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MONTREAL

PAINTING FRIENDS, THE BEAVER HALL WOMEN PAINTERS

Barbara Meadowcroft



Front cover: Plate 23
Autumn (or Girl with Apple),
Prudence Howard, 1942,
oil on canvas, 76 x 63.5 cm

The notion of survival has long provided fodder for art history, and for those engaged with the complex process of artistic production. There is first the artist's own struggle to produce the work, and then begins the process that assures the endurance of a particular work or collection. For women artists, however, the question of survival assumes more complex dimensions. In order to paint at all, women artists historically have had to contend with a patriarchal socio-historical context, to accommodate the prescribed roles and responsibilities of domestic production, which have taken precedence over the exigencies of artistic work. As Griselda Pollock recently noted:

Women live the conditions of artistic production differentially according to the social as well as the subjective structures of gender and sexual difference, economic and cultural positionality. Painting or any form of cultural practice, not only is determined by social institutions and semiotic structures but is the site at which these are articulated negotiated and transformed.

The group of artists known as the Beaver Hall Women Painters were remarkable not only in their determination and capacity to "negotiate and transform", but also in the bonds of friendship which united them for life, and which enabled them to realize their commitment to painting, despite the constraints of institutions and structures which jeopardized their very careers as artists.

In her recent publication *Painting Friends, the Beaver Hall Women Painters* (1999), author Barbara Meadowcroft traces the lives and careers of these Montreal women artists whose life-long association began when they met at art school in the early 1900's. Ten women were affiliated with that group: Emily Coonan, Nora Colyer, Prudence Heward, Mabel Lockerby, Mabel May, Kathleen Morris, Lilius Torrance Newton, Sarah Robertson, Ann Savage, and Ethel Seath. Despite their successes - clearly evidenced in their achievements (including exhibiting with the Group of Seven, as well as internationally, throughout the 1920's and 30's) - their contribution has been largely overlooked by art historians. Meadowcroft provides the first in-depth look at these extraordinary women. In chapters with such revealing titles as "Family Ties" (Chapter Five) or "Surviving as Painters in the Great Depression" (Chapter Seven), Meadowcroft provides a long overdue discussion of their lives and their careers, and of the conditions surrounding both.

The material presented in *Painting Friends* has been gleaned from archival sources, as well as from over 100 interviews with the painters' friends and families. In addition to numerous photographs and sketches in black and white, the book is illustrated with 24 colour plates, which delineate the three themes that typified the artists' subjects: landscapes, still lifes, and portraits. What is perhaps most interesting about the paintings themselves when viewed in the context of a "group" - as they are here - is the frank openness with which the subjects are captured. In *Beaver Hall Square* (c. 1923) by Anne Savage, for example, grey buildings, vertical windows, and thinly outlined trees stretch skyward, as bent figures and horse-drawn carriages brace against the whirling snow. The effect, despite the monochromatic colours, is one of blunt energy; towering structures countered by dwarfed figures pressing to resist their upward thrust. A force of similar magnitude, but very different in mood, permeates the still-life entitled *Lilies* (c. 1938) by Sarah Robertson. Here sensuous blooms extend outward, now toward the viewer, now away, against a window pane through which, between the stems and leaves of the pulsating flowers, houses and lampposts peer humbly. Finally, among the most remarkable in this collection are the portraits, for example *Self-Portrait* (c. 1929) by Lilius Torrance Newton, or *Autumn (or Girl with apple)* (1942) by Prudence Heward. Each depicts a solitary woman dominating

the visual plane with a matter-of-fact self confidence, a directness that is disconcerting, as though the women portrayed are privy to some knowledge which eludes the viewer.

This book's strength lies predominantly in its recognition of friendship as a powerful force that united the ten women, and provided them with the sustaining environment that made it possible for them to paint. In this way, Meadowcroft's findings constitute a sensitive acknowledgement of the social and political currents of the period, as well as of the ways in which women navigated these in order to carry out creative work.

As Meadowcroft notes, only recently has attention begun to be paid to these women. We are tempted to turn to these works for visual testimony of the cautionings of Christine di Stefano: gender is basic in ways that we have yet to fully understand... it functions as "a difference that makes a difference" even as it can no longer claim the legitimating mantle of the difference. The figure of the shrinking woman may perhaps be best appreciated and utilized as an aporia within contemporary theory: as a recurring paradox, question, dead end, or blind spot to which we must repeatedly return, because to ignore her altogether is to risk forgetting and thereby losing what is left of her.

On the other hand, one might argue, di Stefano's reference to the figure of the shrinking woman is not, by any means, what we see in these powerful paintings. Rather, her reference evokes a metaphor for these artists' scant presence in Canadian art history. Meadowcroft's *Painting Friends* enables us to look toward fostering a new understanding of the role of such women painters, and to according them their rightful place among this century's best.

Elizabeth Wood

1 Pollock, Griselda. (1999). *Differencing the Canon. Feminist Desire and the Writing of Art's Histories*. New York: Routledge. p. 146.

2 As Meadowcroft notes, of the ten artists, "Nine of the Beaver Hall women were spinsters - whether by choice or circumstance is hard to say" (Montreal: Vehicule. 1999, p. 80).

