

# Mark Dixon

Mark Dixon, a Canadian artist, studied at the Rhode Island School of Art and has received a Bachelor of Fine Art from The Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and a Master of Fine Art from Concordia University.

His work has been shown in exhibits throughout Canada and in Miami, Florida since 1994. He has won numerous awards from the New Brunswick Arts Board. Private collectors in Canada, the U.S., and the Netherlands have collected his work.



Dixon likes to term his work as **non-objective** instead. He observes plants closely but is not interested in depicting them in **realistic** detail. He seems to be referring to something that is undefined. This helps to draw the viewers in, to make their own **judgments**. He is manipulating the viewers' **perceptions** of his work.

Although Dixon's paintings look very flat, he creates the illusion of **space** and **depth** by manipulating shapes and colors. He carefully plans the composition of each painting. He uses visual qualities, like flat color in the background, to suggest nature, or **silhouettes** of plant forms.





### **Dixon's Process:**

In his paintings, Dixon wants to suggest the beauty of the plants through his choice of color paints and his methods of applying it.

First, Dixon makes drawings of plants. He makes notes of their colors, textures, and tones.

Second, he paints the surface of his canvas in broad brushstrokes covering it with these colors, textures, and tones.

Then, going back to his drawings, he cuts out a stencil, or a silhouette of the plant, that block out the forms. And finally, he paints in his background color.

### **VOCAB:**

**Abstract/non-objective** – not intentionally representing an actual object, figure, or scene

**Realistic** – seeming to be real, very much life-like

**Perception** – the way you think about someone or something

**Judgment** – an opinion or decision that is based on careful thought

**Composition** – a combination of the elements & principles that are arranged to create a work of art

**Silhouettes** – the shape or outline of something; usually a dark shape in front of a light background

**Space** – the area in which the objects are organized

**Depth** – the direct linear measurement from front to back





**Subjective Frame:**

1. What does Dixon's work remind you of?
2. What kind of feeling do you get from this sense of place? Would you want to be there?
3. Can you connect it with an experience in your own life?

**Structural Frame:**

1. Does your eye move around the picture? Where does it go first? Why?
2. Look at the colors. What time of day do you think it is? How do you know this?



Compare and contrast Dixon's artwork with the artwork of Richard Dunlop (left). Look at the colors, shapes, spaces, and movement.

- What are some similarities?
- Differences?

**Resources:**

<http://markdixon.ca/artwork/>

<http://blog.markdixon.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/dixon-book-pages.pdf>

<http://www.timolsengallery.com/images/2021.jpg>