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To: nanjo@rr.ij4u.or.jp
Subject: Proposal for a paper at AICA conference
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Dear Sir:

I would like to present at your Conference a paper on a major Canadian artist. Could you please tell me if you are still taking papers? I have a number of colleagues who might also like to do so.

The paper I would most like to give is on Jack Bush and would fit into the "Memories and Visions" theme.

"Transcending Memory: Jack Bush and Human Frailty"

Jack Bush is leading Canadian abstract painter, widely represented in European and American museums (the Tate Gallery, where his work was reproduced on a set of playing cards; the Boston Museum, etc.) Most critics have viewed his mature work as a pure case of "Post-painterly Abstraction", as he was included in Clement Greenberg's widely discussed exhibition of that name in 1964. However, Bush is quite atypical of those artists like Kenneth Noland that Greenberg wrote about at length and supported more vigorously. Where Noland could argue that art need not be "about anything," Bush's work is replete with traces of memories, often memories of moments of distress in his life: his struggle with the difficulties of supporting a family and trying at the same time to be an ambitious, advanced painter; with anxiety attacks, with alcoholism, with a serious heart condition (angina), and so on. Bush's creative response is an intuitive recapitulation of the experience of aesthetic distance as it has been interpreted by Goethe, Walter Pater, Bullough, Croce and others. Bush developed strategies that he specifically intended to be liberating. The end result is important and ultimately joyous works of art that transcend memory and all the distress it could entail.

I look forward to hearing from you with regard to this paper, and also as to whether you can still take applications from my colleagues.

Yours,

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Ken Carpenter
Chair
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