3 "The nine single painters lived with their parents and siblings for most of their lives. Some had little choice since their art did not provide them with a livelihood, but most were also influenced by family loyalty. Society expected unmarried daughters to care for their parents (...) But the real problem for these creative women was caused less by external circumstances than by the patriarchal image of woman as nurturer, which they had internalized." (Meadowcroft, op.cit., p. 81)

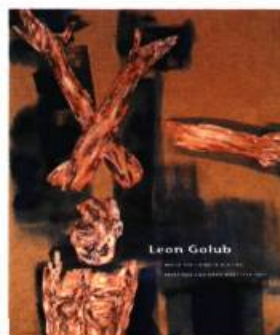
4 Cited in Tong, Rosemarie Putnam. (1997). *Feminist Thought*. (Second Ed.). Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, pp. 210-211.

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LEON GOLUB: WHILE THE CRIME IS BLAZING

Liane and Danny Taran Gallery,
Saidye Bronfman Centre for
the Arts

January 18 - March 5, 2000



Cover page:
Dionysiac, Leon Golub, 1998
Acrylic on linen, 118.5 x 73.5 in.

There's no salvation for Leon Golub's decontextualized humans. These malcontents are Godless creatures who live in a Godless world. The walled empty urban scenarios they exist in are beyond redemption. As icons of violence, corruption and abuse of power, these paintings are not purist or aesthetic but hit-and-run visual diatribes designed to CONVINCE ME OF MY ERRORS as the painted graffiti in *Like Yeah* (1994) exhorts. Graffiti "tagging" is commonly used by Golub to set the parameters of the scene. An arrow marker in the same painting points to an inverted skeleton with more words, this time "another joker out of business" adjacent to it. A man's face is bleached out, pure white, objectified, dehumanized. His mouth is caught open in some kind of abject scream of anxiety whose source he will never know. The horror is not about what goes on inside this man's skull but the violence that exists as a universal common denominator in Golub's world. It's like a Henry Miller story that has been exhumed, all the images and insights have been thrown around the place like shards of lost reason. Identical replicas of sexy dancers in triplicate, a man with his fist clenched leaning against the wall/edge of the painting. A dog sequestered into a black square of paint. Is Golub alluding to the trap of painting itself, the historicity of the act of painting? The textural scumbled effects, the gesturally painted tracts and words in paintings such as *Like Yeah* (1994), *Scratch* (1999) and *Time's Up* (1997) change our conception of these scenes. The picture plane becomes a wall that closes the space in, but not the pictures themselves. A dog-like body with bird on his back shoulder is immersed in a black square while dogs stare in anticipa-

tion in Scratch. The random fragments tell a story of a disjunctive society where imagery has power, but the sequences are broken down, decontextualized, some elements have been erased, others we seek and find.

Leon Golub's paintings are existential whodunits contorted tales of America's moral decline and third world paramilitary law. Somehow the brutality is sexual, explicit, provocative. In the 1960s, Golub was one of a very few American painters addressing the Vietnam War in his work. By the 1970s, several series of paintings including *Mercenaries*, *Riots*, *White Squad* and *Horsing Around* earned Leon Golub a reputation as America's foremost political painter of the century's end.¹ The real acclaim for his work came in the early 1980s when the art dealers rediscovered Golub. The subject of a major retrospective at the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin in the summer of 2000, Leon Golub remains one of America's most controversial realist painters. These images of interrogations, mercenaries, of abstruse violence, torture, coercion, and brutality are now well known to art audiences yet his recent work is less well known. Disjunctive and fragmentary, Golub's most recent work looks postModern, sanitized and relativized. His love of Mexican muralist Orozco's early work shines through, but the causes of the evil, control and brutality that permeate the recent paintings are more invisible, inexplicit and abstract than any social realist's paintings could be. According to Stuart Horodner of Bucknell University's Art Gallery in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, curator of Leon Golub: *While the Crime is Blazing* (in consort with David Liss), Golub's anti-media, activist and issue-oriented paintings may be well known but the recent work has not been dealt with sufficiently: "This exhibition looks at a period (1994-99) marked by shifts in process as well as attitude. Still examining power relationships, the artist (now 77 years old) is now equally addressing the interrogations within himself (anger, cynicism, doubts) and painting with a hit-and-run approach, letting fragments of figures and animals and texts define classic struggles of self in space." These seldom seen recent paintings further dismantle the objectified realism of Golub's earlier style. Godless Golub's *While the Crime is Blazing* show is a controversial must see.

John K. Grande

¹ Montreal's Museum of Fine Arts was the first art museum in North America to purchase one of Leon Golub's *Mercenaries* paintings.

OTTAWA/HULL

EMERGENCE FROM THE SHADOW: FIRST PEOPLES PHOTOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES

PRESENTED UNTIL JANUARY 2, 2001 IN THE ART GALLERY OF THE FIRST PEOPLES HALL OF THE CANADIAN MUSEUM OF CIVILIZATION, HULL



Daughter of Jesse Lewis, by anthropologist F.W. Waugh
Are You my Sister, Shelley Niro

The twenty first century looms before us with the promise/threat of advanced technology affecting everything from the very nature of what we eat to providing us with robotic pets. We are hysterical with Trekkian possibilities as we look to the moon for more space, but before embarking on that journey it may be wise to take a look at *Emergence from the Shadow*, curated by photographer Jeffrey Thomas.

The exhibit is inspired by anthropological field photographs taken at the dawn of the twentieth century by Geological Survey staff (now the CMC) F.W. Waugh, Charles Marius Barbeau, Francis Knowles and Harlan Smith. They recorded languages, histories, activities and ways of life in writing and through photography providing Thomas with the premise "Our ancestry is an important part of who we are as First Peoples, these photographs provide an interesting window to the past. By juxtaposing them with the works of contemporary First Peoples artists, it became easy to see how the past often informs the present in both artistic and cultural terms."

