



ANITA SHAPOLSKY GALLERY

152 EAST 65TH STREET • NEW YORK, NY, 10065 • 212.452.1094 • FAX:
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A DIALOGUE BETWEEN
ERNEST BRIGGS AND PETER BONNER
April 24th through August 2025

Front cover
Details of
Left; Ernest Briggs
Untitled December 1958
94 x 69.5 inch

Right; Peter Bonner
Life's illusions
2020
72.5x66.25 inch

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Ernest Briggs (1923–1984) studied in San Francisco before moving to New York, bridging both the California and New York Schools of Abstract Expressionism. A student of Clyfford Still at the California School of Fine Arts, Briggs found early success in San Francisco before relocating to New York in late 1953. Initially painting in a figurative, symbolic style, he later developed a dynamic visual language of strong, lyrical brushstrokes and geometric compositions. His work from the 1950s is characterized by loose abstractions and rhythmic brushwork, while in the 1960s, he experimented with acrylic and oil, producing large canvases distinguished by dark, deep hues and lighter strokes, often leaving portions unfinished or unprimed.

In his later years, Briggs simplified his forms while maintaining his bold color palette, introducing structured compositions with horizontal and vertical elements that explored the synergy between form and spatiality. His works are held in major collections, including the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Hirshhorn Museum, the San Francisco Museum of Art, the Carnegie Institute, and the San José Museum of Art.

Peter Bonner, originally from Australia and now based in New York, is a master of material and form and seamlessly bridges abstraction and figuration, making paintings that reflect a dynamic interplay between structure and intuition. In 1998 Bonner received a scholarship to come to New York to study with the likes of Mercedes Matter, Charles Cajori and Esteban Vicente and his process has evolved into one of continual construction and deconstruction that moves fluidly between the human figure and landscape. Some of his works exist purely in the realm of paint, while others incorporate materials such as sand, rice paper, and charcoal. Bonner's use of materials suppresses rational thought and encourages spontaneity in order to free subconscious intent. He invites the viewer to step into his narratives, to see beyond the surface and to recognize the hidden connections that bind us all. Bonner won the Dobell Prize for Drawing in 1996, the highest prize for drawing in Australia. As Gorky said: "A bad painter cannot draw, but one who draws well can always paint."

