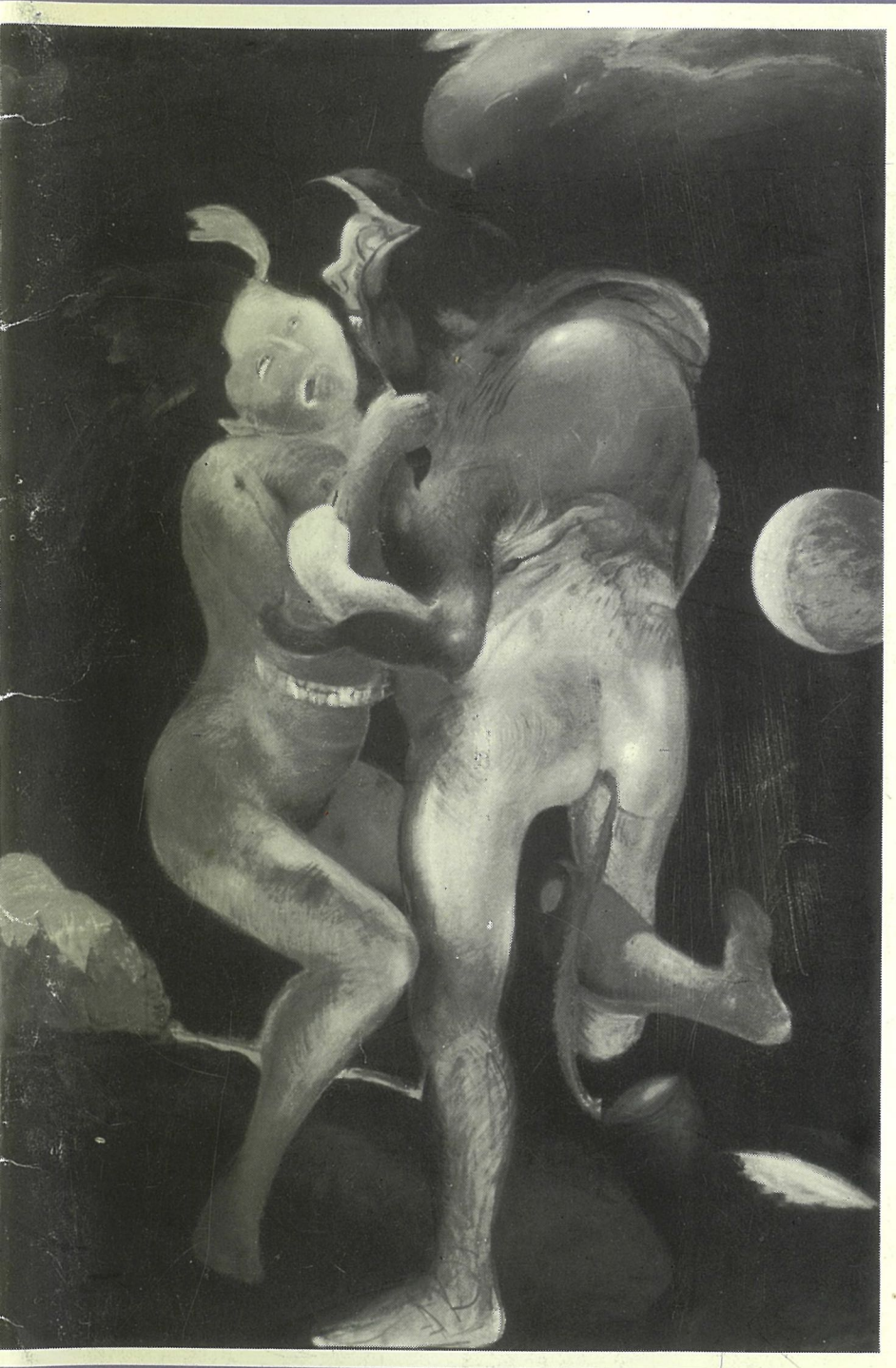


MATRIART

A Canadian Feminist Art Journal

VOLUME 2/NUMBER 4 1992

\$3.00



Women
Art & Age

**Women, Art
and Age**

*We have no markers but ourselves.
We are surrounded by signs that
invalidate our presence.*
(Nicole Brossard)