The exhibition features more than seventy historical photographs, as well as contemporary photographic-based works by Shelley Niro, Greg Staats, Mary Anne Barkhouse, Greg Hill, Rosalie Favell and Barry Ace. Coming out of an artistic renaissance which began in the early 1980s, the works of all six First Peoples artists speak, in this exhibition, to issues of community and continuity and the influence of ancestry and family history on who we become.

Under the Sign of the Cross: Creative Expressions of Christianity in Canada will be on display from November 5, 1999 to March 18, 2001 in the Arts and Traditions Hall of the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

This is an exhibition of religious objects created by Canadian artists of paintings, sculptures, icons, bibles, miniature models and music that illustrate the impact of Christianity on Canada as an integral part of the country's heritage and cultural profile. The works represent several of the Christian denominations such as Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox.

Curator Dr. Robert Klymasz explained that though the Museums do not have a religious collection, its ethnology, folk art and war art collections contain an eclectic range of Christian-inspired items that create a powerful exhibition just in time to celebrate the second millennium of Christ's birth. "I hope that this exhibition will touch people on a personal level at the same time as they enjoy the variety of creative ways Canadians have been moved to express their faith," said Klymasz.

Certain works are of particular interest such as a stunning serigraph of Christ with a crown of thorns by Tsimshian artist Roy Henry Vickers or renowned Inuit artist Pudlo Pudlat's exquisite stonecut print of an Arctic angel. Eastern Orthodox icons such as Slavco Protic's gleamingly patriotic Mother of God of Canada have a serene and universal power to communicate the motivations of the artist.

Both *Emergence from the Shadow* and *Under the Sign of the Cross* leave us at once bemused and comforted. While we anticipate the future, we are inextricably rooted in the present, a moment that passes quickly into history. If we take our inspiration from the artists in *Emergence*, then we are comforted and buoyed by their unshakeable conviction in the process of self-determi-



Mother of God of Canada, Spavco Protic n.d. (94-38878) COLL. CMC

nation and the visceral connection with traditional practices. So, as we make our way to the moon faithfully clutching our time capsules bulging with meaningful relics and getting closer to angels, it will be the bemusing sound of our Aibo barking at a falling star that will spur us on to new directions.

Franceska Gnarowski

CANADIAN MUSEUM FOR CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY, OTTAWA

JUST THE FACTS: CONTEMPORARY DOCUMENTARY APPROACHES

24.09.99-16.01.2000



Purification, Jane Ash Poitras, 1999, mixed media on canvas, 121.9 x 91.4 cm, courtesy Mira Godard Gallery

Adjacent Chateau Laurier, the Museum for Contemporary Canadian Photography, celebrates the end of the 1990's with a '90's survey that underscores the tendencies used in various cross media by Canadian artists. The CMCP, part of the National Gallery of Canada, the state of the art of photography as it develops in Canada, has an extensive collection and archives for research, as well as an active ongoing exhibitions programme as exemplified by this exhibit. The range of on wall works and use of mixed media juxtapositions underline the range of practice in a field that has become more and more off the wall, and on to magazines, silver screens and video.

Michael J. Molter



No Power Greater, (detail), Carole Condé and Karl Beveridge, 1990-91

TORONTO TROT: AROUND THE TOWN

TREES, CLOUDS, GOD AND MAN: ISSUES AND IDEAS SURROUNDING THE MILLENIUM

REINHARD REITZENSTEIN
March 18 - April 12, 2000
Olga Korper Gallery



Reinhard Reitzenstein
Last Wood Series, #7, 1997-98.
Cast Bronze, 60x115x60 cm

In a global economy where natural resources are traded for big bucks and exported far too often to where human labour is sold the cheapest, we might not sit so comfortably if we were magically privy to the history of growth, harvest, and

labour surrounding us, our bodies, our souls. Reitzenstein's works are created through the act of artistic resurrection. "He commenced salvaging invasive and blighted lengths of grapevine, effectively aiding the vitality of the woodland..." With these vines he used a lost wood process of bronze casting to simultaneously immortalize and incinerate each vine. Through many processes of alchemy and labour the bronze and the bronze cast are realized. Reitzenstein then brazes (welds) the cast vine fragments into benches and chair configurations.

When I think about nature and am presented with a bench and a chair my immediate connection is to the park and the lawn. A park bench a lawn chair. Is this the way we living in the 21st century experience our natural environment? Are we seated passively, contentedly? How do we think of "the natural world"? Are we living in the natural world or simply harvesting from it? With so many important questions raised through looking and thinking about these works it is indeed very thoughtful of the artist to provide a seat.

1. Claire Christie, "Reclaiming Grace" (catalogue text), 1999.

YECHEL GAGNON

EXCAVATION

Feb. 12 to March 11, 2000
V. MacDonnell Gallery

The word excavation reads as dig to me. An archaeological word/activity that implies that through unearthing the past we will better position ourselves for the future. Gagnon's "excavation" is a dig into plywood. Using electric routers, chisel knives, belt sanders, and oils to reveal natural growth patterns in the highly processed woods laminated into one of North America's favorite building materials. Gagnon states "I investigate this material by revealing the layering of the product, hence reversing the production process. This allows me to explore the dichotomy between the functional use of the plywood and its nature. Tall and towering these wall-mounted sculptures seem almost a forest of eroding hybrid trees revealing themselves through their own deconstruction. Conversely the strong elongated rectangular visualized lyrical excavations can be read as signposts to our living culture. A little anthropology can indeed change the findings of future archaeology. You dig?"



