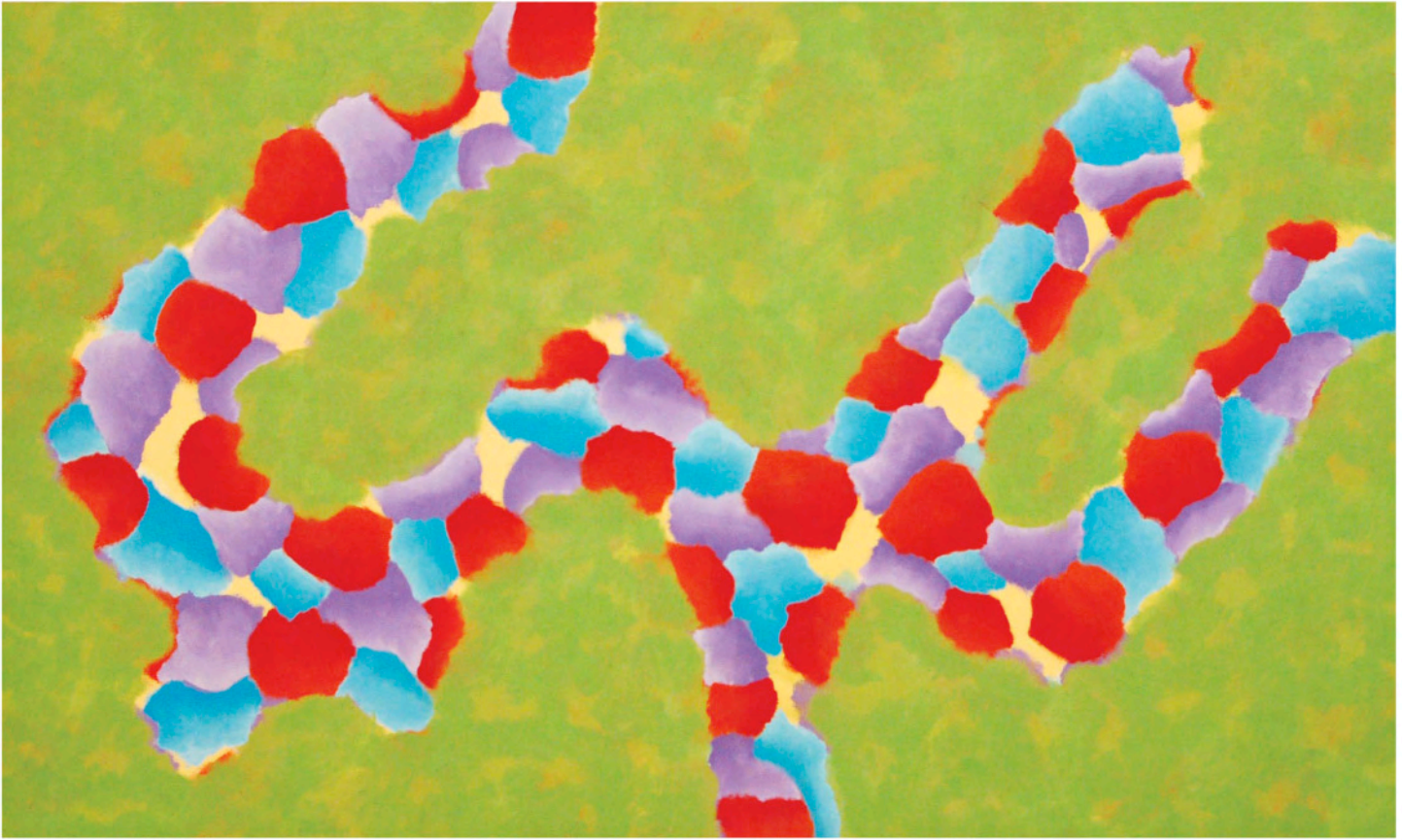
Blue Orange B (B210), 1980, oil on canvas, 42 x 36 inches