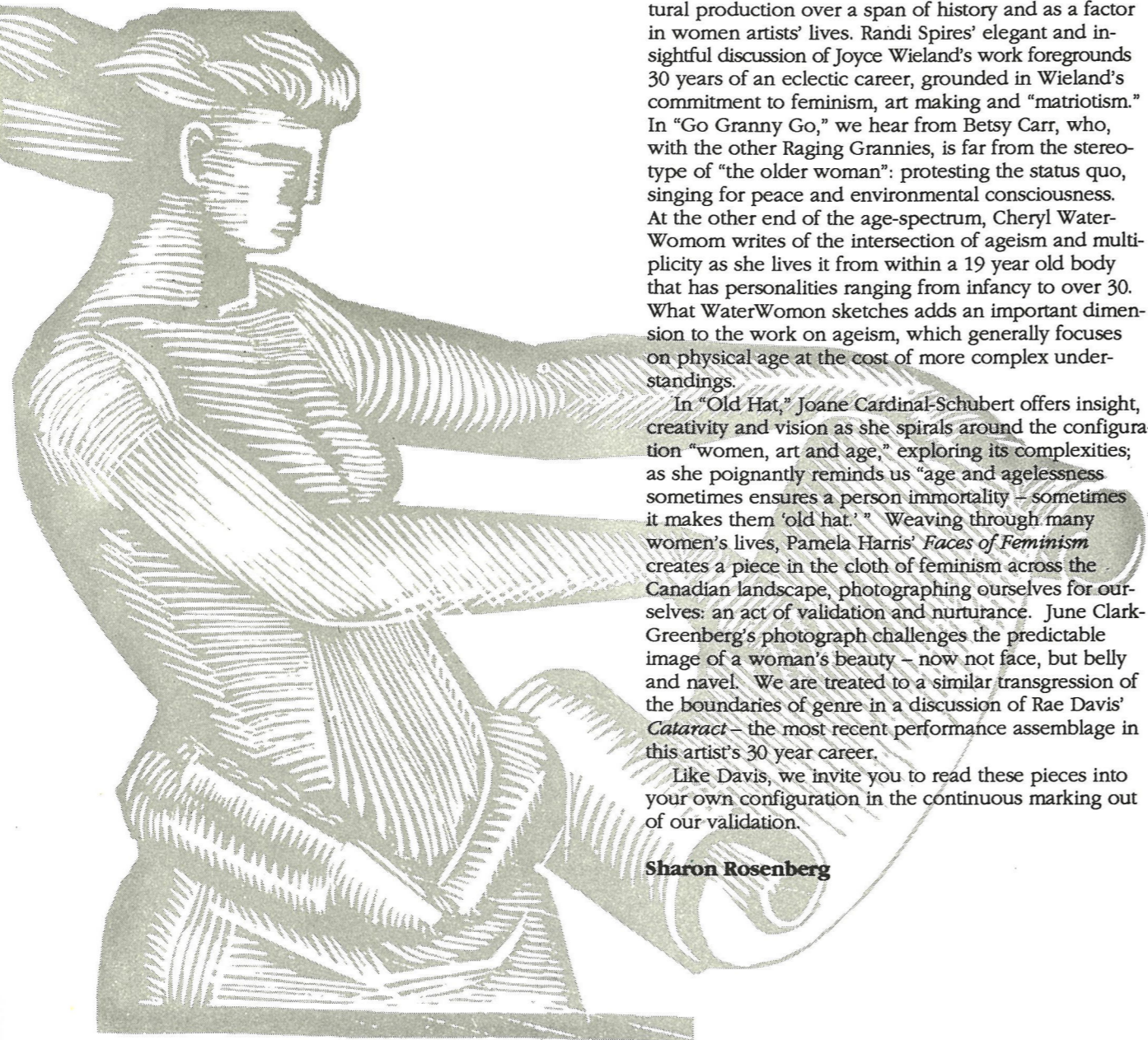
In painting, photography, performance art, film-making, story telling and song writing each of the contributors in this issue of *Matriart* is inscribing signs that validate their presence: rendering the complexities of how we differently live age, aging, ageism. Against the patriarchal lies of femininity that are endlessly repeated in endeavours to keep us "static" – the forever young and timeless face/body – these artists and writers are claiming the strengths, clarity and beauty that are expressions of the women they have become/are becoming.

The contributions in this issue reflect a double interpretation of age: both as a reference to women's cultural production over a span of history and as a factor in women artists' lives. Randi Spires' elegant and insightful discussion of Joyce Wieland's work foregrounds 30 years of an eclectic career, grounded in Wieland's commitment to feminism, art making and "matriotism." In "Go Granny Go," we hear from Betsy Carr, who, with the other Raging Grannies, is far from the stereotype of "the older woman": protesting the status quo, singing for peace and environmental consciousness. At the other end of the age-spectrum, Cheryl WaterWomom writes of the intersection of ageism and multiplicity as she lives it from within a 19 year old body that has personalities ranging from infancy to over 30. What WaterWomom sketches adds an important dimension to the work on ageism, which generally focuses on physical age at the cost of more complex understandings.

