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**From:** Mindy Solomon Gallery

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## **Arnold Mesches at Mindy Solomon Gallery**

Arnold Mesches was born in 1923 in Bronx, New York, a period that witnessed an influx of Jewish and Italian immigrants, serving as a staging ground for many seeking the American dream. Mesches moved to Buffalo, New York as a child, receiving a scholarship in 1943 to study at the Art Center School in Los Angeles. After two and a half years, the aspiring student decided he didn't want to be a commercial artist; he really wanted to say something more personal with his art and decided to pursue painting. Mesches began his new career path painting sets for movie studios. In 1946, he began working on a Tarzan movie set for about three months-until Hollywood went on strike.

"We were on strike for a year. We would walk the picket line from 6 to 9 in the morning. Then, three or four of us would go off somewhere to paint watercolor landscapes. I knew nothing about painting so I'd look over the other guy's shoulders—when they made a stroke, I'd make a stroke—that's how I learned about painting. The defeat of the Hollywood strike paved the way for the eventual HUAC blacklist. By breaking the back of the trade unions in Hollywood, they opened up the possibility of full censorship of the whole industry, which eventually spread to become the McCarthy era nationally. At one point, eight hundred of us were put in jail for three days. We were tried and charged 25 dollars each."

In 1945, Mesches was identified as a person of interest by the FBI. Undeterred, he continued to be a champion of the unions, free speech and human rights. Mesches was a practicing artist and teacher for many years. He taught at Otis Art Institute, UCLA, the Art Center School and USC. Mesches met his future wife Jill, then a private student of his in the late 1960's and they began living together in 1972.

Mesches, and his wife, writer Jill Clement, eventually moved to the East Village in New York City where he exhibited to high critical acclaim. He taught at Parsons, Rutgers, and NYU for 14 years. Mesches exhibited his *FBI Series* at PS1, an affiliate of the Museum of Modern Art in 2002-03. The show was originally scheduled for two months, but was extended to four due to audience demand.

Arnold and Jill moved to Gainesville, Florida in 2002 to teach at the University of Florida. Clement currently teaches creative writing, Mesches teaches graduate seminar in drawing and painting. Mesches was awarded an honorary doctorate in 2009 from the University of Florida. Throughout his illustrious career as an artist, educator and human rights activist, Mesches has forged an engaging and unique body of work.

With his solo show at the Mindy Solomon Gallery, Mesches celebrates his 132<sup>nd</sup> solo exhibition.

The two bodies of work to be featured in the exhibition are WEATHER PATTERNS and the PAINT Series. Mesches states:

By combining unlikely juxtapositions, both in painting techniques and disparate imagery, most recently in the WEATHER PATTERNS paintings, I have tried to re-create the sense of utter instability and sheer insanity that I feel continues to permeate my years. Instead of, as in my salad days, veering toward the overt, I have, for some years now, found myself depicting our time with a sense of unreality bordering on the more unsettling absurd.

The PAINT series, while a tangent of a sort, is simply my way of paying homage to the importance Art and Art Making has played in bringing levity, beauty and expression to our lives.

The Mindy Solomon Gallery is proud to bring this stellar and important exhibition to the Tampa Bay Area.

May 07 - June 18, 2011  
**Arnold Mesches**

**OPENING RECEPTION:**

**May 07, 2011**

**Artist's Talk 6:00 pm**

**Reception 6:30-8:30 pm**

**Mindy Solomon Gallery  
124 2nd Ave NE  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701**

Wednesday - Saturday: 11 am – 5 pm

Sunday & Monday: Closed

Tuesday: By appointment

[www.mindysolomon.com](http://www.mindysolomon.com) – 727.502.0852 - [info@mindysolomon.com](mailto:info@mindysolomon.com)

**COMING Up at Mindy Solomon Gallery :**

**June 25-July 30, 2011-Opening Wednesday, June 29th**

*Blurred Vision*: Patrick Glover

**August 6-September 17, 2011-Opening Saturday, August 13th**

*Hero Worship*: Matt Shaffer, Jeremy Chandler, Mark Newport and Gilhad Ratman, Pavel Avromin

**September 24-November 5, 2011**

*Contradictions*: Russell Biles, Muir Vidler, Gregory Green, Einar and Jamex La Torre

**November 12- December 24, 2011**

*Jars- Recent Works* by Josh DeWeese

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**NOTE: High Resolution Images are available at:** <http://www.mindysolomon.com/press.php>