Yechel Gagnon,
Untitled, 1999.
Gouged Plywood, 240x70 cm

STEPHEN ANDREWS JAMES LAHEY DAVID MORROW

CURATED BY ROBERT BIRCH
C.N. Tower
360 Restaurant-301 Front St. W

As the temperature drops and the millenium takes hold each of us will probably find ourselves standing quietly outside one morning exhaling small breath clouds. Each cloud may act as punctuation or exclamation of our very mortal selves as we gently mentally review our past, present and future goals and exploits. This is possibly the same quiet sensibility that fueled Robert Birch's conception of an equally quiet yet poignant millenium show housed in the tallest building on earth. For the "Gallery" in the clouds Birch has constructed an exhibition of clouds. Due to the structure of the tower the cloud

paintings face directly into the clouds! This obvious relationship between the real and the represented heightens the sense of the artist capturing a fleeting moment and movement of nature with mortal hands and paint. More than mortal hands the tower certainly proves we have mortal ears. The show's three fold relationship between the site, the millenium and the clouds is made obvious in a deceptively understated way upon entering the foyer of the 360 restaurant.

With ears still popping from a speedy ascension in the glass elevator one might take the time to turn and look at the Stephen Andrews works hung as a poignant diptych. The left piece reads December while the right reads January. In each the text is boldly inscribed upon ephemeral, skin like clouds realized in dark smears on velum. Andrew's works are fragment of a much larger calendar series. One full year piece is included within the body of the show. These works were created to express loss, optimism, and the passing of time in response to the many friends and colleagues lost to AIDS. Through conversation with Birch, I was also informed that Morrow's works we also created as means of dealing with death. Morrow's clouds are peppered with blimps bearing text such as BOO or Hoo and the 7 hats of the 7 dwarfs cascade through the cloudscape like hankies on the wind. The creation of personal symbolism through appropriating pop culture iconography sets up a visual dialect that the viewer may decipher and emotionally respond to.



James Lahey
Cloud Portrait,
acrylic on canvas,
22.5 x 30 cm, 1999

Conversely Lahey's works seem to be very much about painting clouds. His palette changes in an almost impressionist manner as a means of capturing light and color. Softly he wields the pigment to represent the mist veils as their soothing, inspiring, lush, intangible selves. But it is paint and paint is what Lahey shows in Rood Screen. This work is a diptych with one side a cloudscape and the other a flat color field of computer screen blue. Through this juxtaposition two things are immediately evident. Firstly the sky is not just blue and secondly both

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sides do the same thing. Each presents an openness and an eternity of space to be visually entered. While the cloudscape side makes the viewer aware of the air moving in the atmosphere the color field side seems to make me more aware of the air moving within my own lungs. So with the memory of heavens visual embrace filling my thoughts I descend. The glass elevator reminds me of Snow White laid out in her glass box and I wonder if Morrow thought about that in regards to the site too? Leaving the elevator and stepping out into the grounded world again I exhale into the night. No breath clouds. Maybe in the morning.

TOM DEAN

April 2000, Edward Day Gallery

Chaos, alchemy, wonder bread dots, babies, dick bones, God Magazine, and a floating staircase. This body of work questions the Universe pre Y2K and comes up smiling. But behind every smiling face is a grinning skull. So to the XVIII Biennale di Venezia and back journeyed artist Tom Dean with crates and crates and crates. For those of you, like myself, who didn't shadow the trek of Canada's foremost artist the Edward Day Gallery maybe a fine opportunity

Tom Dean/Mark Bell
Silence of the Lambs, 1998/99 (detail)
Digital output on Splash printer
Courtesy Edward Day Gallery

to peruse a splattering of works in an intimate space. And for those of you who would like to purchase a little piece but don't have the cash or space for a large work, Dean has created a trilogy of *God Magazine*. *The Silence of the Lambs*, *The Beatitudes*, and an oldie but a goodie *The Ten Commandments*. These are available at the Edward Day Gallery and at Art Metropole whose efforts are responsible for the production of this excellent multiple. The first time I ever saw the images that comprise the picture book *The Silence of the Lambs* I was in a rented warehouse attending an artist initiative collective

show called *Cross Eyed*. The theme of this show was collaboration. The show looked slick from start to finish but it wasn't a gallery show. Members of the collective wrote for grants, sent out press releases, sat the show, and tended bar at the opening. For this show Mark Bell and Tom Dean's collaboration produced 7 images. Each image was a computer manipulation of *Grunevald's Crucifixion 1512 - 1516*. Within the belly of this appropriated altarpiece image they laid "a little of everything, love, death, life..." as Bell puts it. Those images are now bound and called *God Magazine: The Silence of the Lambs*. It strikes me as amazing and inspiring that the theme of an artist initiated show could create the fertile ground necessary to produce collaborative work that Dean felt strongly enough about to request permission to present it to the world. Indeed Dean's name is often listed with younger artists in large collective shows. A few that come to mind are *The Sex Show*, *Karaoke*, and *The Drug Show*. It's silly to think of Tom Dean as representing Canada and Canadian artists on the international stage. Art is not a sport. No one is the best because art is not a linear progression. I must confess (it's the lapsed catholic in me) I am feeling very patriotic right now.