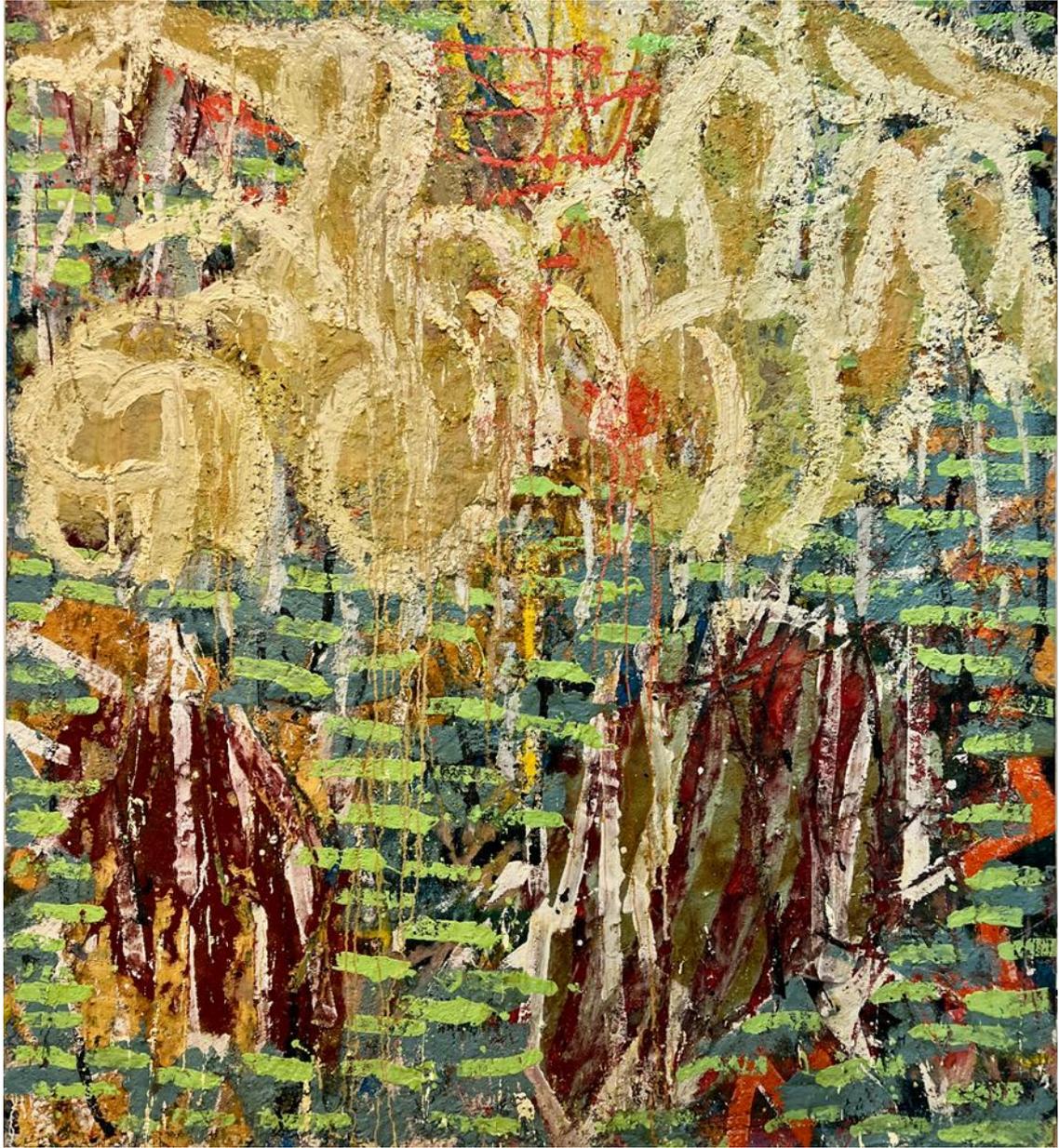
Anita Shapolsky

Anita Shapolsky Gallery, renowned for its dedication to Abstract Expressionism, is pleased to present *“A Dialogue Between Ernest Briggs and Peter Bonner.”* This exhibition brings together two generations of abstraction, juxtaposing the bold, gestural work of Ernest Briggs with the introspective, process-driven paintings of Peter Bonner. A key figure in the second generation of Abstract Expressionism, **Briggs** embodied the movement’s raw energy and spontaneity, using vigorous brushwork to express emotion and the rugged intensity of human nature. In contrast, **Bonner** explores perception, identity, and memory through layered compositions that invite contemplation beyond the surface.

This exhibition reaffirms Anita Shapolsky Gallery’s mission to highlight artists who push the boundaries of abstraction while remaining deeply engaged with painting’s traditions. By placing these two artists in conversation, “A Dialogue Between Ernest Briggs and Peter Bonner” offers a fresh perspective on abstraction’s evolution, celebrating both its historical foundations and contemporary innovations.