Yellow Painting D (B69), 1983, oil on canvas, 26 x 39 inches



Blue I (B246), 1983, oil on canvas, 24 x 39 inches



Spring Greens No. 2 (B139), 1983, oil on canvas, 42 x 69

CHRONOLOGY (1921- 1988)

- 1921 Born in Kielce, Poland
- 1939 Registered at Warsaw Academy of Art. At outbreak of war in September, put to forced labour.
- 1943 Interned at the Auschwitz concentration camp until the fall of 1944 when he was transferred to Buchenwald.
- 1945 At liberation, was sent to recuperate at hospital near Munich.
- 1947 Studied at Munich Academy of Art. Private study with Oskar Kokoschka.
- 1949 Emigrated to Canada and settled in Toronto. Is now a Canadian citizen.
- 1954 First exhibition with the Canadian Society of Graphic Artists.
- 1961 Solo exhibition at Victoria College, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario.
- 1962 Moved to his own studio on Spadina Avenue, Toronto.
- 1964 Became associated with Gallery Moos, Toronto. First of many one-man exhibitions at Gallery Moos from 1964 to 1988.
- 1967 Solo exhibition at Waterloo University, Waterloo, Ontario (Retrospective Exhibition).
- 1970 Group exhibition 'Eight Artists From Canada,' Tel-Aviv Museum, Tel-Aviv, Israel.
- 1972 Represented Canada at the Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy.
- 1973 Solo exhibition at Hart House, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario.
Group exhibition 'The Canadian Canvas,' traveling exhibition organized by Time Canada.
- 1974 Elected a member of the Royal Canadian Academy.
- 1975 One-man exhibition at Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary, Alberta.
- 1976 Solo exhibition at Gallery Moos, Toronto, Ontario.
- 1977 One-man exhibition at Martha Jackson Gallery, New York, NY. Was awarded a medal in honor of the Queen's silver jubilee.
Solo exhibition at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax, Nova Scotia.
Solo exhibition at Gallery Moos, Toronto, Ontario.
Group exhibition 'Seven Canadian Painters,' Canada Council Art Bank, traveling exhibition throughout New Zealand and Australia
- 1980 Group exhibition 'Contemporary Canadian Art,' Nabisco World Headquarters Reception Gallery, East Hanover, New York.
Group exhibition 'A Selection of Canadian Paintings,' The Art Gallery at Harbourfront, Toronto, Ontario.
- 1981 Moved to larger studio near King Street in Toronto where he resides.
Group exhibition 'Other Places, Other Painters; Canadian Contemporary Art,' Sir George Williams Art Gallery, Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec.
- 1982 Retrospective exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto. The exhibition travelled throughout Canada and to London, England (March 1983).
- 1983 One-man exhibition, Marisa del Re Gallery, New York, NY.
- 1985 Establishes the Gershon Iskowitz Foundation and the Gershon Iskowitz Prize in association with the Canada Council.
- 1988 Gershon Iskowitz passes away in Toronto, Ontario.

SELECTED MUSEUMS AND COLLECTIONS

- Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton, Ontario.
- The Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario.
- The Canada Council, Ottawa, Ontario.
- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Vancouver, B.C.
- Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, Ontario.
- Fort Lauderdale Art Museum, Florida.
- Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.
- Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, Kitchener, Ontario.
- London Regional Art Gallery, London, Ontario.
- Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Ottawa, Ontario.
- Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal, Quebec.
- Musee d'Art Contemporain, Montreal, Quebec.
- The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.
- Owens Art Gallery, Mount Allison University, Sackville, N.B.
- Saskatoon Art Centre, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.
- Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, B.C.
- Tel-Aviv Museum, Tel-Aviv, Israel.
- The Toronto Dominion Bank, Toronto, Ontario.
- Waterloo University, Waterloo, Ontario.

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