Elizabeth Fearon

REVIEWS

SUSAN N. STEWART: DENIAL OF SURFACE

V. MacDonnell Gallery
Nov 20th to Dec 18th, 1999

Susan N. Stewart's work deals with our relationship with our bodies and how our bodies are a part nature. In particular she draws links between the spiritual, the sexual and the creative. In this series of self-portraits Stewart explores the formalist content of painting. The work is about the slipperiness of paint, the thrill of brushstrokes and the power of painting to deny a flat surface.



Susan N. Stewart
Blonde Bombshell
Oil on canvas
18 x 18 in
Courtesy V. MacDonnell Gallery

Over time, the ritual of painting the same thing over and over again, and seeing how each finished work looked and felt so different, became itself the true subject and nature of the work. These paintings sing with juicy brushwork and sensuous colour that moves and in a physical, visceral style.

The true subject content is the beauty of the brushwork. These paintings celebrate how a brushstroke can take one's breath away. Each portrait is a description of the body experience when it was being painted. Like Cindy Sherman and Mariko Mori, Stewart uses herself as the blank canvas on which things can happen.

Stewart looked for inspiration to the German artist Baselitz who paints all his work with the top of the head at the bottom of the canvas. Other influences include Germaine Koh and Janet Werner. Other works evidence an emotional rawness, when the ups and downs of life inevitably found their way into the paintings.

MARC SÉGUIN

Nocturnal Solutions,
ArtCore, October, 1999

Séguin's upcoming exhibitions include a solo to be held at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal in November 2000 which will travel to the Centre Culturel Canadien in Paris in spring 2001. In his signature style expansive colourfields are juxtaposed with figure drawing reminiscent of the Italian trans avant-garde. Intense psychological content and compositional simplicity blend in the fragment and the whole in which the undecided character of the work is in the end its strength.

Michael J. Molter



Prometheus, 1999,
oil on canvas, 145 x 105 cm
courtesy ArtCore Gallery



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REGINA Saskatchewan

CURATORIAL PRACTICE



Wesakehah and the Old Woman on a Bed of Gold Leaves, G. Ray McCallum, 1999
lacquer and oil on canvas
96 x 152 cm

Regina is not only home to the Royal Canadian Mounties and their Museum, but it has, per capita, one of the most vibrant art scenes in Canada. No longer just the home of crowd-pleasers Joe Fafard, Vic Cicansky, David Thauberger, and the Regina Five legacy, the city also offers challenging contemporary art and innovative curatorial practice.

With 30,000 square feet of exhibition space to feed, the Mackenzie Art Gallery presents the most art. Ably balancing regional responsibility with a national perspective, they do

not shy away from provocative shows. The second largest gallery, The Dunlop, is not only housed in the Regina Public Library, but shares a board. As a department of the library The Dunlop is mandated to provide information. Its facilitators are specially trained to not only offer facts but interpretations. The gallery also has a critic's residency, impressive publications, and a community branch (Sherwood Village). Neutral Ground, the city's oldest artist-run centre, programs the greatest range of experimental works and has recently branched into electronic art. The Antechamber, an upstart artist and film-maker-run gallery and film site—with a taste for minimal and photo-based work—is a testament to what you can do with a communitarian spirit and much cheaper rents.

Long associated with a strong First Nations contemporary art scene, as exemplified in the work by Bob Boyer, Edward Poitras, the unique fine arts program at the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, and the recent addition of curator Lee-Ann Martin to the museum staff at the Mackenzie has solidified Regina's reputation. The blush-inducing *Exposed: Aesthetics of Aboriginal Erotic Art* (Sept. 24-Dec. 5), co-curated with Morgan Wood, col-

lects erotic works from many of Canada's leading Native artists. A few pieces may be familiar—Daphne Odjig's naughty but morally instructional "Smoke House" works—but others are surprises, I don't remember seeing Norval Morrisseau's huge, entwined male couple in his coffee-table book. While not salacious, the exhibition is a provocation; part of the ongoing project to render First Nations People completely human in the dominant culture's imaginary. For me, the most poignant works were Thirza Cuthand's videos which negotiate her bi-racial and lesbian self in a self-reflexive but entirely guileless manner that elicits both laughter and tears. Altogether, this is a ground-breaking show demanding both more works and a tour.

Another example of exceptional curatorial representation is Anthony Kiendl's international group show exploring cuteness, *Fluffy* (The Dunlop Art Gallery, Oct. 16-Jan. 2). While this trend has been around a few years, Kiendl deepens it with thoughtful selection, clever juxtaposition and by avoiding empty-headed kitsch for kitsch's sake. A rose is a rose is a rose, but a teddy bear by Mike Kelly, and one by Shannon Berard-Gardiner, or Iain Baxter are not the identical. And it is this play of subtlety—the discovery of rich thought, feeling

and nuance behind a seemingly empty surface, that makes this show a revelation. *Fluffy* also introduces us to the darker meanings of Japanese cuteness, its consequences for gender construction, national identity, and commercialization.

Both exhibitions offer medicine and meaning with a sugar-coating. The sort of art and curatorial direction Regina is planning for the future.

David Garneau



Mr. DOB
TAKASHI Murakami, 1996
vinyl, helium
courtesy of Tomio Koyama Gallery
photo: Don Hall

Wyona Mulcaster



Top of the World, Wyona Mulcaster, 1999, Acrylic on canvas

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CALGARY

MUTTART PUBLIC ART GALLERY

The Muttart celebrates its 22nd anniversary to become the art gallery of Calgary. Moving in January 2000 into two of Calgary's oldest refurbished heritage buildings located downtown on Stephen Avenue Mall, it will become one of the city's visual arts anchors, along with the Glenbow, the Arts Centre, and Telus Convention Centre.

