Here, There and in between


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MONTREAL
QUEBEC'S NORTH-SOUTH-WEST CONNECTION

FRONTIERS, FRONTIÈRES, FRONTERAS: RENÉ DEROUIN
Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

Frontiers, Frontières, Fronteras: René Derouin, (Jan. 14 to Mar. 14, 1999) at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, explores Derouin's work and his recurrent themes of land, memory and migration. Derouin employs nature to explore concepts of time, place, cultural and personal identity. The impact of the St. Lawrence River, the Laurentians, James Bay and the North, is integral in his work. His alignment with the outside world, particularly with Mexico, (illustrated throughout this exhibition), provides a unique perspective on the international importance of Derouin's work and an understanding of its influences, including the pre-Columbian. The artist's landscapes, such as Fleuve mémoire, woodcut on paper, 24.7 x 20.5 cm, speaks of the pure uninhabited spirit of the frontier North. This contrasts with his landscapes of the mind, as in Échographie de la mémoire géné­tique, 1986, (woodcut on polyester with hand-painted acrylic, wood relief, ceramic and water, 29.6 x 39.6 x 39.6 cm), which deals with his memory of the Mexico City earthquake and acts, in part, as therapy against the congestion, violence and chaos of the modern metropolis.

The 1994 donation of 300 works, mostly blockprints, to the Glenbow Museum from 19 donors, was the catalyst to this exhibition. The Glenbow's already vast collection of blockprints, including those by Walter J. Phillips, is particularly suited to the production of this exhibition with prints, paintings, photographs, books, video and installation.

Derouin was first introduced to the colour woodprint process when he attended a symposium at the University of Calgary in 1967, led by the Japanese master printer Toshi Yoshida. He has since presented his own workshops and exhibited regularly in Calgary. This exhibition reveals the extent of the artist's breakthrough from traditional printmaking. Derouin's formal invention, experimentation with woodcuts, and his range of materials and techniques, bring a bold strength to his choice of subjects. From Peasant 1, 1956, (red chalk on paper, 25 x 21.5 cm), to Equinox 1, 1989-1990, (poly­chrome relief plates, 188.3 x 188.3 cm) through Place Publique, 1992 (wood relief, ceramic, steel, water, 580 x 488 cm), the breadth of subject and depth of use of material and technique outside the mainstream, credit Derouin's ambitious production. A catalogue drawing upon various literary inspirational sources as John Steinbeck, Salman Rushdie and the Quebec origins of the artist, complements this four decade retrospective. An introduction by curator Patricia Ainsley, with quotes by Derouin, contrasts solitude in the north and plenitude of resources with the political and intellectual stature of artists in Mexico, and reflects upon Derouin's migrations there. Contents include the sub chapters: Migration, Land, Memory, Integration, bibliography, chronology, complete list of works, 18 colour prints, 47 black and white and illustrative process photographs.


Michael J. Molter

STANISLAV GERMANOV: CONTINUITY (review)
Gallery Jean-Pierre Valentin
No. 7/21, 1998

Stanislav Germanov: Continu­ity, is a balancing act that astonishes with a timeless sense of harmony, richness of texture, seemingly balanced and static. Tranquility is achieved by an arduous shaping and conquering of materials, taming and silencing chaos, in the space of creation.

Returning, oil on canvas, captures through a combination of elements, infinite inner movement and reverse perspective characteristic of Byzantine icons. The thick vibrant body of the painting recalls the mural technique sgraffito. Layers of etched, smoothed and sculpted paint reveal a canvas abounding in colour and texture applied in subtile fashion, which at a distance is seemingly monochromatic.

Returning, a peculiar landscape of the mind, is a metaphoric painting in which Germanov recreates a moment frozen in time through optical effect. As if seen from a train, changing horizons merge into a single vanishing point where in four triangular shapes converge. The artist achieves stasis through a mirror effect reversing the movement between the objects in the painting, the sub­ject, and viewpoint. Inner tension between motion and contemplation inhabits this painting that the artist has quieted into an unperturbed peacefulness.

The Last Supper, mixed media on paper creates a highly stylized table separation between the central figure and group portrayed acting as a crown of thorns that places the images into a spiral maze. The works on paper differ from his highly tex­turalized canvases, yet Germanov's vision is identified by subtle use of colour, use of reverse perspective and exploration of infinity motif.