In "Old Hat," Joane Cardinal-Schubert offers insight, creativity and vision as she spirals around the configuration "women, art and age," exploring its complexities; as she poignantly reminds us "age and agelessness sometimes ensures a person immortality – sometimes it makes them 'old hat.'" Weaving through many women's lives, Pamela Harris' *Faces of Feminism* creates a piece in the cloth of feminism across the Canadian landscape, photographing ourselves for ourselves: an act of validation and nurturance. June Clark-Greenberg's photograph challenges the predictable image of a woman's beauty – now not face, but belly and navel. We are treated to a similar transgression of the boundaries of genre in a discussion of Rae Davis' *Cataract* – the most recent performance assemblage in this artist's 30 year career.

Like Davis, we invite you to read these pieces into your own configuration in the continuous marking out of our validation.

Sharon Rosenberg



MATRIART

Vol.2, No.4, 1992

MATRIART JOURNAL: A Canadian Feminist Art Journal is published by the Women's Art Resource Centre (WARC), a non-profit service organization.

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Please contact WARC at (416) 324-8910 for further information and advertising rates.

WARC is funded by the Canada Council, Ontario Arts Council, The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto-Cultural Affairs Division, Toronto Arts Council, Ministry of Communications and Culture, Employment and Immigration Canada, Secretary of State and WARC membership.

Cover Artwork: Joyce Wieland, "Paint Phantom," oil on canvas, 1983-84.

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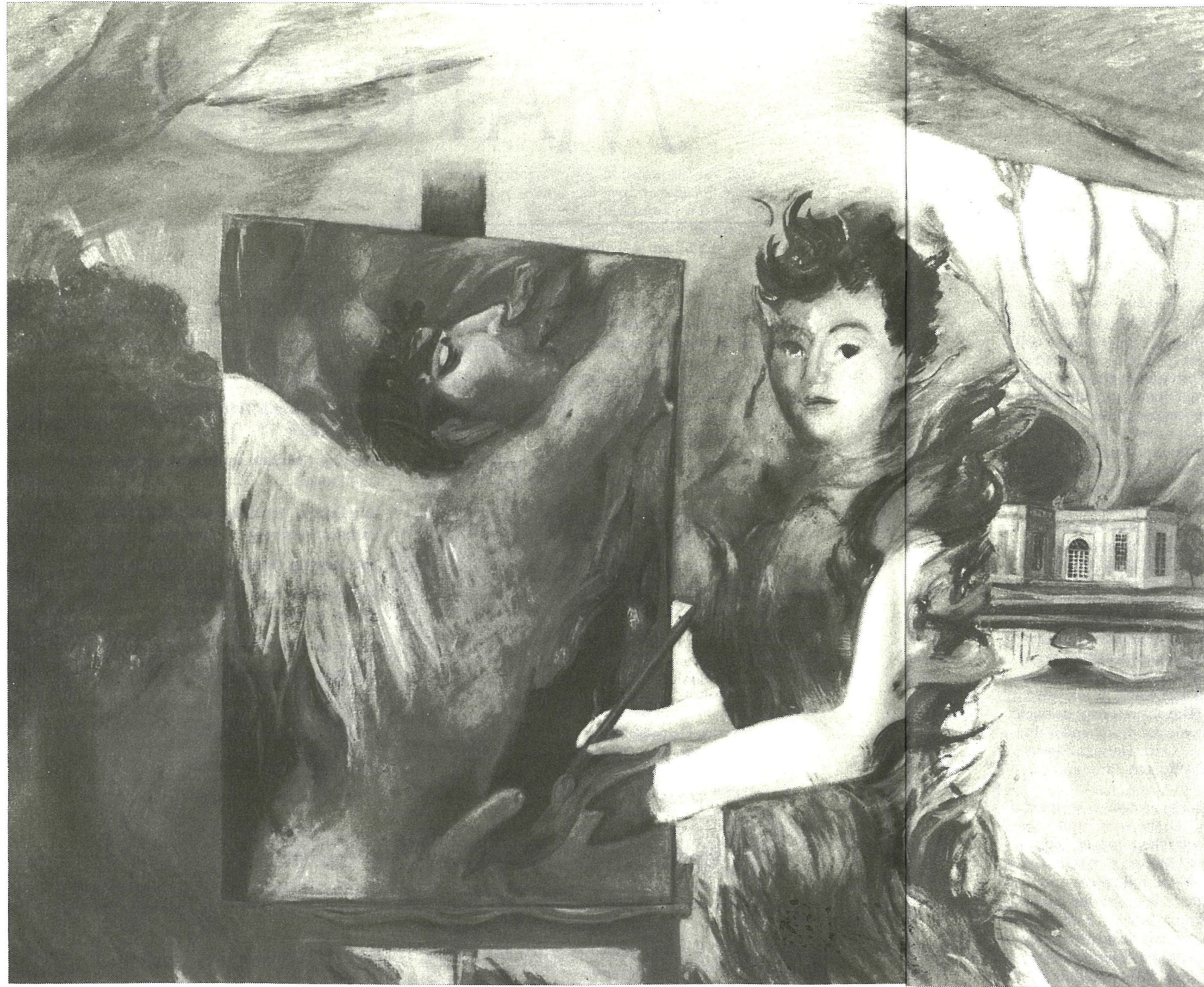
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Joyce Wieland, *The Artist On Fire*, 1983, oil on canvas, 106.7 x 129.5cm