The new space will provide a community-based visual arts gallery supporting both established and emerging artists with 16,000 square feet, four times the current space, to include a new Education Centre and four distinct exhibition areas including Main Gallery, community gallery, children's gallery and media gallery. Karen Hasselfelt, Executive Director, continues to work in collaboration with other galleries. Officially opening March 2, 2000 with *Through the Eyes of the Bears* by Calgary artist Maureen Enns, curated by Ewa Sniatycka, the multi-faceted exhibition and catalogue are based on Enns' grizzly research in Kamchatka, Russia.

CARROLL TAYLOR-LINDOE

Trépanier Baer Gallery
March 2000

The Trépanier Baer gallery's intermittent museum-style tradition of presenting artists with a body of work developed thematically over time contextualizes Taylor-Lindoe's constant metamorphosis.

Examining her own sense of experience within the history of women painters, Taylor-Lindoe's example has impacted the national scene with others who are influenced by feminist thought.

"It is knowing and understanding your place and how things work," says Taylor-Lindoe. Celebrating who we are. It is time for beauty and celebration. "Women today do not need to request an identity formed by others, they declare their own."



Anatomy Lesson #5,
Carroll Taylor-Lindoe, 1998
watercolor, chalk, graphite on paper
45 x 90 cm



Caerimonia VI
1999
encaustic on canvas

CHRISTOPHER KIER

Newzones Gallery of
Contemporary Art, March 2000

Christopher Kier has chosen to revisit four iconic images he has mastered in *Monumentum*, the Latin word for memorial or historical record. It is a two-part exhibition with a catalogue organized by Newzones in Calgary.

Kier paints cross-culturally. His encaustic colours relate to the earth: red ochre, polished ivory and grey granite.

Two separate shapes, a cup and a house, or domus, signify our ongoing physical needs for nourishment and shelter. Spiritual requirements to find peace with the unknown are represented by two different elongated shapes. The horizontal bundle seems more personal, perhaps sacred reminders for safe-keeping. This is for you to decide. A second vertical totemic shape suggests a group spiritual hierarchy as cultures progress, expand, and grow more organized.

Kier believes these basic human "themes coincide with the millennium crossing". They are appropriate issues for this time "of passage, offering, continuity, balance and unity". It is a period for contemplation.

On Kier's personal level as an artist, it is his own way of celebrating the last ten years perfecting the challenging encaustic painting process. Kier thoughtfully chooses "the medium's tactile elements and spontaneity," always discovering something else as he works with this rigorous, but rewarding medium. Technically difficult, it involves the process of mixing heated wax with raw pigments and then brushing it repeatedly over the canvas. The layering yields translucency and texture, as if looking.

Back over 2,000 years with the Fayum portraits found in Egyptian gravesites from the era of Roman occupation, with the help of modern industrial advances.



Top of the World
Wynona Mulcaster
1999
Acrylic on canvas

WYNONA MULCASTER

Virginia Christopher Galleries

As Wynona Mulcaster, age 84, daily rides her horses over the tough dry landscape, she is taking visual notes for paintings that will describe her experience of the land and sky that make up her world of riding in the open country. Her large semi-abstract landscapes can be from many places where beauty is wrenched from a land that is bony yet teeming with life. Raised on the hardy prairies in Saskatchewan, she now divides her time with the ruggedness of San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. The dry-lands blend.

Hill Pasture shows a scattering of brown horses grazing the dusty grasslands. Water, the giver of life, is frequently hinted at with small ponds or a creek surrounded by delicately coloured dry-land plants as in Roughland.

Mulcaster's sketchy surface of acrylic paint, diluted and dragged dryly across the canvas, emphasizes the raw, tough texture of the land she is part of. Details emerge in clusters of rocks, shadows within crevices, scrubbrush thickets, and hints of colour with the hardy flower survivors. Her delicate transfer of this raw beauty onto canvas invigorates as it pleases.

Mulcaster is one of the original Saskatchewan landscape painters, influencing the work of such well-known artists as Ernest Lindner, Reta Cowley, Dorothy Knowles, and most recently David Alexander. As Virginia Christopher brings in the new Millennium, she has chosen to honour survival with the hardy yet fragile work of this exceptional landscape artist.

Anne Severson

THE WORKS announces

A series of art and design competitions as part of the new

Art & Design in Public Places Program

for Downtown Edmonton Alberta
contact: Linda Wedman or Natalie Roy

The Works:
A Visual Arts Celebration

June 23 - July 5, 2000
the 15th Anniversary Festival

Accepting
exhibition proposals
until January 24, 2000

contact: Vincent Gasparri
Artistic Director / Co-Producer

The Works International Visual Arts Society
suite 448, 10113-104 st. Edmonton Alberta T5J 1A1
tel: 780.426.2122 fax: 780.426.4673
www.theworks.ab.ca email: theworks@telusplanet.net

EDMONTON

ENTERPRISE

The Works Society is pleased to announce series of competitions for the new Art and Design in Public Places Program for downtown Edmonton Alberta. A number of projects will be developed in partnership with the Canada Millennium Partnership Program which encourages public and private sector participation to create millennium projects that make a difference in the lives of Canadians and their communities. For information on the art and design competitions, contact Linda Wedman or Natalie Roy at The Works Society 780.426.2122.

