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CARAQUET, NB

VISUAL ACADIA!
FESTIVAL DES ARTS VISUELS EN ATLANTIQUE
4-7 July, 2002

With a unique and ever changing cultural mix, Acadia maintains its persona in the gestures and sounds that embody everyday life there. The popularity of local cultural manifestations such as the Festival des arts visuels en Atlantique, held annually in Caraquet, New Brunswick, is not confined to the young, middle-aged or old—but involves all the community. This initiative, which began as Caraquet en couleurs in 1997 consists of a brief and intense summer celebration of Acadian culture. It includes workshops for young people, four major exhibitions, a francophone visual arts competition, an Acadian book launch, an art auction, one visual arts competition, an Aca­dian book launch, an art auction, and professional musicians, Andrew Miller and D'Arcy Gray. This group has commissioned works by composers who include Atlantic Canadians James Gode, Michael Miller, and Alistair MacLean, and will be giving public workshops on the work of the American composer John Cage on October 18th, 19th and 20th. Motion Ensemble will lead off the symposium with a concert featuring works by composers associated with John Cage, including David Tudor.

Symposium events that will happen in and around Struts Gallery include the very interesting Project Mobilire Bookmobile. The project is a bookmobile housed in a specially designed twenty-six foot vintage Airstream trailer. It features artists books, hand-made magazines and various independent publications. For the open competition this year, Lise Rocher won 1st prize for her ceramic and steel sculpture Homage to Jean-Paul Riopelle and Anguille, Marie Hélène Nardini's Bagage Vial won 2nd prize and honorable mentions went to Georges Goguen, Nathalie Daigle and Monique Caissete. This year's Festival des arts visuels en atlantique proved to be a lively celebration of, by, and with, Acadian art, culture and identity.

John K. Grande

SACKVILLE, NB

I'D BE A FOOL
7th ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM OF ART
Owens Art Gallery
49 York Street, Sackville, NB
Struts Gallery
7 Lorne Street, Sackville, NB
21-26 October 2002

This year marks the 7th annual international symposium of art in Sackville. Co-sponsored by Mount Allison University's Owens Art Gallery and the Struts Gallery, this year's I'd be a Fool symposium is centered around performance art. Performance art is not new. It can certainly be dated to the Dada period during, and after, World War One and the Happenings of Allan Kaprow which date from 1950, but it is an art form that continues to be controversial and within that controversy lies its charm. The press release refers to time-based art... Doesn't all art exist in time? At least when this kind of art is bad and it is over, it disappears without a trace, unlike bad painting and sculpture which continues to haunt us. Performance art is documented, but documentation is a poor substitute for the real thing: being there is everything...

Music in performance art is often performed by non-musicians under the vague premise anyone with an artistic license is gifted. The results leave much to be desired, just like painting by actors. For the Sackville event music is being performed by Motion Ensemble under the solid stewardship of co-directors and professional musicians, Andrew Miller and D'Arcy Gray. This group has commissioned works by composers who include Atlantic Canadians James Gode, Michael Miller and Alistair MacLean, and will be giving public workshops on the work of the American composer John Cage on October 18th, 19th and 20th. Motion Ensemble will lead off the symposium with a concert featuring works by composers associated with John Cage, including David Tudor.

Symposium events that will happen in and around Struts Gallery include the very interesting Project Mobilire Bookmobile. The project is a bookmobile housed in a specially designed twenty-six foot vintage Airstream trailer. It features artists books, hand-made magazines and various independent publications. The trailer will be parked outside the gallery and project staff workshops on the publication of hand made books and magazines will take place. Based in Toronto and Philadelphia, Projet Mobilife tours Canada and the United States, stopping at public libraries, community, senior and youth centres. The project seeks to demystify art by letting ordinary people in on the act.

Three events during the week at Struts: DOMARMA, performed by Toronto artists Ed Johnson and Paul Collard; a performance by Ontario artist, Shary Boyle titled Honkistinkie, and a piece by Vancouver artist Smart Bodies. These events may prove more challenging to the public than the bookmobile. DOMARMA addresses the... relationships and the social and political reaction to various aspects of gay culture. It does so by having the performers, among other things, engage the architectural surroundings. Ms Boyle's performance combines drawing with country and western karaoke and, finally Smart Bodies will work with her audience to uncover areas of public surveillance by using readily available technology.