By Randi Spires

JOYCE WIELAND

TRUE
MATRIOT
LOVE

At the beginning of Kay Armatage's film *Artist On Fire*, Joyce Wieland stands in front of a wall-sized canvas. With broad, enthusiastic strokes she rapidly covers the space with thick, dark spirals of paint. Later in the same film she talks about her love of drawing and how, as a schoolchild, she made pocket money sketching naked women for her male classmates. This, after all, was the Depression – Wieland was born in Toronto in 1931 – long before the presence of soft porn in every corner store.

Circles and spirals have always been associated with the feminine. Circles denote wholeness and unity while also suggesting that which is cyclical and reassuringly unchanging. A spiral, on the other hand, is a circle that doesn't quite complete itself but flows genially into another, slightly different cycle. It represents the possibility of real change without undue disruption.

Circles, sexuality, ecology, and the desire to gently steer the world away from competitive patriarchal strictures have for the past 30 years been consistent themes

in the work of Joyce Wieland, Canada's most prominent female artist and the first living Canadian woman to be honoured with a retrospective at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Her work is strongly grounded in the traditional feminine, in the female body – and in the heterosexual female bawdy.

Wieland's career, from her point of view, has been happily eclectic. But "male-stream" critics have been troubled by this apparent lack of focus, finding it difficult to take seriously someone who paints; puts together constructions utilizing toys and some of the tackier elements of everyday life such as coloured plastic paper; designs patriotic quilts; and makes films.

Validation of her career has also been hampered by her association with Michael Snow, to whom she was married for 25 years. While her ties to Snow may have given her access to people and resources she might not otherwise have had, they also meant that in the eyes of the macho art world she was often seen as the better half of a rising art star, a better half who also produced artwork, not half bad at that, on her own.

Wieland's sense of female solidarity was cemented early. Her older sister, Joan, whom she worshipped, introduced young Joyce to painting, classical music and literature. Later,

For Wieland, the primary purpose of art is "to include others and to give hope."

Joan Wieland supported Joyce's decision to switch from fashion design and home economics into the fine art program at Central Technical Secondary School, despite discouragement from other relatives. Some of the strong women art teachers employed at Central Tech – such as Doris McCarthy and Virginia Luz – were instrumental in identifying Wieland's talent and have remained important role models for her all her life.

For Wieland, the art department at Central Tech was her first contact with the quirky, eccentric art world. The contrast between it and her working class household was marked and the effect liberating. She felt at home in the art department. Later, Wieland found a similarly democratic and off-the-wall environment in the experimental film community of New York, where she lived from 1963 to 1970. When there was still little prestige in and few financial awards for the making of experimental film, that milieu remained receptive to women. However, Wieland says now with disgust, once the theorists from uptown descended and there were rewards to be had, male competitiveness reasserted itself. Those who had welcomed her as an equal in earlier times pushed her out of their inner circle and marginalized her substantial contributions, omitting her entirely from the Anthology Film Archives.

Although Wieland hungered for recognition as much as anyone, she had enough integrity not to play the masculine art game: something many women have tried to do, usually with little effect. The competitiveness of the New York art scene and its war metaphors repelled her. "The abstract expressionists would get together and get drunk and fight each other," she says. Once Herman Cherry told her to her face, "Women can never be on the front line."

In contrast, Wieland has always seen art as a form of nurturing. "All the wonderful artists have nourished us with their images," she says. The purpose of both the part-time teaching that she loves and the full-time art making that has occupied the bulk of her life have been to give affirmation, "to help individuals find the creativity they have inside" so, they can lead richer lives and be better able to help solve the problems of the world.