The Works: A Visual Arts Celebration, 15th Anniversary Festival: June 23 - July 5, 2000. Local, regional, national and international artists are presented in a forum for the exchange of ideas that is unlike any other festival in North America. The Works in downtown Edmonton presents a spectacular array of artists and artworks that range from experimental installations and performance art to traditional art forms such as painting and sculpture. Exhibition proposals currently being accepted to January 22, 2000. Applications on the web at www.theworks.ab.ca or call Vincent Gasparri 780.426.2122.

VANCOUVER

VISIONS

This winter Vancouver, brassy jewel in the crown of the Pacific Rim, pauses on the cusp of the Millennium

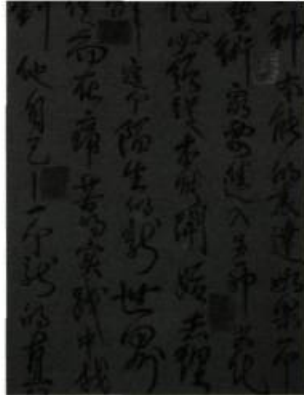


Shaman Dancing in Sunset,
Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun, 1989
oil on canvas
Vancouver Art Gallery

in a moment of self-congratulatory nostalgia. Several shows of historical and contemporary art recall Vancouver's persistent identity crisis between wilderness frontier and metropolis. Looking forward, there is mixed excitement and apprehension at the pressures that indigenous First Nations and immigrant Asians will exert on the urban physiognomy.

Grunt gallery led the way in November with *Live at the End of the Century*, a city wide festival of performance art that recognized Vancouver's seminal contribution to this contemporary practice. The Vancouver Art Gallery contributed as part of its own comprehensive viewing of Vancouver and Canadian art from the past century. Grouped in the VAG's Millennium projects are four exhibitions that showcase the gallery's history as cultural repository.

Two historical shows outline Vancouver's introduction to modernism via John Vanderpant's photography and Frederick Varley's painting. *The Rhetoric of Utopia* presents Vanderpant and his circle seeking a modernist style that broke with European tradition and British colonialism. In



My Own Words,
Gu Xiong, 1993
oil on canvas
Vancouver Art Gallery

the twenties and thirties, these artists declared a hope for Utopian harmony between the burgeoning industrial society of Vancouver and its overwhelming natural setting. *Visions of Paradise* offers Frederick Varley in Vancouver 1926 to 1936, the most creative decade of his career. British Columbia lured the Group of Seven painter with the promise of personal liberty and opportunity to paint his transcendent response to a landscape he called "heaven" that "trembles within and pains with its wonder." The show assembles for the first time in many years Varley's landscapes and portraits, illuminating his impact on artistic vision and production on the Westcoast.

Out of This Century is an experimental project that invited six nationally known Vancouver arts professionals to guest-curate their own selections from the gallery vaults. Each took a decade, beginning with landscape architect Cornelia Oberlander in the fifties and continuing with author Doug Coupland, radio host David Wisdom, filmmaker Mina Shum and playwright Tom Cone. Coupland's gallery of sixties' art "by guys"

recreates the era's sensory overload by hanging works of hard-edge abstraction on walls painted with equal intensity and edge. In a memorable gesture he hangs some paintings "back side out," a single ironic shot targeting several institutions including modernist painting, art market and art museums. First Nations filmmaker Loretta Todd takes the millennial slot with a tentative call to utopian hope for renewed relationship of the region's communities to the land and to each other.

Finally, in *Recollect* the VAG displays recent acquisitions of Canadian and international art of the last twenty years. Two leading currents of art production deal with aboriginal issues and immigration experience, highlighted respectively by Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun and Gu Xiong.

At the Contemporary Art Gallery in January, Eleanor Bond joins the persistent quest for Vancouver's relationship to place with a set of large paintings. The Winnipeg artist, known for her aerial views of industrial and rural sites in decline, is preparing a Vancouver project similar to ones she has done in Chicago and Rotterdam. During research last February, Bond accumulated observations of aspects of the city from North Shore mountains to the Fraser Delta, downtown high-rises and suburban malls, fodder for utopic paintings from a vertiginous vantage point.



Elevator Living in a Community-Built Neighbourhood,
Eleanor Bond, 1998
oil on canvas
260 x 442 cm

millenia/open space

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March 14-18, 2000

five days
poetry
music
dance
performance

cassandra miller
music/paintings

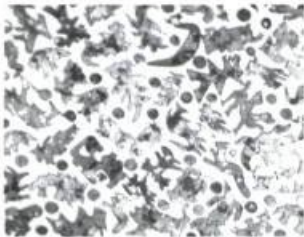
claudia nicoletti
poetry
music

mansell girls
collaboration
dance/music

daniel laskavin
dance
art

nothing changes
nothing remains the same

The year 2000 is Year of the Dragon, the most auspicious animal in the Chinese 12-year cycle and a favourable inauguration of the Millennium. In time for the Chinese New Year Sam Carter previews his 2000 Dragons Project at the Diane Farris Gallery in February, before it travels to the National Gallery of Malaysia in June. The former art director of the Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival will create an "army" of 1000 ceramic dragons surrounded by 1000 paper dragons. Carter made the dragons from fired clay that he polychromed and leafed in silver and gold; and from hand-dyed paper made at the Gandhi Ashram in India. After ten years of collecting dragon artifacts from around the world, Carter synthesizes the dragon into an optimistic



Dragon Grouping, 1999
ceramic-polychrome,
gold and silver leaf 2.5 x 7 in
photo: Ken Mayor

emblem of global understanding and cooperation that acknowledges while it challenges Vancouver's international role.

