

Dislocation

USINE 106U, January 10 - February 10, 2009

Isaak Augustine Elliott

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MONTREAL

DISLOCATION

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USINE 106U
 111 Roy St. East
 Montreal
 Tel.: 514 728-9349
 NB: THE GALLERY IS MOVING
 IN NOVEMBER TO 160 ROY EST

January 10 – February 10, 2009

a feedback clip, a guitar playing clip and other clip clips – very visual with chaos and confusion and displacement all ingredients in this visual mix.

One begins to feel some of the artists here are trying too hard to be cool. What was once live is now pre-meditated, over-meditated, too self-conscious. Take Jay Heikes video *Daydream Nation* (2000), for instance, a single channel colour video of a candle burning based on Gerhard Richter's 1980s *Candle* painting. Meditative – yes, but Rock 'n' Roll? That said, Douglas Gordon's videos are a milestone for this show, capturing old Rolling Stones' bootlegs of Altamont, clips of the Cramps and the Smiths, taking Rock 'n' Roll moments and slowing the sequences down to further the live cultural impact that is essential to Rock 'n' Roll. While *Sympathy for the Devil* seems to lose track of its thematic goal along the way nevertheless it's a fun whirlwind walk through the alchemical extravaganza that was and is art and Rock and Roll. □

The name "USINE 106U", when spoken in French, translates into "no way out".

The brainchild of local cartoonist Eric Braiin, the gallery shows works that are resolutely off the mainstream, and since its opening some two years ago, almost 200 artists have exhibited at this unusual venue.

The mandate for this heavily rotational locale has been to promote marginal, unconventional works with an eye for maintaining a cooperative atmosphere conducive to the growth of younger artists alongside more seasoned veterans of art practice.

Within this spirit of constant evolution lies a link that fills a void in Montreal. The gallery seeks works that ask questions, make unconventional statements, and embrace difference in a vital context. Its October exhibition, *DISLOCATIONS*, presents 26 artists whose art seems to fit the bill.

Two small untitled ink-on-paper drawings by the Polish artist Majka Kwiatoska are part of this group show. Kwiatoska worked on behalf of the Solidarity movement in Poland during the early Seventies, as well as participating in activist

causes through her artwork. Her figuration pieces date back to the same era. The works presented are graced with a calligraphic series of flourishing lines that result in a tasteful rendering of the human figure.

Some proponents of the fashion and entertainment industry might realise that they stand on the shoulders of creative giants whose influence must be considered, as so many popular cultural statements have been derived from the fine arts. Mark Prent, an original pioneer of a macabre aesthetic, offers a silkscreen photo of a life-size sculpture done in 1974 titled *Thawing Out*. The original piece, done in resins, was a life-sized work of a naked corpse emerging from a fridge half filled with ice. This work was part of an exhibition organised with the aim to come to the financial aid of the gallery's owner, Avrom Isaacs of the Isaacs Gallery. It helped cover the legal fees brought on by a right wing Christian group suing the gallery on obscenity charges.

A fine draughtsman, and according to many, a major Canadian talent, Eric Braun, makes no bones about his choice of subject matter: highly charged



Mark Prent
Thawing Out
 Thawing Out is a silkscreen
 of 75 X 106 cm

situations where the human figure is alternately tortured and titillated by phantasmagorical beasts within a sexually charged atmosphere bordering on the religious. The works aspire to an almost Catholic perfection in every aspect. The seven small etchings titled *ENFER* magnificently portray human figures in Bosch like settings. Braun's technique commands respect.

In the work of Daniel Urban, the spirit and philosophy of Art Brut has risen like Lazarus from the underground to resurface into another type of incarnation. Urban offers a single work of savagely inscribed lines recalling Dubuffet that evoke a primal and dark exchange between what suggests to be a family, however coarsely represented. Evocative of Freudian tautology, this work is a powerful statement indeed.

The evolution of Twentieth Century movements and isms would appear to have tapered off, or at least mutated into something integrated with technology. In many ways, however, regardless of how similar in style the works of these artists may appear to our artist-ancestors, they are forging new pathways. □