This is a specifically feminist view. It envisions the artist as a kind of shaman, fully integrated into a social and political fabric that has a built-in capacity for growth and change. It is a vision of ecology and balance without stasis. These ideas stand in great contrast to our present-day mainstream concept of the artist as a commodity maker, as a specialized entertainer for the small elite who consider themselves cultured enough to appreciate high art, as either celebrant of or – which amounts

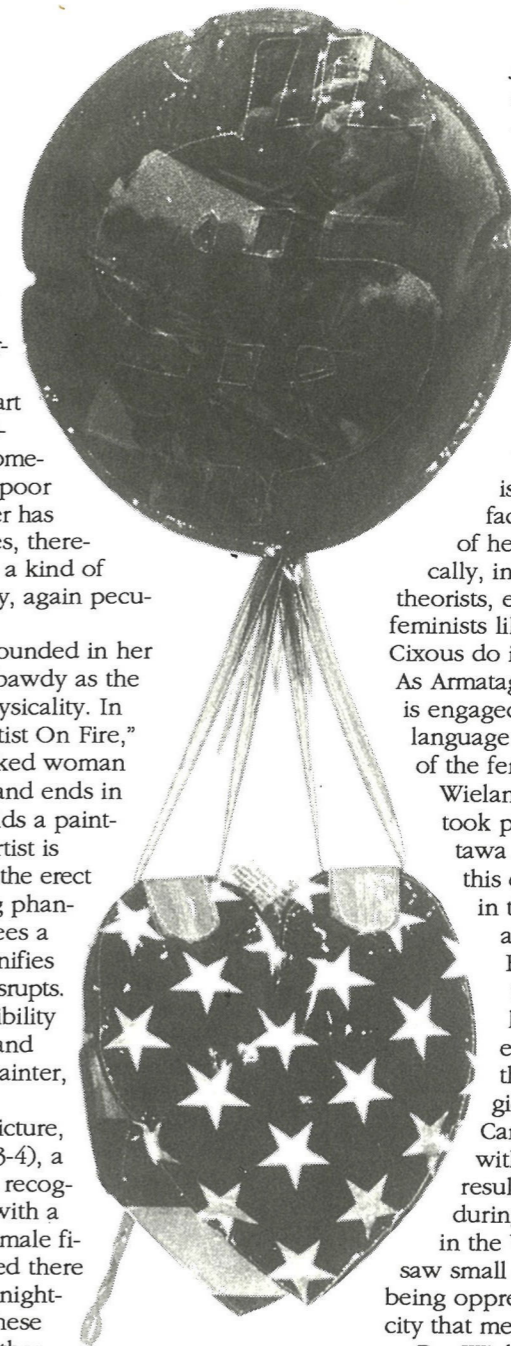
to the same thing – irrelevant to the status quo.

Norman Mailer has asserted that he writes through his penis, thereby claiming art making to be a form of adjunct male sexual activity, something women can only be poor partners to. Mordecai Richler has called writers failed athletes, thereby implying that writing is a kind of misplaced muscular activity, again peculiarly male.

Wieland's work is as grounded in her sense of the female body/bawdy as the above are in their male physicality. In her 1983 painting, "The Artist On Fire," she depicts herself as a naked woman engulfed in flames. One hand ends in a hoof, while the other holds a paintbrush tipped in fire. The artist is putting finishing touches to the erect penis of a winged, burning phantom. This is a vision that sees a creativity and desire that unifies rather than conquers and disrupts. Suggested here is the possibility of fusion between female and male, subject and object, painter, painted, and paint.

But in a slightly later picture, "Paint Phantom" (1983-4), a naked woman, again recognizably Wieland, wrestles with a grotesque, strangely-tailed male figure. Art making as depicted there is a vigorous struggle with nightmare and carnivalesque. These two visions complement rather than contradict each other. Painting is, at times, hard physical and emotional work.

Wieland's use of sexual imagery goes back a long way, before modern feminist discourse made it respectable for women to speak in sexual terms. In "Penis Wallpaper" (1962) sets of detached male genitalia float in a sea of red dots, decoratively domesticated, like so many inquisitive goldfish circling a bowl. One could not conflate these penises with the mighty phalluses of myth. They are not un-erotic, but their purpose would seem to be the enhancement of pleasure rather than threat and danger.