The symposium will wrap up Friday night (October 25th) with a lecture titled Joseph Beuys: Props for the Memory or Remembrances of Doing Wrong by art writer and teacher Kristine Stiles from Duke University. Ms. Stiles is co-author, along with Peter Selz, of the reference Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Source Book of Artists' Writings. Her lecture will question Beuys' Nazi past and may assert Beuys was more of a good Nazi than he led people to believe during his life. In all, the symposium I'd be a Fool promises to be a busy week full of surprises. It is to the co-sponsors credit (The Owens Art Gallery & Struts Gallery) that this event occurs annually in Sackville and at Mount Allison University. Pots do need stirring every once in a while, if only to make sure we don't get too comfortable with our ideas about art and life.

Virgil Hammock

Andrew Chandler
Performance, 1998
producing works that reflected the area, I gave up on working from photographs and remembered Hartley's approach to his Memory Series. I then began to take on Hartley's process and paint the light, shapes, and lines of the New Mexican desert I had left behind. As a result, MacLeod developed a more acute eye for the qualities of local colour, the blue and purple light he had discovered while painting the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and desert mesa floor.

Scott MacLeod learned how to capture the essence of desert light the longer he painted there, but on his return to Montreal the real seeds of the Taos Memory series germinated into the celebration of the New Mexico landscape now on view at Victoria Hall in Westmount. Some of the paintings such as The Ceremony (2002) constitute narrow vertical slices of the horizon reminiscent of Japanese calligraphic works. They are likewise suffused with the vibrant complimentary desert colours. The abstraction reflects California painter Richard Diebenkorn's work but the colours are deeper with saturated hues and soft light. Others paintings based on visits to various sites in New Mexico including Abiquiu, Ghost Ranch, Pilar, and the Rancho de Taos, where remnants of the old pueblo settlements can still be found. The overall impact is of light suffusing and diffusing, and of majestic natural landforms, the ever changing atmospheres of the desert landscape.

John K. Grande

HULL

VIKINGS

NORTH ATLANTIC SAGA
Canadian Museum of Civilization 100 Laurier Street
Tel: 819-776-7000 1-800-555-5623
www.civilization.ca
May 8th–October 14th, 2002

On the shores of the Ottawa River at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the Vikings have landed! More than 300 artifacts from nine countries, from navigational instruments, to agricultural tools, wood and stone carvings, jewellery, armor, a whalebone ironing board, and a scale model reproduction of the Viking Gokstad ship are here until October.

Interestingly, a team of fifteen curators from museums around the world helped assemble this intricate weave of objects to bring an important part of North American and European history to the public.

Apparently, when evidence was discovered proving the Vikings had been in North America 500 years before Christopher Columbus, the Italians rioted in New York! The Vikings were pirates, and the loot they captured, some on view in Hull, evidences the range of territory they covered: a 7th century Buddhist, an 11th century Irish cross, Runaíga’s 8th century copper and enamelled casket from Scotland, ivory chess figures from the Isle of Lewis. Looking at the swords, with their intricate design and construction one can only be impressed by the high level of Viking blacksmith work. A carved limestone slab from 8th-9th century Gofand depicts a Viking ship carrying the dead warriors to the afterlife in Valhalla where, we can see, fighting and feasting conclude. A mini-section of the paintings such as The Ceremony (2002) constitute narrow vertical slices of the horizon reminiscent of Japanese calligraphic works. They are likewise suffused with the vibrant complimentary desert colours.

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Karilee Fuglem
Water Drawings

TOM THOMSON

National Gallery of Canada
380 Sussex Dr.
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 9N4
Tel.: 613-990-1985
http://nationalgallery.ca
June 7th-Sept. 8th, 2002

Vancouver Art Gallery
750 Hornby
Vancouver, BC V6Z 2H7
Tel.: 604-662-4700
www.vanartgallery.bc.ca
October 5th, 2002-January 5th, 2003

Tom Thomson is, along with Emily Carr, one of Canada's most salient and immortal myths, when it comes to Canadian art. His art has been examined under the microscope and copied by thousands of Canadian Sunday painters, and art school students. Thomson's rustic studio/cabin has been moved from the unlikely setting of Toronto to the grounds of the McMichael Collection in Kleinburg, Ontario. The school busloads of students come each year to marvel at and re-discover this myth, ..., or play frisbee or football in the ravine....

The book that immortalized Thomson for my generation was The Silence and the Storm, co-authored by David Silco and the Toronto artist Harold Town. The focus there wasn't on the elaborately hewed brush and palette "masterpieces" like Northern River (1914-15) or The Jack Pine (1916-17) but the brief, flighty, light and color capturing sketches Tom made camping or canoeing in the woods at Algonquin Park, at Dr. MacCallum's cottage (whose walls were brought from Go Home Bay to Ottawa and are now on permanent exhibit in the National Gallery of Canada).