The elasticity in Germanov's work is endowed with a poetic quality that penetrates the canvas and pulls the viewer into the frame. There is an ancient tinge to the surfaces of this recent body of work, that evokes a reflection on art as a phenomenon, which can be likened to archetypal and archaological, balanced to between past, present and future.

Rossitza Daskalova.
Claude Millette & Teresa Velázquez
Ombres et Lumières
Musée d’art de Mont-Saint-Hilaire
Sept-Nov 1998

The dramatic and powerful exhibition Ombres et Lumières, shown recently at the Musée d’art de Mont-Saint-Hilaire, attests to the fact that, when things go well, the pairing of two artists in a single environment can prove enriching for all concerned. This exhibition integrates the richly layered oil paintings of Teresa Velázquez with the large-scale steel, bronze, and aluminum sculptures of Claude Millette. The intense, abstract and angular colours of the Velázquez works recall the stained glass in an ancient cathedral, while the solemn works by Millette inhabit the space as though witnessing, inviting, partaking in ceremonious ritual. The dim, spacious museum that houses this exhibition, with its high ceilings and carpeted silence, assumes the aura of a sacred place.

Teresa Velázquez is a Mexican artist whose paintings have been shown extensively in solo and group exhibitions in her own country as well as in the United States, Peru, and now Canada. She is primarily concerned with light, and the way in which it carves the rich, densely stratified colour that is superimposed over forms. While not immediately visible, closer inspection of the works reveals glimmers of gold throughout. Angular and organic, translucent and opaque, her untitled works are constructed outward from a dark foundation. As the edges cut away, the darkness recedes, and forms emerge. In some, abstract reds and greens float as though revealing the inner workings of the natural world. In others, geometric shapes are defined and dissected by angles of light, almost quivering, like a city perceived at night from across the water. These works undulate with an energy that is contained only by the thin black frames that enclose them.

Quebec sculptor Claude Millette has presented his monumental metal works in over twenty group exhibitions since the early 1980s. Since then, we have witnessed an escalation in the emphasis he places on purity of form, the context of the site, and on the positioning of his works in relation to each other and to light. The most recent exhibition constructs an environment that is delineated, but not defined, by the volume of the metal structures.

While the works of Millette, like those of Velázquez, vibrate with light and shadow, this occurs differently in his, namely through the dialogue between the work and the space that surrounds it. One of the most arresting pieces, Generescence, consists of three elements. A tall, solid structure seems to writhe slowly, although frozen immobile in space, flanked by geometric shapes of lesser intensity. A second work, Arborescence, comprises a waist-high pedestal, reminiscent of a majestic spider's web, the steel centre hovers suspended at the vortex of a majestic shadow of lace. Finally, Luminoscence comprises a waist-high pedestal, resembling a bistro table, topped with a bundle of wooden sticks in cast bronze. Suspended overhead like a chandelier is a second form calling the pointed tips of Generescence.

A sense of ritual prevails here, as though some mysterious sacrifice is about to take place... or already has. A lethal gap separates the arrow, hovering from the ceiling, and the wood targeted below. The menacing form on the wall, distorted and precarious, dissolves downward in a spectrum of shadow and light.

These artists’ works seem restless – be they painted surfaces of intense colour or metal forms, fluid as polished mercury. Whether in two dimensions or three, and despite the perfect and protected calm of this mute, sedate museum, they appear somehow discontent with their immobility. This is achieved, perhaps through their errant luminosity, the most significant unifying element in the exhibition. For Velázquez, while the releasing of light at the surface of the canvas is employed as a means of liberating colour, paradoxically the reverse also applies in her work: the dense stratification of coloured pigment itself serves as a means of releasing light. Similarly, Millette’s proud, polished threedimensional structures do not merely exist in the space, they inhabit and transform it. Both artists invite us to notice, most importantly, the light that extends outward from the works. The light that sculpts the shadows.

Elizabeth Wood
DOWN FROM THE SHIMMERING SKY: MASKS OF THE NORTHWEST COAST
McMichael Collection of Canadian Art, Kleinberg, Ontario


The largest and most complete exhibit of contemporary and historical masks created by First Nations artists, Down from the Shimmering Sky: Masks of the Northwest Coast, opened to thunderous reviews at the Vancouver Art Gallery as the main event in 1998. With masks returning from public collections in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, and the United States for the first time in two hundred years, and others by artists practising the art of creating masks today, this exhibition celebrates the rich heritage of the Northwest Coast, while commemorating the work of the region’s finest artists today.