*Anita Shapolsky
New York
April 2025*

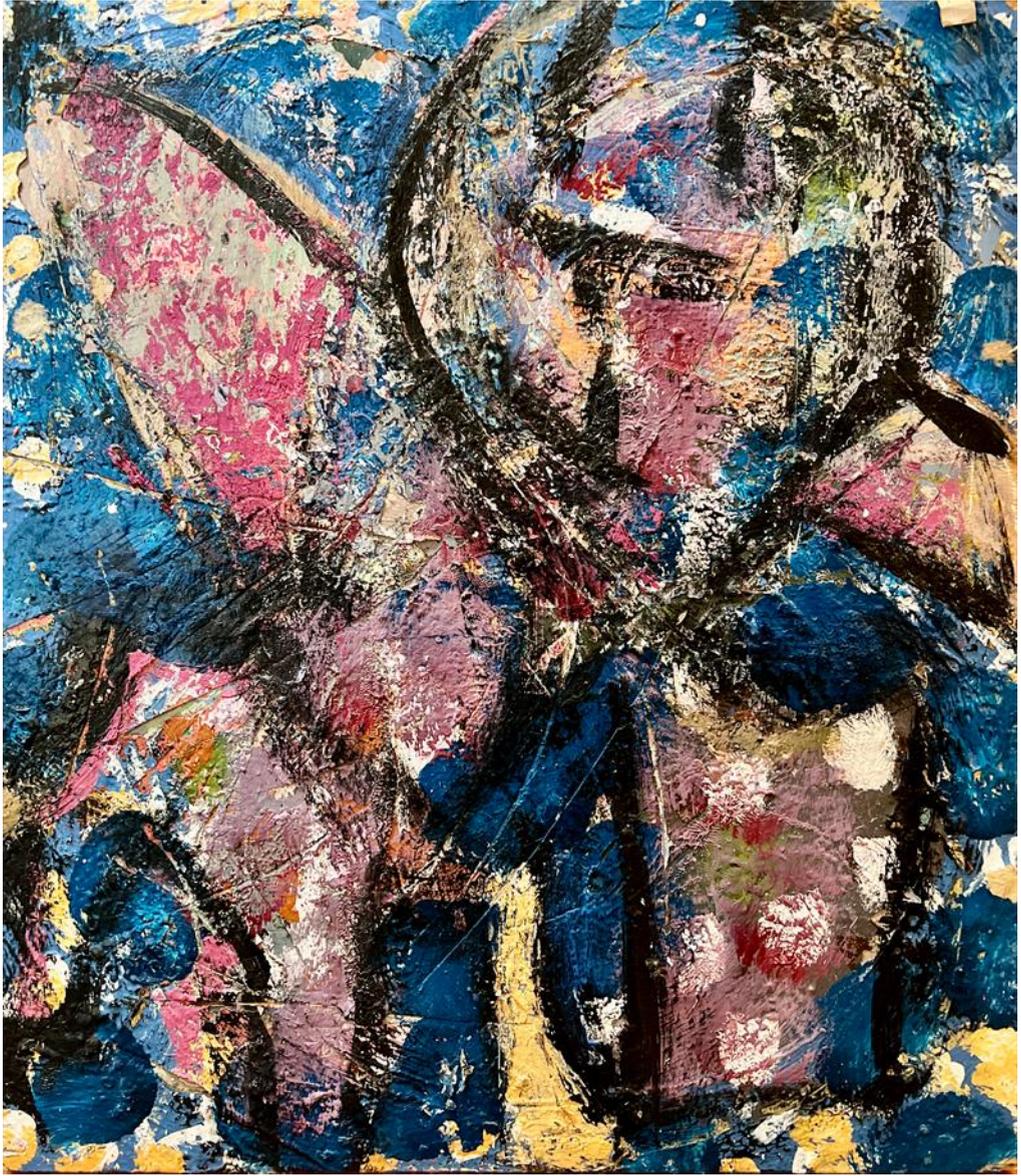
Peter Bonner
Life's illusions
2020
Oil and sand on canvas
72.5 x 66.25 inch



Ernest Briggs
Untitled
1974
Acrylic on canvas
35 x 36 inch



Peter Bonner
A patch of stars opening up in the sky ahead
2014
Oil on panel
24 x 21 inch



