

PRESS RELEASE

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First Retrospective of L.A. Artist Jim DeFrance Opens at Doyle Arts Pavilion Feb. 8



Jim DeFrance, Tango, acrylic, eucalyptus and aluminum on birch, 63" x 48" x 4", 2006, courtesy of The Estate of Jim DeFrance.

A first-time retrospective featuring nearly 50 years of highly engaging, abstract paintings by Los Angeles artist Jim DeFrance (1940–2014) will be on display at Orange Coast College's Frank M. Doyle Arts Pavilion from Feb. 8 until April 7.

The exhibit, titled "Jim DeFrance: A Retrospective," is curated by former OCC art instructor Tom Dowling and former Doyle Arts Pavilion director Trevor Norris. Two receptions for the retrospective will take place, one on Thursday, Feb. 8, from 5–8 p.m., and another on Saturday, Feb. 10, from noon until 5 p.m. Both curators will be present at the reception on Feb. 10, with noted artist, critic, and essayist for the DeFrance catalog, Peter Plagens, giving a talk at 2 p.m. that same day. Admission for the events is free.

As a colleague of the "Light and Space" and "Finish Fetish" artists of the 1970s, DeFrance forged his own vocabulary of painterly abstraction that merged craftsmanship with wood, shaped paintings and unique surfaces. "Our hope is that the exhibition will create renewed interest in the artwork of Jim DeFrance, encourage further scholarship, and continue the influence of his practice as an artist," says Dowling.

The retrospective features works from DeFrance's "slot" paintings, which are large canvas grounds that have rectangles or lozenge shapes cut of the canvas, and directly engage in the quality of perceived light and color by the viewer. Other shaped-object paintings invoke passageways and doorways. DeFrance used a variety of materials and techniques throughout his works that include laminated veneers and wood bark covered in paint, cutting into paintings, and fitting together tightly fitted pieces into a large-scale color field work.

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Also featured in “Jim DeFrance: A Retrospective” is a piece of functional art in the form of a credenza, which includes multiple panels of fitted, color pieces.

“DeFrance, who was a major artist, and certainly one of the best painters L.A. had going, never got his critical or museological due,” writes Peter Plagens in his catalog essay that accompanies the exhibition.

Born in 1940 in Alliance, Nebraska, Jim DeFrance came to Los Angeles, where he received his MFA from University of California, Los Angeles in 1965. Along with being included in numerous group exhibitions, he had solo exhibitions at the Nicholas Wilder Gallery, Sonnabend Gallery, and Jan Baum Gallery. His work is included in many private and public collections, and recently, he had a posthumous solo exhibition at SCAPE gallery in Corona del Mar. He died from cancer in 2014.

“Jim DeFrance: A Retrospective” received support from an anonymous donor, SCAPE gallery, and the family and estate of Jim DeFrance.

The Frank M. Doyle Arts Pavilion at Orange Coast College focuses on contemporary visual culture and creates dynamic programming that inspires interaction and dialogue between artists, students, scholars, and local and international communities. Designed by architect Steven Ehrlich the Arts Pavilion features a Main Gallery and Project Gallery.

Upcoming exhibits for Spring 2018 at the Doyle include:

- “Jim DeFrance: A Retrospective,” Feb. 8–April 7, Main Gallery
- “Helix²: Sculptures by Eric Johnson,” Feb. 8–April 7, Project Gallery
- “Mass Appeal OCC Student Exhibition,” May 3–17, Main and Project Galleries

Admission is free for all exhibitions. Hours for “Jim DeFrance: A Retrospective” are Monday to Friday, 11 a.m. until 5 p.m., with additional evening hours on Thursday from 11a.m. until 7 p.m. The Doyle also will be open on the following Saturdays: Feb. 10, March 10, and April 7, from noon until 4 p.m. The gallery is closed on Feb. 16 and 19, and March 26–31 for school holidays.

The Arts Pavilion is located next to OCC’s Parking Lot D, off Merrimac Way, between Starbucks and the Art Center classroom building. A map of Orange Coast College is available at www.orangecoastcollege.edu

For additional information, call (714) 432-5738, or search Frank M. Doyle Arts Pavilion on Facebook.

[Orange Coast College](http://www.orangecoastcollege.edu), founded in 1947, is one of the nation's top transfer schools. With a student population of 25,000, OCC provides exemplary programs leading to Associate degrees and 130 career programs. The college's 164-acre campus is located in the heart of Costa Mesa.