Images of supernatural creatures, such as the Grizzly Bear, Thunderbird, and human face masks representing ancestral spirits of First Nations peoples were in use in traditional dance ceremonies to preserve the stories, status, and responsibilities of their owners. Names of many masks at this exhibition are now lost in time. Contemporary sculptors of diverse, dynamic and inventive new objects include: Joe David, Beau Dick, Freda Diesing, Willie Seaweed, and Art Thompson, to name a few.

Co-curators of this landmark exhibition include: Peter Macnair, former curator of thirty years in Anthropology at Royal British Columbia Museum in Victoria; Robert Joseph, a Kwakiutl chief, writer, curator and adviser on land claims and Native rights; and Bruce Grenville, Senior Curator of the Vancouver Art Gallery, contributor to and editor of The Post Colonial Landscape, book and exhibition series.

Robert Joseph suggests that through the mask Native people reconnected with the universe, identifying their humanity, affirming celestial honour, and conquering fear to interact with the spirit world and their ultimate destiny. A Spirit World beyond individual tribal groups, beyond the western horizon, is reached by an underground route through a coffin as a doorway to the underworld, or through the Milky Way in a spiral to oblivion. Coexisting with the Mortal World, separated by a thin veil only few learn to penetrate, spirits access the Mortal World with ease as manifestations of the dearly departed. These Bak’wats, ghostly spirits of ground embodiment, were skeletal with shy faces, green hairy bodies, and strides four times longer than living men. Souls who drowned or unknowingly ate Bak’wats food soon became members of this ghostly ritual.

Similar counterpart variations of this creature re-occur among the Haida, Heiltsuk, Kwakiutl, Makah and other West Coast groups, such as the Nuu-chah-nulth.

Until about 1850, most masks collected on the Northwest Coast represented human portraits in the likeness of the person intended, or in animal anthropomorphic guise. Many masks also represent human frailties, such as arrogance, avarice, conceit, pride or sloth. Others categorize old people, intruders, rivals, white men, as well as local animals, water creatures, creatures of the sky and celestial objects.

Captain James Cook chartered the Northwest Coast in 1778 before an untimely death on a sidetrip to the Sandwich Islands. On their return expedition to the Northwest, British sailors traded with the Native inhabitants for, among other objects, otter pelts, at that time valued in the Canton, China international port at a hundred dollars American. The profound effect on Northwest Coast peoples as traders from Europe and the United States arrived, occasioned the emergence of dynasties and rivalry between the Boston, Canada Log, Maguituna, Sebaessa, Shakes and other groups enhanced through their control of the fur trade.

Rituals practised by peoples from Vancouver Island to southeast Alaska originated largely among the Heiltsuk and became the basis of intercommunication among tribal groups, as the dissemination of ceremonial objects and regalia was accelerated by artistic fervour, resulting from new wealth in trade. Rivalries were expressed through the medium of the Potlatch, in which ceremonial finery was displayed, indicative of status, wealth, and privilege. In the commerce of blankets and fur, masks were the symbol of chiefly office leading to an acceleration in the evolution of subject and form in a dialogue relating to inherent supernatural powers, throughout the 19th century.

Down from the Shimmering Sky: Masks of the Northwest Coast, honours a unique artistic cultural history, challenging the notion that through innovation we must reject tradition. This exhibition confirms a dramatic transformation, in a survey of masks making, that will serve to inspire and influence coming generations.

Michael J. Molter

A NEW BRUNSWICK TRILOGY
Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton, N.B., Jan. 31-Apr. 14, 1999

Francis Coutellier
Concertant, grotte maison et cheval, 1995, oil on photograph, artist.

Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton, N.B., Jan. 31-April 14, 1999, curated by Curtis Joseph Collins, New Brunswick Trilogy is a three part exhibition: Boat: Philip Iverson (liberating inner convictions through the mediation of art); Cartes et Symboles, Memoire des Lieux: Francis Coutellier (travel maps and memories of places lived and known); and Corpus: Sarah Maloney (work about how identity is constructed from without and within the individual). Philip Iverson’s large format murals present urban density images, somewhat less dense when one thinks of New Brunswick from, perhaps, a Montreäl urban perspective. Francis Coutellier’s photo-based grand scale formats are an autobiographical history relating to mythological and geographical areas in places where he has lived and worked: Acadia, France, Belgium and Italy. Sarah Maloney appropriates human imagery presented in embroidery on silk with skeletal knitting components.