This fresh assessment of Tom Thomson's life and art involved a lot of collaboration; the scholars include Charles C. Hill (NGC), Dennis Reid (AGO), Andrew Hunter, Sandra Webster Cook, Anne Ruggles and that great popularizer of Thomson Joan Murray, among others. Looking through the show, and seeing the breadth of Thomson's life, one can only think how much more lives like Thomson could have been or would be had they not died in their 30's.

TORONTO

KARILEE FUGLEM...
WATER DRAWINGS

Leo Kamen Gallery
Suite 406, 80 Spadina Avenue
Tel.: 416-504-9515
r.holt-kamen@sympatico.ca

Karilee Fuglem continues to explore aspects of the ephemeral with her new Water Drawing series on view at Leo Kamen Gallery. Best known for the Breath Drawing Wall she exhibited at OLMC's first Montreal Biennial in 1998, Fuglem has recently experimented with the colourless medium of water, brushing it directly onto tracing paper. The first results were exhibited in a show titled Winsome, Soon You Will Stop Searching for Meaning at Pierre-Francois Ouellette Art Contemporain this past May along with an installation titled Secret Visibility. The installation had thousands of clear acetate disks attached in clusters onto the gallery walls. Activated by fans intermittently they moved mysteriously and poetically...

More recently, the volatile nature of tracing paper has caused Fuglem to use vellum. Approximately 10 new works in varying dimensions are on view at Leo Kamen Gallery. The Water Drawings involve making circles or ovals onto paper, to then let the paper dry and repeat the actions again. The result is fascinating, and a purely physical response to the action of water on paper patterns. Fuglem's physical and material interactionist art recalls Andy Goldsworthy experiments placing reddish Morecambe Bay stone into large snowballs from 1992 that, when it melted onto paper made arbitrary forms of varying colour densities. Fuglem's Water Drawings likewise mirror nature's sensitive and often invisible, ever changing chaos.

Drawing with water and delving into the dynamics of nature, Karilee Fuglem surprises us yet again with the subtlety of her art. Letting go or controlling the brushwork determines the way the works evolve. With or without your magnifying glass, whether investigating the microcosm or the macrocosm, Fuglem's Water Drawings are a must see!

SASKATOON

QU'APPELLE:
TALES OF TWO VALLEYS

The Mendel Art Gallery
950 Spadina Crescent East
PO. Box 699 Saskatoon
Saskatchewan S7K 3J6
Tel.: (306) 975-7610
June 14th-September 2nd, 2002

Qu'Appelle: Tales of Two Valleys, The Mendel's programming centrepiece for 2002, considers Saskatchewan's most famous valley
from multiple historical, social, industrial, spiritual, visual, textual, even medical points of view. More than an exhibition, this multi media event includes two art shows and a well-planned and informative website (http://quapelle.mendel.ca/exhibition/) that includes histories; school projects; recollections, comments, and filmed interviews and slide shows from writers, artists, and Piapot elder, Beatrice Lavalle; and a very cool virtual tour of the shows. The gallery has arranged on-site and outreach educational programs and a two-volume exhibition catalogue.

The historical art survey, curated by Robert Stacey and Dan Ring, is a collage of paintings from the 1840s to the present. There are dozens of big and little scenes and portraits, mostly hung salon-style, by C.W. Jeffries, Ingris Steddon-Williams, Nicholas de Grandmaison, Ernest Lindner, and others. Many are little known varnished, muddy views, or bright but formulaic. They reveal an imported Romantic gauze that figures both the original inhabitants and "grandure" of this modest little valley to suit the needs of recent colonizers. The immigrating farmer who judges the whole of southern Saskatchewan from these oasis pictures. But there are also some sensitive surprises from early and mid-20th century by artists such as Illingworth Kerr who seems to be searching for something of the place itself, or for something of himself in this place.

The works by contemporary artists are familiar but, in this context, enlightening. The views range from modernist documentaries by Gregory Hardy, Dorothy Knowles, Landon Mackenzie, etc., to attempts to evoke the hidden meanings of the valley: Bob Boyer and, especially, Lisa Steele and Kim Tomczak's immersive video installation, Blood of the valley: Bob Boyer and, especially, Lisa Steele and Kim Tomczak's immersive video installation, Blood of the valley.

Despite the survey show, the exhibition is eager to be exhaustive, not simply record and denounce. The views range from early and mid-20th century by artists such as Illingworth Kerr who seems to be searching for something of the place itself, or for something of himself in this place.

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