

# Art Openings - Promotes Creative People & Places (/)

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Detail: Shifting III by Heather Midori Yamada

## Heather Midori Yamada

Oct 10-Oct 28, 2017 at Gage Gallery Arts Collective  
Presents **Cusp** with a variety of mixed media paintings

Opening reception Oct 12, 5pm-8pm.

Heather Midori Yamada is a visual artist and teacher with a lifelong passion for paper and painting. A mature artist, her CV brims with awards, grants, commissions and exhibitions. Yamada's collectors include many private clients and over 30 corporate and public firms. The artists' show *Look for Banners to Rise* is currently running at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre in Toronto. She exhibits regularly at Espace Galerie in Montreal.

The artist is pleased to be a part of the 18 member Gage Gallery Collective. It's her second show at the gallery since relocating to Victoria in 2015. Yamada has previous experience with artist run centres. After earning her BFA, she honed her printmaking skills at Open Studio in Toronto. In the early eighties, this artist run centre specialized in fine art prints. At Open Studio, she often used Japanese *washi* paper when creating monotypes. *Washi* is hand-made paper, made from the inner bark of three plants, and comes in a marvellous range of colours and textures. "*Washi* has an inner life," she says, "that responds to various pressures and inks. It's unique qualities become part of the artistic process."



Spiral Interrupted, Cusp Series #005, Mixed Media, 20x16 in, 2017



Trait, Cusp Series #002, Mixed Media, 20x16 in, 2017

Yamada's early experiments with monotypes included imprinting, etching and embossing. These techniques evolved into mixed media and collage paintings. Never still and static, Yamada's experiential art-making is a journey of discovery. *Cusp* features a series of compact acrylic on canvas mixed media paintings. The noun "cusp" has several meanings: a point of transition between different states, a fold in a major blood vessel that makes a valve, part of a Gothic arch, a mathematical reversal of direction, and the pointed ends of a crescent moon. "I like my titles to resonate with several meanings," she says. "Changes, endings, beginnings, everything is in flux, on the verge of becoming other."

In *Spiral Interrupted* (above left) a warm sandy background suggests aged stone or packed earth. On this ground, collaged pieces of *washi* paper add unique and colourful elements to the composition. Pumice and gel mediums add texture to the dots, dashes and raked areas. Dramatic bursts of curvilinear colour collide with delicate moody ink-washed patterns. "These are well-worked surfaces," says the artist. "A lot of time goes into placement and balance, scratching back and reworking."



Emergence I, Cusp Series, Mixed Media, 18x16 in, 2017



Emergence III, Cusp Series, Mixed Media, 18x16 in, 2017



Detail: Emergence V, Cusp Series, Mixed Media, 36x72 in, 2015-2017



Water Emergence II, Ink &amp; acrylic on washi paper, 24x37 in, 2015

A variety of sizes, mediums and methods enliven *Cusp*.

Side by side, *Emergence V* (top left) and *Water Emergence II* (top right) offer an interesting comparison. *Emergence V* is a 36x72 inch acrylic on canvas painting. The detail shows how collaged pieces of *washi* paper bring energy and focus to the composition. A leaf motif with ink washes and splashes of red paint makes a complex pattern. Nearby, the simplicity of a black half circle on white paper adds contrast.

*Water Emergence II* is an acrylic and Ink on paper painting. Notice how the paper absorbs the mediums to make a spreading landscape of organic patterns. The patterns pulsate with energy as they shift in luminosity and hue. Natural phenomenon are suggested by the irregular shapes and textures. Are we looking down from a satellite at dried river beds, swirling ocean swells and volcanic eruptions? Or viewing the inner workings of the body at microscopic level?





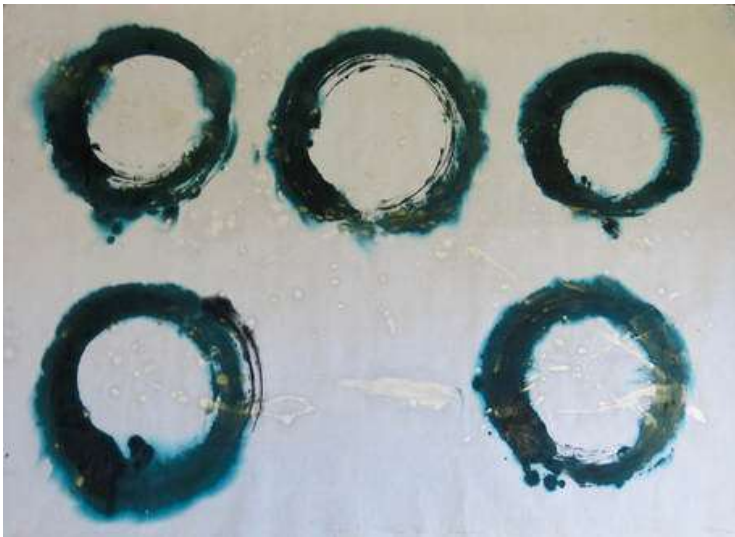
Enso Rising I, Ink on Japanese washi paper, 40x24 in, 2017.



Golden Temple, Rising/Falling, Mixed Media, Diptych, 2017

In *Enso Rising I* (above left) the artist refers to the Zen Buddhist symbol enso. Drawn for centuries by followers of Zen, the circular shape symbolizes the harmonious nature of enlightened mind. Enso describes an emptiness of form and totality of being that encapsulates the paradox of Buddha nature. Streaks of colour, dots and dashes stream upward from the enso image. The blue background is peaceful; bright red accents focus our attention.

In *Enso II Approaching Five Times Harmony* (below) five enso symbols show a variety of width and definition. Although similar the hand drawn circles are all unique, responding to both human touch and plant material in the paper.



Enso II, Approaching Five Times Harmony, Ink on Japanese washi paper, 24x36 in, 2017.



Detail: Enso II,



Co-emergence II, Mixed media on washi paper, 24x36 in, 2015



Detail: Rising / Falling, Mixed Media on Washi. 2017

Gage Gallery Arts Collective is located at 2031 Oak Bay Ave. Hours: Tues-Sat 11am-5pm. Phone: 250-592-2760.



Heather Midori Yamada welcomes your interest in her work. Please email: [hmidoriy@gmail.com](mailto:hmidoriy@gmail.com)

Web Design, Content and Selected Photos  
by Kate Cino

Kate previewed arts events for 18 years at  
Boulevard magazine.  
She has a History in Art degree and Public  
Relations certificate from the UVic.

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[kate-cino@shaw.ca](mailto:kate-cino@shaw.ca) (<mailto:kate-cino@shaw.ca>)  
250 598-4009