Joyce Wieland, *N.U.C.*, 1966, hanging, plastic & collage, 26-1/2 x 11"

Wieland's ability around this time, and even earlier, to play freely with images of sexuality is characteristically feminist, but, as Kay Armatage notes in her essay on Wieland's 1964 film, *Watersark*, the locus of this sexuality is so phallic it makes the work, in fact, "proto-feminist." That aspect of her work remains to this day. Ironically, in *Watersark*, Wieland, who abhors feminists like Lucy Irigaray and Helene Cixous do in their dense and elliptical prose. As Armatage points out, in that film Wieland is engaged in the task of discovering a filmic language based on the material subjectivity of the female body.

Wieland's first retrospective exhibition took place at the National Gallery in Ottawa in 1971, soon after she returned to this country from the U.S. While living in the States, she had several shows at the Isaac's Gallery in Toronto. Entitled *True Patriot Love*, the Ottawa show featured a number of large quilts through which Wieland expressed her appreciation for all things traditionally feminine, ecologically sound, and characteristically Canadian. Her conflation of Canada with the feminine was probably the result of her living in New York City during the years American involvement in the Vietnam war was escalating. She saw small countries (Vietnam, Canada) being oppressed with much the same audacity that men used to oppress women.

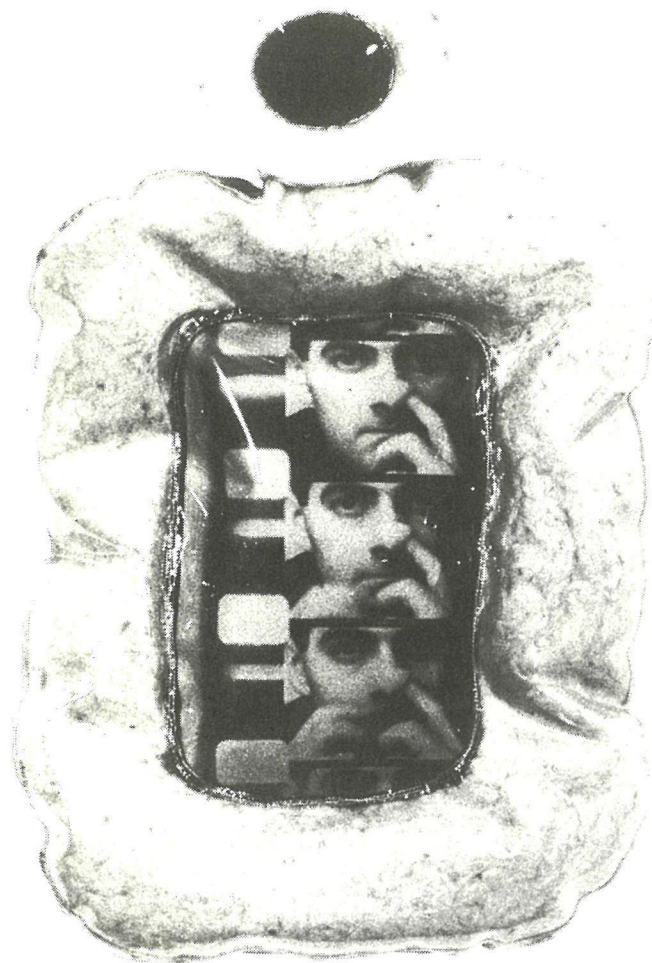
But Wieland's disinterest in theory has produced a number of contradictions. Nationalism has traditionally served as an excuse to subject women to the demands of patriarchy, and Wieland was aware of this. As early as 1964, in the film *Patriotism II*, she had phallic hot dogs marching along with American flags. And powerful as they are, how much more effective would the lithograph of the red lips mouthing "O Canada" and the quilted message "True Patriot Love" have been if they had, instead, read "True Matriot Love."

Nonetheless, the exhibit did contain two of Wieland's most elegant works: "The Water Quilt" and "Arctic Day." "The Water Quilt"

Joyce Wieland, *La raison avant la passion*, 1968, quilted cloth, assemblage, 156.5 x 302.3cm

LA RAISON
AVANT
LA PASSION

"'Reason Over Passion' eulogizes Pierre Trudeau and refers to his statement 'Reason over passion in government.' Of course 'reason over passion' is the opposite of what I believe; the two should go side by side." - Joyce Wieland



Joyce Wieland, *Larry's Recent Behaviour*, 1966, plastic & collage, 59.1 x 35.6cm

consists of 64 white flaps each embroidered with a different flower. Below each flap is a segment from a document describing a U.S. plan to divert Canadian waterways for American use. "Arctic Day" is a circular assembly of cloth cushions. Drawn in coloured pencil on each cushion is a different species of Arctic wildlife. The drawings are light and delicate, as if bleached by the 24-hour Arctic sun. The circular cushions remind one of those fragile glass bulbs, which, inverted, produce delicately floating ersatz snow. The circles also suggest family portraits, refer to our ties to the entire biological family. The circular outline of the whole piece is like the outline of the earth, giving the viewer the perspective of a space traveller or a deity.

