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Découvrir la revue

Citer ce compte rendu
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 positionalities. 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 Cotton, Prudence Howard, Mabel Lockerby, Mabel MacKinnon, Lilias 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 'Famly Ties' (Chapter Five) or 'Surviving as Painters in the Great Depression' (Chapter Seven), Meadowcroft provides a long overdue discussion of the contributions of such women painters, and to their achievement as artists. What is 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 Annie Savage, for example, grey buildings, vertical windows, and sharply outlined trees stretch skyward, as bent figures and horse-drawn carriages brace against the winter snow. The effect, despite the monochromatic colours, is one of bluntness: towering structures countered by dwarfed figures press against their upward thrust. A force of similar magnitude, but very different in mood, permeates the still-life entitled Lilacs (c. 1938) by Sarah Robertson. Here uncouth blooming extends outward, now toward the viewer, now away, against a window pane through which 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 Lilias Torrance Newton, or Autumn (or Girl with apple) (1942) by Prudence Wead. 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 acknowledgment 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 their 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 contributions of Christine di Stefano: gender is basic in ways that we have yet to fully understand. How 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 aportia within contemporary theory, as a recurring paradox, question, dead end, or temporary theory: as a recurring testament evokes a metaphor for these artists' scariant 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 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 dilate the three-dimensional into two-dimensional, thus providing a long overdue discussion of the contributions of such women painters, and of the ways in which women navigated these in order to carry out their creative work.

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Golub's While the Crime is Blazing show is a contro-
styled. Godless Golub's While the Crime is Blazing show is a contro-
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texts define classic struggles of self in

terrogations within himself (anger,
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By the 1970s, several series of paint-
ings including, Mercenaries, Riots, White Squad and Horsing Around

Leon Golub's paintings are exis-
tential wholists corted tales of

America's moral decline and third

world paramilitary law. Somehow the brutality is sexual, explicit, provoca-
tive. In the 1960s, Golub was one of a

very few American painters ad-
dering the Vietnam War in his work.

in the early 1960s when the art dealers rediscover-
golded 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 interroga-
tors, mercenaries, of abstruse vio-

cence, torture, coercion, and brutal-

ity are now well known to art

audiences yet his recent work is less

well known. Disjunctive and frag-

mentary, Golub's most recent work

looks postModern, sanitized and re-

alized. His love of Mexican mural-

ist Orozco's early work shines through,

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In a global economy where natural resources are traded for big bucks and exported far too often to sustainably if we were magically privy 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 highbred 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 live 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.

"...planting the metaphor of a vine in the urban environment... Remains of the vine still visible..."}

In conversation with Birch, I was also informed that Morrow’s 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 presented with a bench and a lawn chair. This work is a diptych with one side facing directly into the sky and the other facing away. The right side is included within the body of the cloud. These works were created as means of dealing with death. Morrow’s work is presented with a bench and a lawn chair. The creation of personal symbols through appropriating pop culture iconography sets up a visual dialect that the viewer can decipher and emotionally respond to.
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.

TOM DEAN
April 2000, Edward Day Gallery
Chaos, alchemy, wonder bread does, 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 XLVIII pre Y2K and comes up smiling. But behind every smiling face is a grinning skull. So to the XLVIII pre Y2K and comes up smiling. But behind every smiling face is a grinning skull.

aforemost artist the Edward Day Gallery maybe a fine opportunity 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 lapse of thinking) I am feeling very patriotic right now.

Elizabeth Fearon

REVIEW

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.

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 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 artists 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 avante-garde. Intense psychological content and compositional simplicity blend in the fragment and the whole in which the inductive character of the work is in the end its strength.

Michael J. Moiter

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Membre de l’Association Professionnelle des Galeries d’Art du Canada
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 community 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, collects erotic works from many of Canada’s leading Native artists. A few pieces may be familiar—Daphne Odjig’s naughty but morally instructual ‘Smoke House’ works—but others are surprises, I don’t remember seeing Norval Morrisseau’s huge, entwined male couple in his collectable 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 Kiedel’s international group show exploring cuteness, Fluffy (The Dunlop Art Gallery, Oct. 16-Jan. 2). While this trend has been around a few years, Kiedel 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 Kelley, 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
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' research in Kamchatka, Russia.

CARROLL TAYLOR-LINDOE
Trépanier Baer Gallery
March 2000

The Trépanier Baer Gallery's inter-Continuum 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.

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 safety. 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.

WYNONA MULCASTER
Virginia Christopher Galleries

As Wynona Mulcaster, age 89, 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 found in many places. Mulcaster 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 streams 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 rich clay and earthy shadow within crochets, scrubbrush thickets, and hints of colour with the hearty flower survivors. Her delicate touch with the raw beauty onto canvas invigorates it.

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 hearty yet fragile work of this exceptional landscape artist.

Anne Severson

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.

WIE DES ARTS N° 177 | 85
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 Gasparr 780.426.2122.

VANCOUVER

VISIONS

This winter Vancouver, brassy jewel in the crown of the Pacific Rim, pauses on the cusp of the Millennium 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 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 the twenties and thirties, these artists declared a hope for Utopian harmony between the burgeoning industrial society of Vancouver and the 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." The show opens 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 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 Conlon. 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 utopian musings from a vertiginous vantage point.

Elephant Living in a Community-Built Neighborhood, Eleanor Bond, 1998
cassandra miller, portrait

March 14-16, 2000
five days

petey
music
collaboration
dance/musica
collaboration
dance/musica

nothing changes
nothing remains the same

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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 presents 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
Schoolhouse, Treehouse, Water-Allyson Clay. Margaret Naylor's Gallery accompanied by a catalogue tower, Storyteller), employ ordinary field notes originated at Surrey Art submissions from the community. An image wall will result as a call for recognized by curator Lisa Baldissera, the exhibition that resonates with humor, 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 Rauna Lumpur, Malaysia, from June 4, 2000.

Joan Richardson

VICTORIA

MILLENIARIUM 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 fictitious narratives, a series of questions to be continued, are constructed in the future/present. An investigative or transgressive voice unrolls 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...

Claude Tousignant: INTROSPECTIVE

Dennis Burton
GARTER BELT/INTERFACE, REVISITING OUR AESTHETIC SITES
February 3 - 26, 2000
March 2 - 31, 2000

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

Contemporary, influenced by abstraction, some artists share history 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 radiically frontal. The reserved Frenchman met Barnett Newman in the 1960's and was most impressed with his new austere vocabulary of abstraction. 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 Setimales 3-69-47 (1969); some Monochromes and some works on paper. Simultaneously (1960's), then Toronto painter Dennis Burton (b. Lithbridge, 1933), painted his controversial project "The Garter Belt Series". This work was considered to 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 Reubens, depicts the garter belt clad graces in a tender Rubensque burlesque that brims with sensuous vitality. Like de Kooning'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 modem eyes), and to reconsider or redefine their relevance thirty years later.

Linda Giles

MILLENIUM / OPEN SPACE
March 14 - 18, 2000

FIVE DAYS
POLITY
MUSIC
DANCE
PERFORMANCE
MANSELL GIRLS
COLLABORATION
DANCE/MUSIC
CASSANDRA MILLER
MUSC/PINTINGS
CLAUDIA NICOLETTI
POETRY
MUSIC
DANIEL LASKAYIN
DANCE
ART
NOTHING CHANGES
NOTHING REMAINS THE SAME
OPEN SPACE/MILLENIUM

Claude Tousignant: INTROSPECTIVE

Dennis Burton

50 x 560 cm.