

# art

galleries • museums • artist's talks



Mary Ann Barkhouse's *Persevere* makes you wonder if it's kitsch or if it's art.

canadiana

## Tastefully Canuck

Beaver Tales tries to transcend kitsch By FRAN SCHECHTER

**BEAVER TALES: CANADIAN ART AND DESIGN** at University of Toronto Art Centre (15 King's College Circle), to December 6. 416-978-1838. Rating: NNN

WHAT MAKES ART CANADIAN? *Beaver Tales* takes a simple thematic approach, gathering craftspeople's interpretations of iconic national flora and fauna: the Canada goose, the trillium, evergreen trees, antlered animals, the beaver and the maple leaf.

Exemplary artworks by Emily Carr, the *Group of Seven*, David Milne, Charles Pachter, Joyce Wieland, Mary Anne Barkhouse and others complement the artisanal pieces.

Official symbolism – in items like designs for coins, the Centennial maple leaf logo, Harold Town's op-art trillium painting for Ontario Place and maple-leaf-ornamented furniture and china commissioned by Adrienne Clarkson – gives the show a slightly governmental feel. No sur-

prise that Heritage Canada is one of its sponsors.

The survey of design history goes from 19th-century furniture and silver, a souvenir Wedgwood-style teapot bearing a Group of Sevenish blowing tree and Arts-and-Crafts-style program-cover illustrations for what must have been a much classier CNE to Thor Hansen's '50s-modern outdoor-themed rec room drapery fabric. Pottery from Six Nations, a quill basket, Northwest Coast jewellery and a small Bill Reid totem pole give First Nations a voice.

Standout contemporary pieces, some better known than others, include Rob Southcott's four wooden chairs joined by tall, intertwining "antlers," a beaver-chewed version of Frank Gehry's cardboard armchair, Amy Bélanger's charming beaver-dam necklace, Frédéric Guibrunet and Didier Boursin's spiky white paper maple leaf light fixture and Todd Falkowsky's deadpan antlers-on-a-stick coat rack.

The curators claim the artists "transcend the pitfalls of kitsch or cliché," but pieces that don't quite make the leap, like Betty Sylvester's Teepee teapot for Clarice Cliff, its spout a naked war-bonneted brave (where's Kent Monkman when we need him?), add a bit of politically incorrect fun.

As the owner of a modest collection of "souvenirs of nowhere," I wouldn't mind seeing a few more wacky examples of the lowbrow tourist aesthetic, because, let's face it, tasteful Canadiana can be a bit boring. @

art@nowtoronto.com

installation

## Give Kruger more space

Art Metropole is too cramped for T.O. artist's new installation By LEAH SANDALS

**NESTOR KRUGER** at Art Metropole (788 King West), to November 1. 416-703-4400. Rating: NN

LAST YEAR, IN A SOLO SHOW AT GOOD-water Gallery on Queen East, Toronto artist Nestor Kruger built an ingenious plywood intrusion from the street into the gallery, totally changing the architecture and experience of the space.

Unfortunately, this exhibit at Art Metropole pales by comparison.

Two rectangular cases are placed opposite each other – one filled with water, the other with air. Accompanying these structures are two large rectangular prints in the vein of lithographs of old dressers – one white on black, the other black on white. Finally, near the entrance, there's a small circular array of black dots on the white wall.

Part of the problem is that in order

for the piece to work, it needs a spare, pristine space it can dominate. Given such an environment, its reductive riff on emptiness and fullness, figure and ground, oblivion and existence would resonate a lot better.

But multiples-focused Art Metropole is not that kind of space. It's a cluttered, heterogeneous, colourful – and to be clear, utterly enjoyable in its own right – resource that offers its own artistic highlights. In fact, people should drop by to check out shop-display treats like Derek Liddington's Reading Machine for Dr. NO, Paige Gratland's *Celebrity Lesbian Fist* series and Tom Dean's spotted versions of old *Globe* and *Mails*. There's plenty of smaller stuff, like buttons and magazines, to linger over and enjoy, too.

Some might say the beauty of Kruger's work in this context is the uneasy combination of his high-end formal rigor with the more casual environment of Art Met. But really, I'd rather



Nestor Kruger's *Oblivion* can't dominate the gallery space the way it should.

wait and see what he does when he has the total run of a space again. @

art@nowtoronto.com

# exhibitions

All listings appear alphabetically by venue. Openings are shows or events that begin this week. Ongoing shows/events have already opened. Last Chance close this week. Museum shows are listed at the end. Admission is free unless otherwise noted.

● Critics' pick (highly recommended)

### How to place a listing

All listings are free. Send to: art@nowtoronto.com, fax to 416-364-1166 or mail to Art Listings, NOW Magazine, 189 Church, Toronto M5B 1Y7. Include gallery name with address and phone number or website, artist's name and medium, show's open and close dates, and reception times. Listings may be edited for space. Deadline is the Thursday before publication at 5 pm.

