

## LOCAL TALENT ALEX McLEOD

BY SHOLEM FROSHDALKA

Nothing else. McLeod's art studio is a multifarious affair: an assorted array of tables for a smorgasbord of sounds, the whimsical miscellany of the Shantou Alley marketplace, a small cluster of computer monitors, fans, and a large wall of framed prints. I could point the work back to a website that houses these numerous, but screen monitors and boards display at least three computer screens, each in various states of activity. It consists of tables and chairs and plugs protruding from the floor, all of which lead to the scene of the framed prints across a small machine shop or roughly finished space platform, being fed a flow of white plastic through a circular duct.

"Oh, making 3D prints?" explains McLeod nonchalantly, in the same tone that greets the night owl. "Oh, that's my coffee table." And what is it doing? "Right now, it's printing out my clouds," the structure has a small table to the far wall where smaller "printed" objects, mostly painted black, stand in a row. "This is what the program does...not complete drawings, but little vignettes, and clouds suspended from the ceiling."

McLeod has the habit of answering for his upcoming solo show at the August Gallery. Having graduated from OCAD in 2007, he's begun showing internationally, and his work has landed in numerous public and corporate collections, including the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art (MOCCA), the Royal Bank of Canada and the Bank of Montreal. He admits they aren't his ideal occupation: "Anyone that has experienced this."

For his upcoming solo show, in addition to the intensely time-consuming and arduous 3D work, McLeod plans to take the elements that comprise his glass structures into the third dimension. He crosses one to a "bookshelf" and picks up more of these miniature products, something that looks vaguely like the "Bookshelf Bookshelf," a stack of brightly colored logs, more like tiny clouds. "It's not about architecture, or technical architecture, it's about any form, anything goes," McLeod says. "By using something that's like a log, but then making an attachment or a mobile structure out of it, it really removes it from any architectural context."

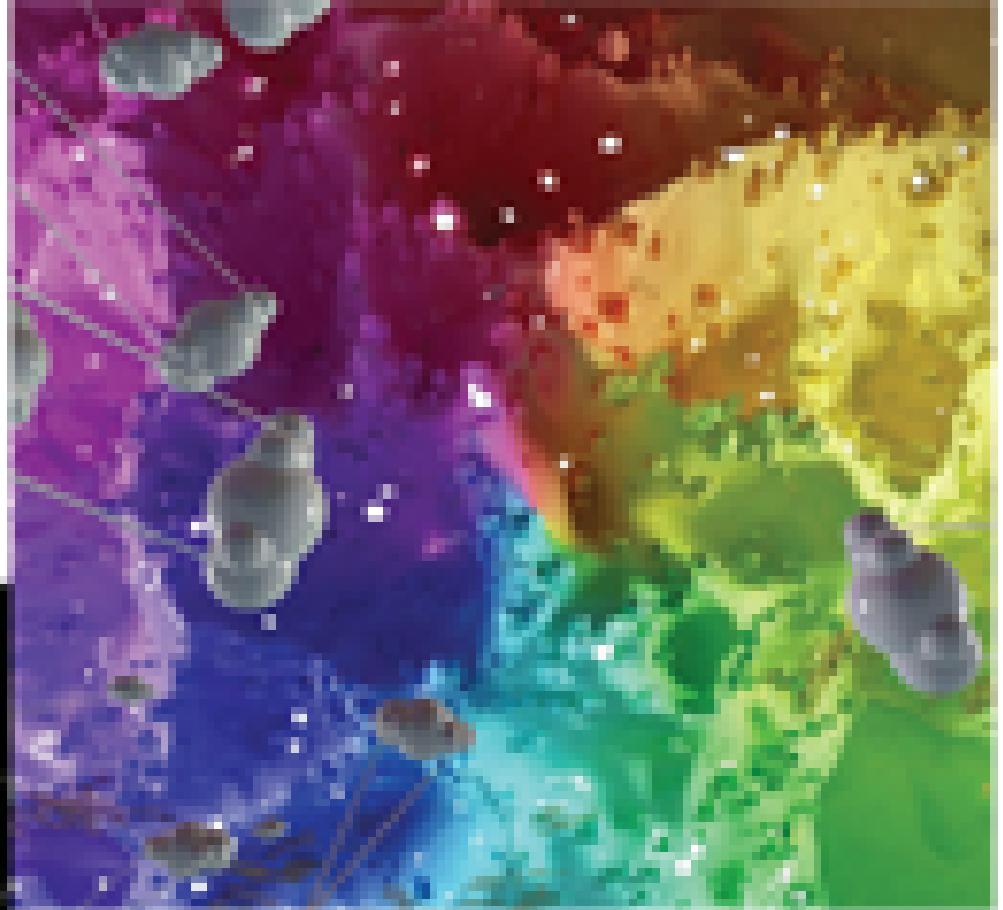
McLeod's art practice almost started in a quiet accident. For those who look at his work—mostly computer-generated prints, up to now—consists of landscapes, but landscapes that are not references of any kind. They are not reproductions of existing landscapes, or even fictitious landscapes. What's more, they're prints that are not technical references. There are shapes that are recognizable as clouds, or trees, or small houses, surfaces that can be mistaken for, or even like, or going off to locations that seem other, or suburban, or rural. But every object and every surface—rough or smooth, open or closed or with—has a kind of grace, like a plastic-covered rock.

In fact, McLeod doesn't even refer to them by name. Instead of trees or clouds, he calls them "objects." He "scans" his prints from various perspectives with a series of 3D-rendered objects. "I used the computer, and I used like a 3D printer. I don't want to take the form and try to create something that looks or not like. I don't think that operates if you're better...making a printer of a table for instance of the real thing." Furthermore, even in his upcoming Super Mario structures, he'll be creating objects, not necessarily subjects and depictions. McLeod includes just more like walls of things, the clouds behind, of course, but the concrete walls being followed by the sky.

"Thinking with the idea of what can be produced digitally, I discovered the work is not the same digital thing, it's like the two-dimensional-based structure, but I want them to be as if they could exist in real life." McLeod says a strange idea, given of computer. He imagines that the real photographs of thousands of images of rendered landscapes.

I could talk all day of the things about windows and the windowing system, but the scene of things in McLeod's eyes. He talks with a rapper's flow, and instead of offering a specific idea or image, "I'm saying," he says "I'm saying it." When I asked for a list of things in the process, he made and said that the "Real" was. And in fact, I've gone to the corner of a small number of Southfield. I want them to be real, and not a copy. He has a sense of the world, something that through iteration and testing, but through play and experimentation. The Super Mario suggests the technical and coming off into the late last century. ■

ALEX McLEOD



ALEX McLEOD IS REPRESENTED BY THE WHITE GALLERY, WHITEGALLERY.COM. HIS WORK IS ALSO IN THE ART GALLERY, NY.

