

DIAZ CONTEMPORARY

MEDIA RELEASE

Elizabeth McIntosh

Young Night Thought

October 19 – November 25, 2006

Opening Thursday, October 19 6–9 pm

Artist in attendance

It is with great pleasure that Diaz Contemporary presents its first solo exhibition of gallery artist Elizabeth McIntosh's work. *Young Night Thought* features a selection of McIntosh's new paintings; there has been an unequivocal excitement over the new directions Elizabeth McIntosh has taken over the past few years in her work, and these new tendencies are shown off to their best advantage in this selection of canvases.

As a founding member of the Toronto collective Painting Disorders in the early 1990s, McIntosh has been looking at the medium of painting through a backward glance at the tropes of Modernism and Geometric Abstraction for years. Repeating basic forms such as circles, squares, rectangles, stripes, and ovals were a medium for responding to these earlier painting tenets. With the recent introduction of the triangle to her canvases, the artist has been playing with the inherently two-dimensional form of this shape, that when multiplied forms the basis for three-dimensional structures such as the geodesic dome.

By using an intentional and studied irregularity in her references to Geometric Abstraction, and repetitions of geometric shapes, McIntosh opens up a new dialogue with the historical precedents for this type of work; where absolutes regarding a channeling of transcendental information was once the norm, McIntosh now forefronts flaws and formal slubs. These purposeful interruptions in the potential for perfection and regularity are partnered with McIntosh's ebullient palette to create new narrative possibilities.

McIntosh's well-thought out compositional awkwardness creates different zones of activity—triangles undulating off the edge of the canvas, girded by narrow horizontal bands at the bottom from which legs may sprout. Calling to mind the horizon of landscape painting, but now supported by spindly limbs, spatial depth is created, then has the ocular rug pulled out from underneath it. A resultant investigation of the potentially narrow gap between representation and abstraction is created.

Elizabeth McIntosh is currently included in the Vancouver Art Gallery's *PAINT* exhibition, on view until February 27, 2007, featuring a selection of works by the upcoming generation of painters working in British Columbia, contextualised amongst the work of the artists who preceded them, including Jessica Stockholder, Robert Youds, and others. McIntosh has recently exhibited at the Clementine Gallery (NYC), Perugi Artecontemporanea (Padua, Italy), Hallwalls (Buffalo, New York), and at the Santa Monica Museum of Art (Santa Monica California,) amongst others. McIntosh studied in Canada before moving to London to do her graduate work at Chelsea College of Art. In Vancouver, McIntosh teaches painting at the Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design.

DIAZ CONTEMPORARY

Paulette Phillips

Monster Tree

October 19 – November 25, 2006

Opening Thursday, October 19 6–9 pm

Artist in attendance

Diaz Contemporary is pleased to present its first showing of work by Toronto-based artist Paulette Phillips; Phillips has developed an international exhibition record with shows of her installation work. Often haunting, in Phillips' pieces a leitmotif of humour can also be discerned, though even then it may well be black.

Phillips' oeuvre is comprised of works built upon an idea discovered, an object reconsidered, a monument redone, or a history excavated. Shooting in 16mm and 35mm film which she presents as liminally elaborate installations, Phillips' works are subtle but detailed investigations into the wanderings of human moral senses as evinced by subtle traces of various histories or perverse occurrences. At Diaz Contemporary, Paulette Phillips will be presenting her work *Monster Tree* (2006), commissioned by the London organisation Parabola for the exhibition *Repatriating the Ark*.

Monster Tree continues Phillips' interest in revealing and exploiting overlooked or forgotten dramas, and unseen peculiarities. The piece grew from two discoveries: the first occurred while the artist was visiting Paris' 18th century Musée Fragonard, and came across abnormal animal specimens presented as "monstres". This allowed Phillips to make the connection between the word 'monster' and 'demonstrate'. Etymologically, the word 'monster' comes from the Latin *monstrare*, meaning 'to show' and *monstrum* meaning 'portent', 'unnatural event', or 'monster'. These malformed specimens were therefore sites for the conflation of the two meanings of the root word—'demonstrating', and 'monstrosity'. The second discovery involved the filmic capture and subsequent elaboration upon a unique arboreal malformation Phillips stumbled across in the tourist-laden and spectacle-oriented world of Niagara Falls. In *Monster Tree*—presented on a flat panel monitor in the gallery's East exhibition space—Phillips focuses on an aberration overlooked in a location devoted to the spectacular.

Paulette Phillips has recently exhibited at The Museum of Garden History (London, UK), The ICA (London, UK), Heidelberger Kunstverein (Heidelberg), La Maison Européenne de la Photographie (Paris, FR), Sparwasser (Berlin), Danielle Arnaud Contemporary Art (London, UK), Oakville Galleries (Oakville, ON), The Ottawa Art Gallery (Ottawa), and others. Her work is in private and public collections, including The Museum of Modern Art, NYC. Paulette Phillips lives and works in Toronto, where she teaches film, video, and installation at the Ontario College of Art and Design.

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