

# The Philadelphia Inquirer

Posted on Sun, Sep. 25, 2011

## Word works

By Edith Newhall  
For The Inquirer

Ray Johnson's influence on Rob Wynne, who was the recipient of correspondences from the older artist in the early 1970s, lives on in the elegiac poured and mirrored glass words and phrases he is showing at Locks Gallery. Looking at and reading Wynne's work - his art asks viewers to do both, as Johnson's often did - his wispy, fleeting snippets writ large become more than the sum of their parts.

Sometimes Wynne's wordplays use only one word, as in his piece *Intuition* (2011), a vertical arrangement, with "IN" on top, "TU" in the middle, and "iTiOn" on the bottom. Or they might be one word rethought as two, as in *Be Come* (2009), presented with "BE" above "COME!" Other times they're composed of several words arranged top to bottom, such as *Rue de Fleurus*, *Visible Silence*, or *Be Fore Long*. Memory and a sense of loss emanate from all these works.

Neysa Grassi's 10-year survey of her paintings and prints on Locks' second floor shows the artist moving from her signature veiled forms reminiscent of the human body to include shapes and contours more suggestive of landscapes.

That new direction is most obvious in *Poet's Garden* (2011), in which a strong dark line appears to outline a misty grotto, but it can also be detected in *What the Clouds Say* (2011), a vision of white, cloudlike forms with an eye in its midst, and *Willow* (2011), in which the rib-cage form common to Grassi's paintings has morphed into a dense thicket or twisted basket shape.

Grassi's jewel-like abstractions should have more empty space around them than this installation allowed. The display of her monoprints, hung in the smaller back "viewing room," strikes just the right balance.



Rob Wynne's "Be Fore Long" (2011), poured and mirrored glass, at Locks: Memory, a sense of loss emanate from these works.



Neysa Grassi's *Poet's Garden*, 2011, oil on linen, 40 1/8 x 40 1/8 inches

LOCKSGALLERY



600 Washington Square South  
Philadelphia PA 19106  
tel 215.629.1000 fax 215.629.3868  
info@locksgallery.com  
www.locksgallery.com