Wieland's work with quilts predates by some years Judy Chicago's attempts to rehabilitate traditional female genres such as china painting, quilting and embroidery from the realm of craft to the domain of high art. In fact, says Wieland, Chicago got the idea for doing this and for using blatantly female imagery from Wieland, after a mutual acquaintance showed Chicago the catalogue of the *True Patriot Love* exhibit. What rankles Wieland is not that Chicago utilized her insights, but that she never saw fit to credit Wieland for them.

Wieland's and Chicago's uses of the feminine are rather different. For Wieland, the feminine and masculine sensibilities are irrevocably different. Wieland is for the most part content to work within the domestic and natural spheres and wishes mainly to ensure that their value is fully recognized. *The Dinner Party* interjected female images and concerns into monumental masculine space. Chicago's work asserts the right of women to arenas of power and display that have been appropriated by men for their exclusive use.

As Kass Banning notes, Wieland is rooted in the parochial specificities of Canadian culture. This has meant that many of the resonances of her work are lost on equally parochial American critics. In her catalogue essay, Lucy Lippard manages to mention Wieland's sketch for the "Venus of Scarborough" without remarking on the humour inherent in that title. Lauren Rabinovitz, in her catalogue essay, discusses Wieland's 1972 film *Pierre Vallieres* without talking about the closing shot of a snowy landscape. This, of course, is a visual reference to the line from Gilles Vigault's Quebecois anthem *Mon Pays*.

Reacting with depression to world conflicts in the mid-'60s, Wieland did a series of disaster paintings and mixed media works. But these sinking sailboats and crashed airplanes

have a buoyancy about them that belies their origins in distress. Like sexuality, humour and playfulness have been constant features of Wieland's work.

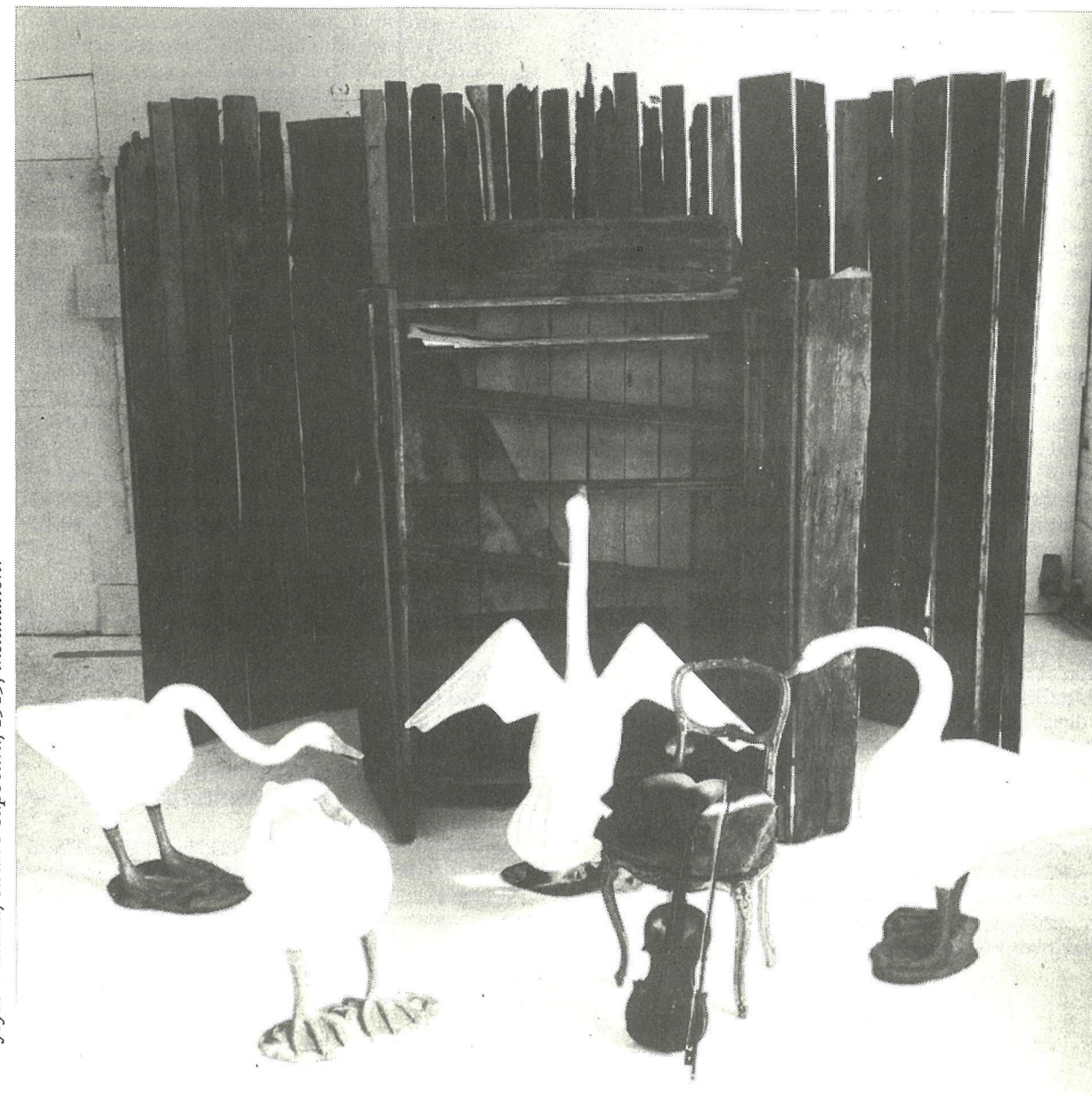
In *The Far Shore* (1976), Wieland attempted to mix her love of the Canadian landscape and her feminism with the narrative feature film form. Frame by frame, it's gorgeous to look at. The formal constructions of the film would work wonderfully in an experimental context. But as a narrative it falls flat, burdened by a script embarrassingly riddled with clichés and by a director skilled at working out cinematic structures and not at dealing with the interrelations of audience and narrative.