The Power Plant, 251 Queen's Quay W., offered up a two-part exhibition *Picturing the Toronto Art Community: The Queen Street Years and American Playhouse: The Theatre of Self-Presentation*. The exhibition concerning Queen Street Years was heavily archival and documentary, giving a concentrated look into the "happenings" of a particular segment of the arts community over a two decade period. However, the focus seemed too focused, as if the thesis was already in place and the work chosen merely to support it.

The General Idea exhibition held last winter at the AGO presented a much more comprehensive overview of that same period, even though it focused exclusively on the work of one collective and the Warhol-factory artists were featured in depth in the Andy Warhol exhibition there last spring. *American Playhouse* lost potential impact due to over-familiarity. Diane Arbus's work has been seen in two recent exhibitions at Ydessa Hendeles. People going through the exhibits seemed to be sporting a "been there — seen that" demeanour.

Jane Corkin Gallery's, 179 John St., *Robert Bourdeau: Industrial Sites* seduced with images which, perhaps, if encountered first-hand, most of us would turn away from. His gelatin silver prints depicting silos, mine sights, abandoned steel plants and coal mines, create elegies to abstract modernism using these remnants of modern urban decay. Broken window panes cascade in a tribute to Mondrian; a rusting water tower seems to shimmer composed of speckles of paint à la Pollock; views of silos and detail from a lime plant, in sensuous and graceful appreciation of chiaroscuro, remind of the best of Rothko. Bourdeau tips his chapeau to early platinum photographers with his ruins of a chapel, recalling in particular the work of Frederick Evans.

The Joseph D. Carrier Gallery in North York hosted Ken Danby's first solo exhibition since 1985, including oil paintings, watercolours, egg tempera and drawings October 23 through November 24.1998. Danby's realist work sold out in a concurrent exhibition at Gallery Moos on Richmond, and was featured in a one hour documentary on CBC's *Life and Times*, with an historical perspective by Walter Moos.

Antila Richard Lukacs, in two solo exhibitions, October and November at the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery, Hart House, University of Toronto, and in loft space on King St. W., opened to large mixed crowds and mixed reviews. The Barnicke show profiled less well-known "lotus" images, depicting nude concubines in erotic poses. Lukacs served up plenty of his familiar skinhead images at King W. with earlier work. Rumour has it that Lukacs's work hasn't been selling in New York the way it used to, and has been brought to Toronto to find a secondary buyers' market. Regardless, Lukacs's technique stands up as being gloriously painterly. In fact, the subject matter, sensational or mundane, remains less important to the work than the technique.

Susanna Heller's *Year End* exhibit at Olga Korper Gallery, presenting her intense inner landscapes with broad depth perspective vision, shows that the best is yet to come.


One of the gems of last season was found in a three part exhibition at Mercer Union, 439 King St. W., Michael Alstad created his version of The Last Supper, an installation comprised of a prison dining room table, two benches and metal plates depicting photographs of the last meals eaten by convicted killers before their execution. Each plate contained an image ranging from a single apple to steak and wine, bordered by the name of the convict with, here and there, messages gouged into wooden benches. Even for those pro capital-punishment, this work was incredibly powerful in evoking a sense of people's ordinary humanity, regardless of their inhuman actions.

George Bures Miller's kinetic sculptures were frenetic and threatening, bordering on loss of control, but visually compelling. Janet Morton's window installation titled The Ascension of the Good Businessman, combined bodiless starched shirts with neckties ascending into the sky. In sympathetic irony, these shirts with skyscrapers painted on their tails indicate these aspiring/ascending "businessmen" are held down and trapped by their surroundings.

DeLeon White Gallery at 455 King St. W., featured two dual artist fall exhibitions including: Lorne Wagman's "interface between the Canadian landscape and the mediascape of contemporary reality" in September; Monique Crepault's photographic works based on sculptural installations were paired with Paul Waldé in November; and in December '98 through February, 1999, New York artist Alan Sonfist and Toronto sculptor Ian Lazarus are featured.

