

Introduction to the exposition of Lawrence McLaughlin and Mascha Mioni at the Bareiss Gallery in Taos

Good evening and welcome to the Philip Bareiss Gallery.

I am honored to be here this evening to introduce Larry McLaughlin and Mascha Mioni and this wonderful show of their work.

I am in the marketing communications field and have been at Apple for the past 30 years. This experience has afforded me the opportunity to deeply appreciate the details and the beauty not only of the electronic devices I market, but of creative work of all types. I have also been sculpting for the past 20 years and understand how difficult the creative process can often be, but how important the work can be for both the creator and the appreciator.

I have a diverse personal collection of sculpture, black and white photography, paintings, and mixed media work.

I have been a friend of Larry McLaughlin's for several years, as well as a collector of his work. I've also recently had the great pleasure of being introduced to Mascha's work.

Larry began working in sculpture while studying at the University of California at Santa Cruz in the 1970s. Later he worked in London, painting and printmaking. In 1988 he completed studies at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Larry maintains studio-residences in France and the United States. His work is in numerous galleries in Europe, Canada and the US.

I love Larry's work. His graceful forms communicate such life and emotion. I have always found it ironic that Larry's work is made of concrete—a material that one could imagine as cold or heavy. But the pieces move with an elegance and grace that speak of something else. The pigs and *Schmitterliniks* have such a whimsical humor, and the female figures a palpable tenderness.

I have always especially loved *The Transparent Souls*. They speak to me of how vulnerable and soft our hearts can be—especially when we are willing to be transparent for a moment. The juxtaposition of hard concrete and transparent glass serves to remind me of the human condition—how we all have a hard exterior at times, but also a radiant soul that can shine through. Just as the light hits and reflects from the Chihuly glass to the beautiful *Transparent Soul* in the garden at my home in the Bay Area. I find Larry's work to have the same amazing sweetness as the artist. It brings me joy and comfort to have his friendship and his work in my life.

It is wonderful to experience Larry's and Mascha's work together here this evening. Their pieces complement each other well.

Mascha Mioni was born in Zurich and spent her schooling and training years in Switzerland, France, England and Italy. From 1981 to 1984 she restored historic American quilts and through them discovered her way to abstraction. At the end of the 1980s, her work in textiles became more and more important, and in 1989 she founded the Art to Wear Team. Mascha's textile art is shown in exhibitions in Switzerland, Germany, France, Slovakia, Georgia, and the US. She creates paintings as well as art clothing.

I love the simplicity and purity of Mascha's work. It reminds me of the art I've experienced in Japan. There I learned the importance of restraint and leaving something unsaid. It always seems so much easier to say too much. Mascha's work leaves us to wonder about what is not there, and encourages us to seek a deeper and less obvious understanding. Her work, like Larry's, has a beautiful transparency, and she masterfully incorporates elements from the natural environment.

Being here this evening and seeing Larry's and Mascha's creations reminds me of why I am so drawn to artists' work. For me, collecting art is a creative and intuitive act—something that I find deeply personal and very satisfying. I know many collectors consider how the work may appreciate in value when buying art. Although art can certainly appreciate financially, this has never been my motivation. I never buy art based on its long-term value, or how popular or well known the artist may be. I buy work that I really love—work that speaks to me on some deeper level. I may not even fully understand my attraction at first. I often find that work reveals itself slowly when I live with it and appreciate it over time. I come to see things that I initially may not have perceived.

I have been to Japan more than 20 times and it has deeply influenced my aesthetic, as well as how I see and experience my surroundings. Each time I experience the beauty of a garden in Kyoto or the simplicity of a tea bowl, I am reminded how calming it is to be surrounded by simple and beautiful objects. We are allowed to more clearly see the beauty in something when all of the extraneous elements are removed. This is evident in Larry's and Mascha's work. Their self-restraint and willingness to leave something unsaid allows the work to unfold more deeply over time.

I have come to understand how important it is to not only select art that I love, but to carefully consider where it's placed in order to create a calm and peaceful environment—one that allows the beauty of the art to shine through and to be felt.

In the end, I believe that collecting from the heart can shape a beautiful and highly personal collection. I know this may come as a shock given what I do for a living, but I still like to experience art the old-fashioned way—in person. I do not purchase art online and instead enjoy experiencing it directly—ideally in a beautiful environment. Not unlike the one we are standing in this evening. I hope that you will enjoy and love Larry's and Mascha's work as much as I do.

Thank you.