Ernest Briggs
Sketch for a Crucifixion
1981
Oil on canvas
69.5 x 67.5 inch



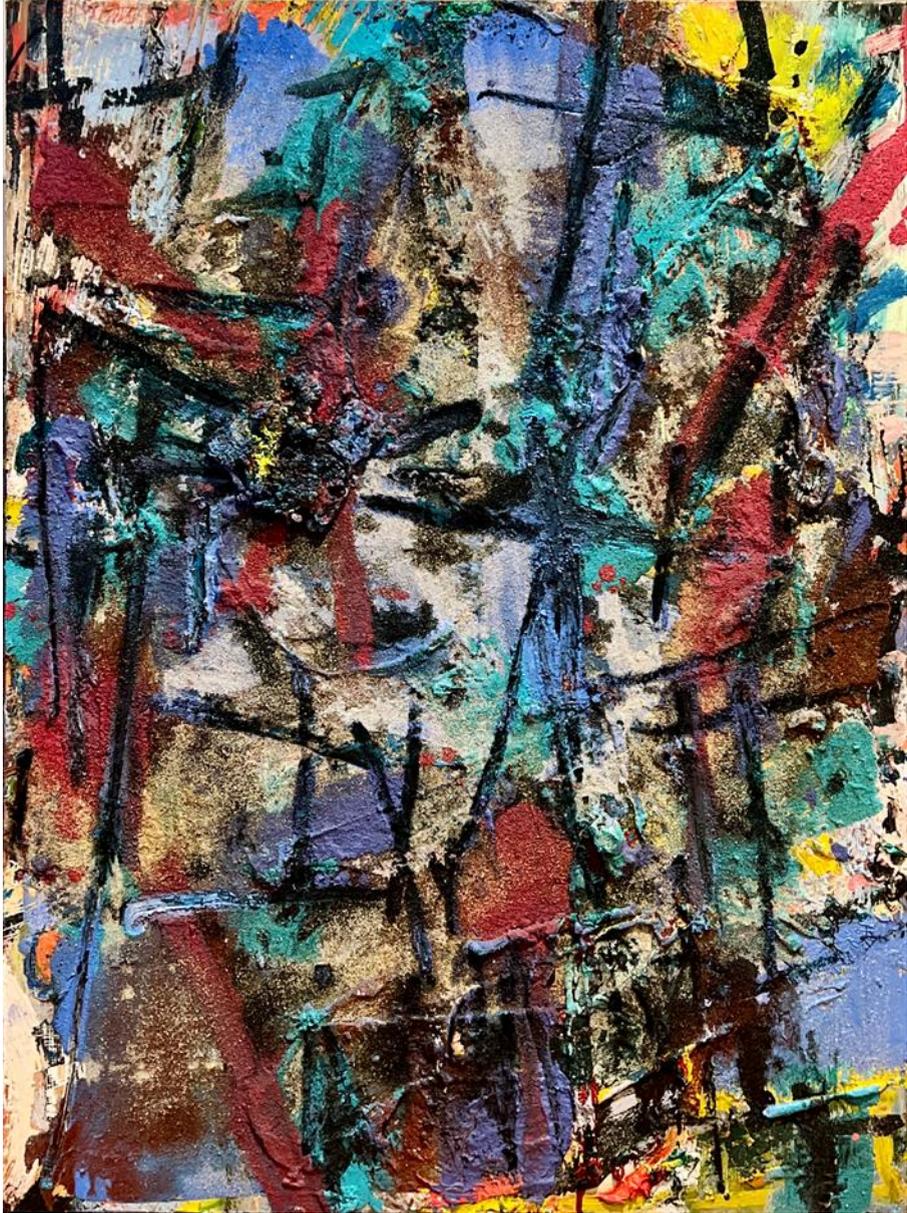
Peter Bonner
Here and now- The meagre arrangement of events
2019
Oil and sand on canvas
48 x 48 inch



Ernest Briggs
Mask
1965
Acrylic on canvas
23 x 20 inch



Peter Bonner
She's proud but she's broken
2024
Oil and sand on panel
32 x 24 inch



Peter Bonner
Afternoon- I swept away your sins
2024
Oil and ink on Panel
24 x 18 inch