At 80 Spadina Ave., Leo Kamen presented an exhibition of new work by John Kissick. Painted primarily on copper, these small abstract paintings evoke a sense of space and landscape, and Gary Blundell at Gallery 306 exhibited on-site sketches of Northern Ontario and finished oil on wood carved paintings in a technique reminiscent of Paterson Ewen.
Marilyn Levine: A Retrospective

Mackenzie Art Gallery, Regina
Nov. 13, 1998 - Feb. 14, 1999

Marilyn Levine: A retrospective is a history of subjects through Levine's technically astounding and emotionally engaging lifelike clay reproductions of leather objects from police boots to leather jackets. The exhibition analyzes two decades of this intriguing meticulous work, charged with emotional impact and technical mastery, in the context of current considerations of realist art. Originally from Medicine Hat, this Oakland based sculptor was first introduced to ceramics in Regina and has since exhibited widely in Europe, Japan, Australia, as well as in a 1981 retrospective at the Boston Institute of Contemporary Art. Also during the same dates: Intersecting Circles: from the John and Sandra Whitwick Collection of English Pottery, curated by Catherine YU, features ceramics from the 1950-1970's representative of the British Pottery Movement.

I. R. 80 A, SITUATION TOBOGGANISTS
Neutral Ground, Regina

I. R. 80 A is a street action performance, with Richard Martel, Edward Poitras, Greg Daniels, Robin Brass, Alain Maskegon-Ishkew and Brenda Geman dragging pieces of sod on toboggans through downtown to the Victoria Park statue of John A. MacDonald. A visual reminder of First Nations land claims, I. R. 80 A refers to Indian land at Regina Beach, converted to resort property and leased to the city to 2054. This represents one of the largest pieces of reservation land in Canada with no native inhabitants. Toboggan, an authentic Cree word, references Aboriginal traditions and satirizes notions of cultural superiority. Sod carried on toboggans questions portability of territories and transgression of treaty boundaries. Dressed in chic millenial tyvek suits, shielded from urban biohazards, the performers interacted with the statue's pose with outstretched arms bearing MacDonald hamburgers, which they then left in a concentric offering.

Ken Lum
XXIV Bienal de Sao Paulo
Jan.16-Feb. 14, 1999

Ken Lum, XXIV Bienal de Sao Paulo, Jan.16-Feb. 14, 1999, presented by curator Jon Tupper, Walter Phillips Gallery, Banff Centre for the Arts, is an installation featuring 19 works from the Photo-Mirrors series incorporating keepsakes, memories and photographs culled from refuse, in an interruption of
Ken Lum
Photo-mirror
(Birthday Cake), 1997, 18 x 15" courtesy Waller Phillips Gallery
mirrors reflecting the reality of documented static fleeting personal history. At the W.P.G. Banff Centre, Feb 4-Mar 28, Blanket Statements features four diverse quilt artists: Jean Hewes' hybrids between painting and quilting; Clarissa Hudson in the Northwest Coast button robe tradition incorporating dream imagery; Barbara Todd's metaphoric quilts; and Margaret Wood's translations of Native American material culture into quilts.

Margaret Wood
Tipi, 1994, 85 x 148", cotton and shell courtesy Walter Phillips Gallery

KRAFTWERK
Open Space Gallery, Victoria
Mathieu Gaudet, Greg Forrest & Warren Murfitt
March, 1999

Greg Forrest
Amplification (Bobby Orr), 1996, plaster, wood, latex paint. courtesy Open Space Gallery

Hooper, the project culs from the valutative history of craftsmanship and woodworking offering a response to a modernist and minimalist spatial theory. Forrest's replicas of objects associated with leisure compares productive time and manual techniques as a form of leisure play. Gaudet's sculptures use distortion to critique bourgeois standards, while Murfitt's approach to craftsmanship is alleged with construction and renovation.

PALIMPSEST
Grunt Gallery, Vancouver
Marcus Bowcott
Feb. 12-Mar. 6, 1999
PALIMPSEST, Marcus Bowcott, Feb. 12-Mar. 6, 1999, Grunt Gallery, Vancouver, is both performance and a case photograph projected on an installation sculpture including photography and video performance documentation of the project. Relating prehistoric to modern, concrete to ethereal, captive to wild, attainment to desire and projection to reflection, Palimpsest features in the 10th anniversary Grunt program, which begins Jan. 12, 1999 with Deb Dyer's sculptural assemblage works to Jan. 30, followed by Margaret Dragú's Eine Klein Nacht Radio, an investigation into the death of fishing and farming produced for Selfish, a Canadian tour in Germany and the Netherlands in June 1998. March 16-April 3, Travelling Alternative Medicine Show is a collaboration between Anishnabe artists Janice Toulouse Shinwack and Leonard Bean focusing on reserves of Serpent River and West Bay, Manitoulin Island Ontario and aboriginal urban cultural experience through multimedia curated by Lynn Hill.