This "celebration of dragons" will preview at the Diane Farris Gallery from February 1-28, 2000. The exhibition will open at the National Art Gallery in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from June 4, 2000.

Joan Richardson

VICTORIA

MILLENARIUM MUSINGS

FIELD NOTES FROM MATERNAL
TERRITORY: AN EXHIBITION ABOUT
MOTHERING
MARGARET NAYLOR
jil p. weaving
ART GALLERY OF GREATER
VICTORIA
January 13 - March 5, 2000

field notes from maternal territory is a multi-media installation in three parts by Vancouver artists jil p. weaving and Margaret Naylor. In an exhibition that resonates with humor, the artists examine mothering as a cultural construct while acknowledging, among other texts, the critical influence of Mary Kelly's (1978) *Post-Partum Document*. The installation relies on Naylor's object-related sculptures and weaving's sixty continuous feet of narrative paintings (oil and acrylic) installed comic-strip style. weaving has also created a website for "mombots" with projected CD ROM images. A third component, a proposed "Wall of Honor" consists of photographs of mothers in all stages of motherhood. Organized by curator Lisa Baldissera, the image wall will result as a call for submissions from the community. Field notes originated at Surrey Art Gallery accompanied by a catalogue with essays by Petra Watson and Allyson Clay. Margaret Naylor's homey sculptures, (*Motel*, *Picnic*, *Schoolhouse*, *Treehouse*, *Water-tower*, *Storyteller*), employ ordinary

materials that convey a sense of everyday drama. As Naylor suggests: "The work centers around architectural forms, furniture and domestic objects which act as physical metaphors for the mother's body from which the maternal voice speaks." This culturally constructed voice is not gender specific but rather in Naylor's view, relies on the participation of both women and men. The implied narrator is that of Storyteller/Protector. jil p. weaving's fictitious narratives, a series of questions to be continued, are constructed in the future/present. An investigative or transgressive voice unravels through a series of twenty-nine representational panels that reference the television series, *The X-Files*. weaving's inclusion of a virtual component (website with projected images), further complicates the narrative, offering an "officially" sanctioned government voice on mothering policies established by the secret "Department of Maternal Affairs." The artistic practices of Naylor and weaving expose the contradictions endemic to our society's devalued notions of mothering. Their exposures raise questions that allow new and different discourses to occur, to be continued...



To be continued,
jil p. weaving, 1997.
1,811cm x 142cm. painted strip, computer
with website courtesy Surrey Art Gallery

CLAUDE TOUSIGNANT: INTROSPECTIVE DENNIS BURTON

GARTER BELT/INTERFACE.
REVISITING OUR
AESTHETIC SITES
February 3 - 26, 2000
March 2 - 31, 2000
WINCHESTER GALLERY
1010 BROAD STREET

In two exhibitions for the new millennium, Winchester Gallery re-examines the paintings of well-celebrated Canadian artists, Claude Tousignant and Dennis Burton.

Contemporaries, influenced by Abstraction Expressionism, both artists share histories rich in abstraction and cultural difference maintaining a long-time commitment to experimentation in Canada to achieve their respective creative involvements. Tousignant, (b.Montreal, 1932) the more esoteric, is best known for his Op-inspired target paintings. With no evidence of representation or brush-stroke, these reductivist paintings were considered shocking and radically frontal. The reserved Frenchman met Barnett Newman in the 1960's and was most impressed with his new austere vocabulary of abstract beauty. Tousignant moved further into abstraction with his Monochromes, in which the paint and canvas share a continuous color-soaked unity and a restrained emotional content. "Today I believe that whenever there is more than one visual plane on a surface there is necessarily an element of figuration." Claude Tousignant's February 2000 exhibition includes oil paintings, *Gong Chromatique* (1966), and *Settimale 3-69-47* (1969); some Monochromes; and some works on paper. Simultaneously (1960's), then Toronto painter Dennis Burton (b.Lethbridge, 1933), painted his controversial project "*The Garter Belt Series*".

This work was considered to be Burton's break with abstraction and a return to a more precise style of painting, i.e. representation. The paintings are beautifully constructed but how are they intended? Burton quotes: "The

20th century woman is a packaged commodity. She is presented in advertisements, the entertainment field, and men's magazines as an inanimate object divested of her humanity, leaving her only as a sex symbol....In my work, I express my love for the container and especially for its contents." A 1967 painting from this series, *The Three Graces After Rubens*, depicts the garter belt clad graces in a tender Rubensque burlesque that brims with sensuous vitality. Like deKooning's *Women*, we are confronted with sexually-charged imagery that ambiguously exploits the stereotype the artist proposes to challenge. Dennis Burton's March exhibition at the Winchester invites a unique opportunity to view these erotic paintings (with post-modern eyes), and to reconsider or redefine their relevance thirty years later.

Linda Giles

MILLENNIA / OPEN SPACE

MARCH 14 - 18, 2000

FIVE DAYS
POETRY
MUSIC
DANCE
PERFORMANCE
MANSELL GIRLS
COLLABORATION
DANCE/MUSIC
CASSANDRA MILLER
MUSIC/PAINTINGS
CLAUDIA NICOLETTI
POETRY
MUSIC
DANIEL LASKAVIN
DANCE
ART
NOTHING CHANGES
NOTHING REMAINS THE SAME
OPEN SPACE/MILLENNIA



Portrait Commission of Cynthia Kelly,
Dennis Burton, 1965,
oil on canvas
90 x 110 cm