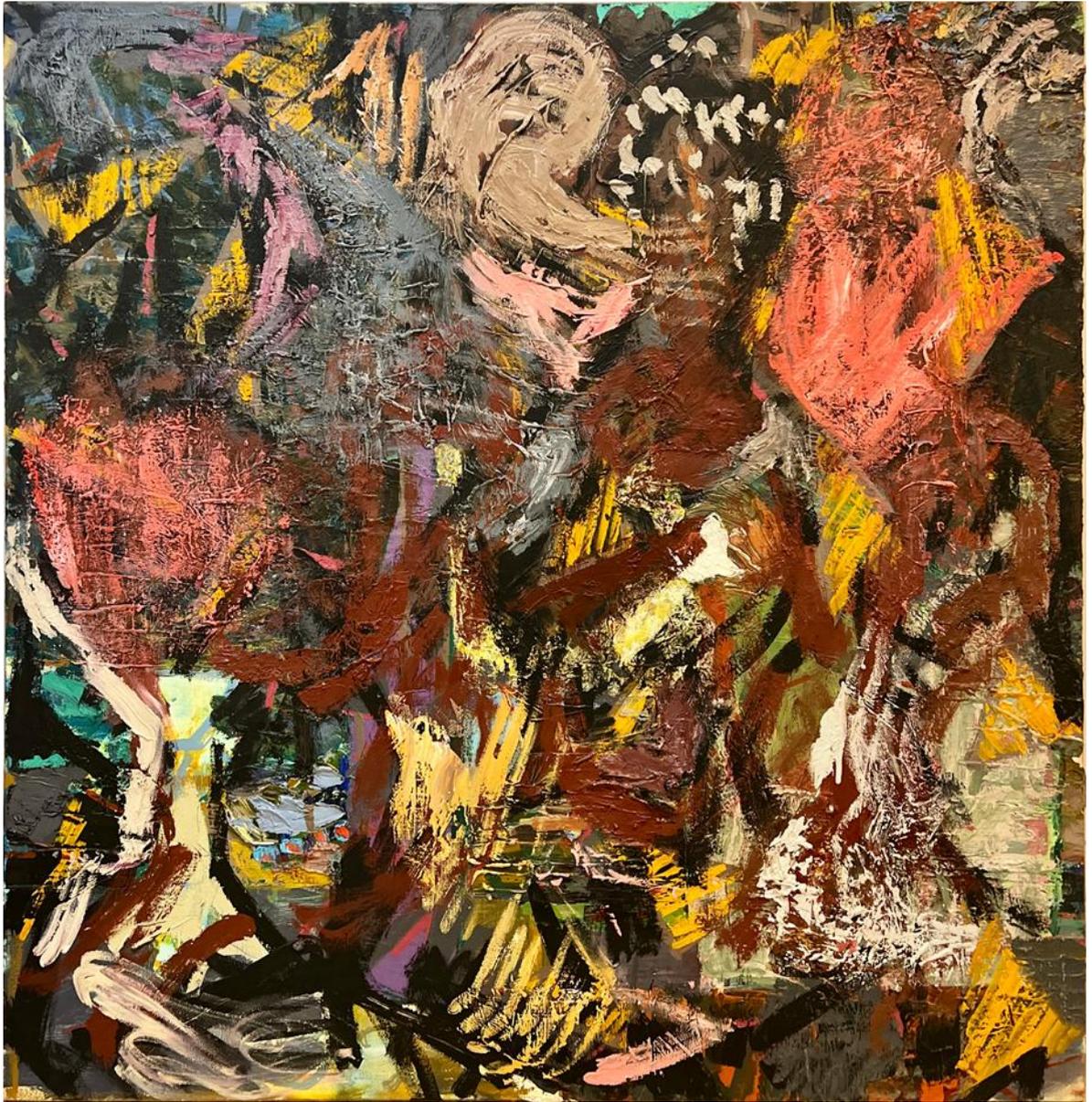
Peter Bonner
Into the Mystic
2021
Oil and sand on canvas
36 x 24 inch