Michael J. Molter

Marilyn Levine
A RETROSPECTIVE
NOVEMBER 13, 1998 TO FEBRUARY 14, 1999

Peggy's Jacket, 1991 ceramic
OK Harris Works of Art, New York
Photo: Richard Sargent

Organized by the MacKenzie Art Gallery with the Assistance of The Canada Council for the Arts and The Saskatchewan Arts Board

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MacKenzie Art Gallery

VIÉ DES ARTS N°173 81
PACIFIC WEST COAST

GRANVILLE ROW GALLERIES

The Granville Row Galleries are situated from 3rd Ave. to Catriona Jeffries at 15th Ave. While Monte Clark reopened on Granville from Third Avenue, presenting international artists of the stature of Graham Gilmore (NYC) in Painting Lesson, March 1999, (mixed media installation series from 1998). Douglas

Jin-me Yoon, between departure and arrival


Jin-me Yoon, between departure and arrival, Gagnon, Monika Kin; Kang, Hyun Yi; Radul, Judy, 1998, Western Front, ISBN 0-920974-30-9, 80 pp., deals with this artist's commitment to public discourse and social change through artistic practice. Between departure and arrival, makes manifest the implications between photographic identity and videographic consciousness, bringing together time zones, desires, metaphors of identity, images of aerial subjectivity and media images of Asian history. Yoon engages a Utopian desire for limitless consciousness and grounds it via a fragmented history of limits. Represented by Catriona Jeffries Gallery, Yoon is increasingly seen on the international scene. Yoon's work reflects the unfixed nature of identity and relates to its fragmentary historically grounded multiplicities.

Michael J. Molter

The Vancouver Art Gallery is a study in contrasts over the next few months in as much as it presents in a more focused exhibition calendar. With a tremendous amount of territory to cover; European historical, Canadian, First Nations, as well as pan-Asian historical and contemporary art, they have their hands full, but aimed in the right direction.

The Natural World, through the end of January, is actually linked exhibitions addressing several issues surrounding scientific and biological classification systems which include: habitat, extinction, mortality; abstraction and decaying through contemporary works by Cornelia Hesse-Hornegger, Lee Bul, Mark Dion and Mike Kelly to the historical presented through the works of the 19th century naturalist and artist John Audubon.

This adjunct exhibition with over 100 prints by Audubon from his portfolio entitled The Birds of Canada presents probably one of the most masterful print series often regarded as his greatest series of ornithological engraving series. The meat of the dialogue rests with the contemporary work instigating more than just reproduction, deviating further into the classification systems by demonstrating a simultaneous, but modernized relevance of scientific, philosophical and cultural concepts in the natural world.

Detailed, highly representational watercolours by Cornelia Hesse-Hornegger, not only counter Audubon's work, but extend his concept of species identification, underlining the pressure humans put on all other species on this planet. Mark Dion in his Notes Towards a Field Guide to the Birds of the Department of European Decorative Arts of the Art Institute of Chicago, investigates the history of natural sciences with an ironic commentary on the traditional systems of classifications, like those utilized and devo-
The exhibition presents four installations: *Win, Place or Show* (1998), *Mutter* (1996), *Der Sandmann* (1995), and *Hors-champs* (1992); and includes sets of color photographs from *Win, Place or Show*, *The Nootka Sound Series*, and the Potsdamer Schrebergarten Portfolio.

*Win, Place or Show* concerns two fundamental transformations of North American social space during the 1960s: inner city "slum clearances," wherein pre-existing lower class neighborhoods were eradicated and their residents relocated into new, centralized, housing developments; and the rise of network television as a socializing agent, viewed by many different ethnic and social classes, while only representing the interests of the inhabitants of white, middle class suburbs. An aspect of contemporary prime-time television which to this day mires it in a post-modern colonial past.

*Mutter* is a video installation filmed in Nootka Sound, on Vancouver Island, B.C., which delves in to our West coast colonialism as it projects two shifting landscape images on the same screen, while revealing two adversaries who describe their geographical and psychic displacement, ruminating on their hatred of each other, with identical quotations drawn from the Gothic and colonial literatures of Cervantes, Captain James Cook, the Marquis de Sade, and other persons of history.

In contrast to many of Douglas' other projects, *Hors-champs*, a documentary, presents the performance of four musicians from the "Free Jazz" movement of the late 1960's and early 1970's. The musicians, George Lewis, Douglas Ewart, Kent Carter, and Oliver Johnson, play music based on Albert Ayler's 1965 composition, *Spirits Rejoice*. The video is shot in the style of a French ORTF television production dating from around the time of Ayler's composition, but, unlike the musical television of director Jean-Christophe Averty, Douglas' production is projected on two sides of a double screen, presenting on one side a seamless montage of the group's performance, and, on the other, in Douglas' words, "a simultaneous counter-narrative of everything that had been edited out" of the other film.