## openings

**ANGELL** Painting: James Olley, Oct 24-Nov 22, reception 6-9 pm Oct 24. 890 Queen W. 416-530-0444.

**ANNEX ART CENTRE** Painting: Michael J Seward, Oct 23-30, reception 6-8 pm Oct 23. 1073 Bathurst. 416-516-0110.

**ART WITH HEART** Gala auction for Casey House, Oct 28, 5:30 pm. \$125. Carlu, 444 Yonge. 416-962-4040 ext 236.

**AVENUE PRESENTATION GALLERY** Glass: Don't Throw Stones (Sandra Ainsley Gallery), Oct 25-Nov 10. 210 St Clair W. 416-486-6645.

**AWOL GALLERY** Surface Dwellers group show, Oct 23-Nov 2, reception 7-10 pm Oct 24. 76 Ossington. 416-535-5637.

**BLACKWOOD GALLERY** Painting/video: Etienne Zack and Jesse Jones, to Nov 9, bus tour 11:30 am-5 pm Oct 26. U of T, 3359 Mississauga N. 905-828-3789.

**CEDAR RIDGE** Benefit for Boys and Girls Club of E-Scarborough: Catherine Eichstedt, Oct 26-Nov 1. Painting: Gayle Fehr, Jean Rennie and George Huff, to Oct 24. 225 Confederation. 416-395-4026.

**CONVENIENCE** Installation: Gordon Lebrecht, Oct 28-Nov 25. Parkdale International Art Fair, to Oct 27. 58 Lansdowne. conveniencegallery.com.

**CORKIN** Thaddeus Holownia, book launch 2-5 pm Oct 25. Photos: Harold Edgerton and Frank Mädler, to Oct 25. 55 Mill. 416-979-1980.

**DORIS MCCARTHY GALLERY** Installation: Bill Burns, Oct 29-Dec 17, reception/artist's talk 5-9 pm Oct 29 (bus from 401 Richmond W, 6 pm). 1265 Military Trail. 416-287-7007.

**ENGINE** Painting: Martin Oulette, Oct 23-Nov 16, reception 7-10 pm Oct 23. 1112 Queen W. 416-531-9905.

**FOUNTAIN** Painting: Tobey C Anderson, Oct 23-Nov 2, reception 7-10 pm Oct 23. 652 Queen W (rear). 647-519-0420.

**GALES GALLERY** Photos/painting: Heather Williams and Danielle MacDonald, Oct 27-30, reception 7-9 pm Oct 28. Sculpture: Meiko Maruyama and Robert Clements, to Oct 24. York U, 105 Accolade W, 4700 Keele. 416-736-5187.

**GALLERY 44** Photos: Katja Høst and IM Martinez, Oct 24-Nov 29, reception 6-9 pm Oct 24. 401 Richmond W #120. 416-979-3941.

**IE GALLERY** Painting/drawing: Katie Pretti, to Nov 16, reception 7-10 pm Oct 24. 1183 Dundas W. 416-532-8467.

**HART HOUSE** Photos: Someone Else's Treasure: pit-mining in Tanzania, 6 pm Oct 29. 7 Hart House Circle.

**JAPANESE CANADIAN CULTURAL CENTRE** Toronto Potters, Oct 23-25. 6 Garamond. 416-441-2345.

**JESSICA BRADLEY** Installation: Jed Lind, Oct 23-Nov 19. 1450 Dundas W. 416-537-3125.

**KATHARINE MULHERIN** Sensible group show; painting: Kelly Palmer, Oct 23-Nov 15. 1082 Queen W. 416-537-8827.

**KEEP SIX CONTEMPORARY** Explicit Fantastic group show, to Nov 30, films/panel 7-10 pm Oct 24. 938 Bathurst. 647-436-6594.

**KOHL GALLERY** Seeing The Land group show, Oct 23-Nov 2. 282 Eglinton W. 647-430-9185.

**KOMA GALLERY** Jewellery: Baby Steinberg, Oct 24, 8-11 pm. 1239 Queen W. 416-857-6730.

**LABSPACE STUDIO** The Lab Session 4.0: Deconstructing Hip, Oct 25, 7 pm-midnight. \$10. 2A Pape. 416-836-1516.

**L.A.M.P.** Great Pumpkin Art Festival, 10 am-3 pm Oct 25. \$5. 158 Fifth. trailart.org.

**LATITUDE 44** Option Art Awards (benefit for W Toronto Junction Historical Society), 7 pm Oct 23. 2900 Dundas W. 416-769-2900.

**LEONARDO** Painting/photos: Julie McGregor and Bret Culp, Oct 28-Nov 19, reception 6-9 pm Oct 28. Painting: Bisa Bennett, to Oct 25. 133 Avenue Rd. 416-924-7296.

**LOOP** Painting/prints: Laura Cirulis and Jane LowBeer, Oct 23-Nov 16, reception 6-9 pm Oct 23, reception 2-5 pm Oct 25. 1174 Queen W. 416-516-2581.