Peter Bonner
Strange Brew
2022-4
Oil and charcoal on panel
24 x 24 inch



Peter Bonner
St. Kilda Scream
2005-09
Oil on canvas
51 x 50 inch



Peter Bonner
The Fall
2022-4
Oil and charcoal on panel
24 x 24 inch



Peter Bonner
After Titian
2023-4
Oil and charcoal on panel
24 x 24 inch



Peter Bonner
Kinglake
2009
Oil on panel
14 x 17 inch



Peter Bonner
Search
2012-25
Oil on Panel
18 x 16 inch



Peter Bonner
All the big things hurt
2013
Oil and sand on panel
27 x 24 inch



Peter Bonner was Born in Australia and now lives and works in New York City

PRIZES, AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS, COMMISSIONS and RESIDENCIES

2021 Guest Presenter- Drawing Symposium National Art School Sydney Australia
2015 Commissioned to be the Expedition Artist for Hifire 7, Andoya Space Center, Norway
2008 Travel grant, to travel to Ruby Gap, NT, Australia
2006 Finke River Artist Grant
2004 Artist in Residence, Monash University, Faculty of Art and Design
2001 Dean's Award for Painting, NYSS
2000 WON COMMISSION TO DESIGN AND PAINT THE DANCE FLOOR FOR THE WEDDING OF BOB WEINSTEIN,
temporarily installed at The Regent International, Wall Street
Awarded Vera List Scholarship for Painting
1999 Awarded Alexander C. & Tillie S. Speyer Scholarship for Painting
1997 WON DOBELL PRIZE FOR DRAWING, Art Gallery of New South Wales
1972 WON DRAWING COMPETITION, Channel Nine, Brisbane

EXHIBITIONS-SOLO and FOCUSED

2025 "A Dialogue between Ernest Briggs and Peter Bonner" Anita Shapolsky Gallery, NY
2019 "The Plains", New Paintings, John Davis Gallery, Hudson NY
"Other Sides & Other Sizes" Paintings by Barbara Laube, Ben Pritchard and Peter Bonner, M.David&Co Gallery
NYC- Exhibition essay by Paul D'Agostino
2018 "A Pilgrims Progress", SOCA Melbourne, Australia
2017 "Musings on Life and Death, and some of the things that happen along the way", John Davis Gallery, Hudson NY
2016 "SPEAKEASY" , An exhibition of Works on Paper, Theater for a New City, New York
2015 "PAINTINGS", John Davis gallery, Hudson NY
"HIFIRE 7" Andoya Space Center, Andennes, Norway
"White Turning", William Holman Gallery, New York
2012 "Louvre", William Holman Gallery, New York
2010 "Sitting Space V's Standing Space", Monash University, Melbourne
2009 "Made from Memory", The Gallery at Z Space, San Francisco.
2005 "Looking On", the space above the firestation , Great Jones St, New York
(Opened by Mrs. Parker Collier)
2000 "From Darkness to Light", Gallery 486, Brisbane (Opened by Councilor David Hinchliffe)
1998 "Interiors and Exteriors", 359 Queen St, Brisbane (Opened by Clr D Hinchliffe)

EDUCATION

2007-2009 MFA (by Research), Monash University, Melbourne supervised by Geoff Dupree and Dr Maryanne Coutts
"The Observer looking in; Synthesizing image making and lived experience through Drawing and Painting"
1998-2001 Post graduate diploma in painting and drawing in New York and was influenced by teachers such as
Rosemary Beck, Jake Berthol, Nick Carone, Charles Cajori, Garth Evans, Louis Finkelstein, Andrew Forge, Bruce
Gagnier, Mercedes Matter, Graham Nickson, Estaban Vicente Pérez, Lee Tribe.
1994-1997 BA (Fine Arts)(First class Honors), Monash University, College of Art and Design (studied with Wendy
Stavrianos, Andrew Sibley and Yvonne Audette)
1992-1993 Studied Painting at the London Literary Institute, Covent Garden, London (Studied with Peter Hall)

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