Addressing concerns at the other end of the spectrum, internationally recognized Vancouver artist Stan Douglas, February through May 1999, views the modern world through the conventions of media, specifically film and television. Using the languages of photography, television and cinema, Douglas seeks to make viewers aware of conventions operating within these ubiquitous formats with precise layering of sound and image grounds, both fore and back, utilizing each medium's subtle manipulations, expanding upon other equally important counter-narratives to address historical and contemporary thought. His installations have been included in major international group exhibitions such as *Documenta 8, Sculptur Projects Munster*, Germany; *3 Biennale d'art contemporain de Lyon*, 97; *Korea Biennale*, Korea; *Sydney Biennale*, and *Aperito 90*, Biennale di Venezia, Italy. He has had numerous solo exhibitions at venues throughout the world including the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal and the Whitney, Rotterdam, yet to date a relatively unknown in Vancouver. Douglas is represented by David Zwirner Gallery in New York.

Deborah Koenker - Bayoux Tapestry
January 1999

Victoria Stanton & Sarah Williams - as part of Uno Festival of Solo Performances
February 1999

Gregg Forrest, Mathieu Gaudet and Warren Nurrini - Kraftwerk
March 1999

You can purchase art and information from the Vancouver Art Gallery's website: www.open-space.ca
ALBERTA

FOUR STRONG WINDS

The abundance of so much good art photography shown in Calgary this winter is partially due to the second Alberta Biennial of Contemporary Art and the inclusion of two remarkable series by Diane Colwell and mn Hutch Hutchinson, and the coincidental timing of several exceptional solo shows by Toronto and Calgary based photographers.

DIANE COLWELL
TOURIST VIEWS
Edmonton Art Gallery
Jan. 30 to Mar. 28

"Tourist Views" assembles ten of Diane Colwell's (Calgary) subtly altered photographs from road trips to wildlife museums and souvenir shops, surveying our various methods of containing, framing, preserving and serving up nature. Through stills of dioramas with stuffed animals, images of wildlife on souvenir plates, and tourist snapshots, Colwell investigates the impossibility of accurately imagining nature. m Hutch Hutchinson's (Calgary) "Book of the Damned: Cycles 1 through 3" is a large, 40 panel grid of text and bizarre, computer manipulated self-portraits. The text is by master skeptic Charles Fort and the installation, with its comic, yet sincere characters, is a playful performance of pig-headed skepticism, ufophilia, conspiracy theories, identity crises, and more obscure (personal?) symptoms of millennial angst (and mid-life crisis).

ED BURTYNSKY
IN THE WAKE OF PROGRESS: QUARRIES, TAILINGS AND URBAN MINES
Paul Kuhn Gallery
Oct. 17 - Nov. 7

Ed Burtnsky's (Toronto) "In the Wake of Progress: Quarries, Tailings and Urban Mines," is a spectacular collection of large chronogenic prints that combine luscious colour and subtle tones in ways that encourage you to forget that you are looking at pollution. Oil drums compressed into multicoloured and rusting cubes and stacked like the base of a cartoon pyramid; vertiginous views of cubistic quarries; Burtnsky discovers beauty in the geometries of human refuse.

MARGARET MAY
Margaret May
Paul Kuhn Gallery
Feb. 13 - Mar. 6

A must-see, coming to Paul Kuhn's this winter, is Margaret May's (Calgary) enigmatic photo-lithographs. Often printed on plaster or chine colle on shaped MDF board, they have the fugitive visual feel of veiled daguerreotypes or engraved stone. The human made subjects are timeless, usually worn has-relief architectural details: a well, water wheel, ladder, gears, steps. These evocative sights are archetypal, dream-like stimulation for active associations.

GEOFFREY JAMES
Ilingworth Kerr Gallery
Nov. 26 to Dec. 19, 1998

Geoffrey James (Toronto) presented 32 black and white photographs commissioned by the San Diego Museum of Contemporary Art. "Running Fence" records activity around 'Operation Gatekeeper', a
14 mile fence patrol system designed to keep illegal immigrants from crossing from Tijuana and San Diego. In "Highway sign, U.S. side," for example, set against a desert landscape and highway, is a caution sign with the silhouette of a running family. Perhaps an unremarkable image for San Diegans but surreal to Canadians—we prefer subtle exclusions. A selection from James' previous series on asbestos mining, historical European sites, and more at Trépanier Baer Gallery November 26-December 31.