**MERCER UNION** Installation: Gwen MacGregor and Sandra Rechco, Christof Migone, Oct 24-Nov 29, artists' talk/reception 7 pm Oct 24. 1286 Bloor W. 416-536-1519.

**NEILSON PARK CREATIVE CENTRE** Etobicoke Printmakers; prints: Dorothy Wilde, Oct 28-Nov 16. ShadowBoxing 2008 fundraiser, to Oct 25. 56 Neilson. 416-622-5294.

**NEW GALLERY** Textile: Mary Lou Freel, Oct 29-Nov 16. Jewellery: Lily Yung, to Oct 26. 906 Queen W. 416-588-1200.

**NICHOLAS METIVIER** Photos: Robert Polidori, Oct 23-Nov 22, reception 6-8 pm Oct 23. 451 King W. 416-205-9000.

**OAKVILLE GALLERIES** Burning Cold group show, to Nov 23 (Centennial, 120 Navy). Video: Deirdre Logue, to Nov 16. Bus tour 11:30 am-5 pm Oct 26 (\$10, oakvillegalleries.com). 905-844-4402.

**OCAD** Artist's talks: MC McCain, 6:45 pm Oct 23. Zhiyuan Cong, 7 pm Oct 29. Design For The Other 90%, to Jan 25, 2009 (Professional Gallery. 100 McCaul. 416-977-6000.

**PROJECT 165** Drawing: Ryan Solski and Dan Rocca, to Nov 10, reception 6-11 pm Oct 23. 165 August. 416-838-5730.

**PROPELLER** Painting: Jelena Krstic and Judith Geher, to Nov 2, reception 7-10 pm Oct 23. 984 Queen W. 416-504-7142.

**7A\*11D** International Festival of Performance Art, Oct 23-Nov 2. Free-\$5. Nights Xpace (58 Ossington), days at Toronto Free (1277 Bloor W). 416-822-3219. 7a-11d.ca.

**SHERBOURNE HEALTH CENTRE** Painting (benefit): Ronzig, 1-4 pm Oct 25. 333 Sherbourne. 416-820-6036.

**STEPHEN BULGER** Lutz Dille, memorial 2-5 pm Oct 26. Photos: Fritz Spiess; Hunting group show, to Oct 25. 1026 Queen W. 416-504-0574.

**STUDIO 203** Painting: Riad Jisri, Oct 25-Nov 8, reception 3-7 pm Oct 25. 28 Industrial. 416-322-5113.

**SUSAN HOBBS** Installation: Brian Groombridge, Oct 23-Nov 29, reception 7-9 pm Oct 23. 137 Tecumseth. 416-504-3699.

**URBANSCAPE** Drawing/multimedia: Ruth Comfort and Iliya Blanusia, Oct 23-Nov 12, reception 7-10 pm Oct 24. 2959 Dundas W. 416-850-0021.

**VIAPÉ** Video: Paul Wong, Oct 25-Nov 22, reception/artist's talk 1-5 pm Oct 25. 401 Richmond W. 416-351-1317.

**WOMEN'S ART ASSOCIATION** Painting: Suzanne Dennis and Janice Hurlbut, Oct 24-26, reception 6-9 pm Oct 24. 23 Prince Arthur. 416-979-2060.

**WORKSHOP GALLERY** Painting: Iain Bailey, Oct 23-Nov 3, reception 7 pm Oct 23. 1018 Coxwell. 416-425-9348.

**WRONGBAR** SAVAC 15th anniversary party, Oct 24. \$15. 1279 Queen W. 416-516-8000.

## ongoing

**A SPACE HOW:** Engagements With The "H Wood Indian," to Nov 21. 401 Richmond W. 416-979-9633.

**AKAU** Video/photomural: Vera Frenkel, to Nov 22. 1186 Queen W. 416-504-5999.

**ALDRIDGE ART** Painting: Mendelson Joe, Nov 15. 161 Gerrard E. 416-964-8824.

**ALISON SMITH** Sculpture: Nikola Nikola, 6. 1410 Dundas W. 416-516-8859.

**ART GALLERY OF YORK U** Installation: Carcagnini and Rodrigo Matheus, to Dec 7. Ade East bldg, 4700 Keele. 416-736-5160.

**ART METROPOLE** Installation: Nestor Kruger, Nov 1. 788 King W. 416-703-4400.

**ARTCORE/FABRICE MARCOLINI** Painting: McGinness, to Nov 15. 55 Mill. 416-920-1111.

**BAILEY FINE ARTS** Video installation: Ke Monkman, to Nov 15. Sat noon-6 and 19. 243 College. 416-925-2733.

**BAU-XI** Painting/prints: Ted Fullerton and Griebel, to Oct 31. 340 Dundas W. 416-979-1111.

**BIRCH LIBRALATO** Painting: Will Gorlin, to Nov 15. 129 Tecumseth. 416-365-3003.

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