SANDRA MEIGS AND DAMIAN MOPPETT
NEW AND RECENT WORKS
Trépanier Baer
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21, 1998

Sandra Meigs and Damian Moppett put taste to the test in “New and Recent Works.” Meigs' deliberately (I trust) with her brilliant hum-listed small paintings of dogs complete with dangling 3D tails and built in miniature lights, and Damian Moppett's large acrylic drawings of intestinal bodies, perhaps derived from the scribble margins of an early ’70s adolescent male who admires the drawings found in Car-toons magazine (or the more recent Juxtapose). Might be called high dumb. While funny, these paintings do not indulge in the usual forms of porno irony. They are self-consciously self-conscious. Heir to the anti-intellectual attitude of early 80s Bad Painting, these pretty ugly works are, perhaps, attempts by their authors to be born again urban folk artists.

CATHY DALEY
Newzones
Feb. 26 - Mar. 20
Mar. 25 - Apr. 25

Exhibitions to watch for include Cathy Daley's (Toronto) graphic twists on femininity and the representation of women's bodies in art; her turbulent yet comic oil pastels on vellum can be seen at Newzones, which featured last season, followed by a large selection of Jack Bush (1909-1977) paintings March 25-April 25, 1999, coinciding with the Edmonton Art Gallery's "Brush With...", which explores brushwork in large abstract paintings by Jack Bush, Robert Motherwell and Lawren Harris, among others (until August 30).

David Garneau

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VICTORIA
GU XIONG:
THE RIVER
Art Gallery of Greater Victoria
Review by Yvonne Owens

The exhibition space created by Victoria Art Gallery for Gu Xiong’s installation August 14-October 11, 1998, shed a vermillion glow all the way down the gallery stairs. Upon entering the room painted entirely red, I experienced a combination of shock and buoyancy, always my initial response to Xiong's installations, the clarity of his communication induces sheer delight.

Xiong installations are poignant at the same time as they express a cautious optimism. He and his family emigrated here from China in response to atrocities and oppression and, though their experiences as immigrants were often traumatic and disorienting, he is philosophical about it. His visionary process resolves such cultural confrontations humorously, in elegant, multi-leveled visual puns, consistently using European artistic modes and Chinese tradition to communicative advantage.
In the recent exhibit at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, a river of white gym socks flows in the same direction, describing a meandering path along the Gallery floor. Artifacts in plexi boxes from the Gallery’s permanent collection were placed at regular intervals, like rocks jutting out from the stream. These included an antique model of a traditional Chinese house, half its accommodations reserved for people, the other half for animals. A cast bronze figure in Thousand Mile Eyes portrays a far-seeming traditional hero archetype, gazing off into the future, flanked by a trio of ancient wine-cups, the kind reserved for people, the other half for animals.

Photographic plates and snapshots elicit the elements of Time and Eros in Photos of Gu in Tiananmen Square and on Parliament Hill in Ottawa side by side. Gaudy plastic toys are scattered throughout, as well as kitsch collectibles from the Cultural Revolution. A red alarm clock worthy of Disney features happy workers on its face, waving Mao’s little red books as the seconds tick by. Warhol’s postcard image of the smiling Chairman glowers in vivid, pop colours right next to it.

The smiling Chairman glowers in tick by. Warhol’s postcard image of Cultural Revolution. A red alarm well as kitsch collectibles from the Square and on Parliament Hill in shots elicit the elements of Time and movement within the red room of life. Red is the colour of good fortune in Chinese tradition; it signifies prosperity, health — all things vital and good. Xiong points out that red is also the colour of salmon as they are dying, after they’ve returned to their source in the river to spawn. “Their eggs, too, are red,” he says, “it is not a geographic return, but a spiritual one.”

Gu Xiong emigrated to Vancouver with his family in 1989. He had been a university professor in China, whereas here he worked at menial jobs. The massacre in Tiananmen Square had closed a door on his former existence and left him with no choice but to leave, integrity intact. He has been exercising this integrity of vision ever since. There is a lucidity in his conceptual presentations which is refreshing and surprising. I would never have thought antiques from the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria Permanent Collection could have been so easily arranged beside plastic toys and socks, so blithely assuming new life.

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