Wieland's concern with domestic space and her commitment to the environment are linked in a number of her films. Whether the

film is of her house cat, in *Catfood* (1968), the birds in her backyard, in *Birds at Sunrise* (1976), or her pet gerbils, in *Rat Life and Diet in North America* (1968), there is a sense of respect for the privacy and integrity of these creatures, even when they have been utilized as symbols. These films are among her best and most accessible works.

Beyond her artwork, Wieland will be remembered as a pioneer. Her generous nurturing of other women artists is widely known. For Wieland, the primary purpose of art is "to include others and to give hope." That she has done that in addition to producing a number of works of lasting value is beyond question. **M**

This article originally appeared in Canadian Forum, 1987.



Joyce Wieland, *Suan's Cupboard*, 1989, installation.

SUNDAY CHICKEN AND *Soft-spoken Tom*



Mary Anne Barkhouse, *I Have No Face*, 1990, woodcut.

Tom was a soft-spoken Cree from Cutknife. He was my father. But as far as mothers went, a trail of women moved through our lives. In the end, I was the only one who stayed.

Perhaps it was his gentle doe eyes that gave him trouble. They showed his heart and it wasn't far to his pocket book neither. However, for me, his eyes told me I could trust him completely.

With these expressive eyes, he'd look at me. "Hear how I found you? You were like a half-drowned kitten in front of the Biggar Hotel."

"Then...? what next?" I would ask just because he liked to tell the story.

"Then cook tried to get you into the hotel with a big hamburger yet. Stubborn bugger, you were. Wouldn't budge!"

His narrow shoulders would straighten proudly. He'd tilt the worn tweed hat back enjoying his role.

"There you were, a little Injun girl sitting there like the world had passed you by. So I gave you a quarter and said 'Go buy yourself a Hires root beer.'"

Tom always shook his head at this part. "You threw the quarter back and said, 'Go drink your beer yourself.'"

His eyes would sadden, "you was put here for God's punishment, to straighten me out." Woefully he'd say, "And no more beer."

He just did this for emphasis. I was just a kid, not no law enforcer RCMP. Anyway, the way I remember it, Tom went in for his beer. When he came out a large lady was draped on his arm.

I noticed them coming down the sidewalk, her stocking-legs heavy and his feet tiny. He was strutting like a rooster, silver spurs on those size 6A cowboy boot.

His boots stopped beside me. "Still here, little critter?" Head cocked, he says to the woman, "Doreen, what say you and I get a bit of fresh air?"

Sitting down beside me, he asked me in Cree, "where's your mother?"

I pretended they weren't there, especially the nosy man.

"What's your name?" he asked again in Cree.

I heard him all right. I didn't answer.

"Darned women," he said scratching his head.

"Geez, God made them funny. Talk when they want and when they don't, can't get them started!"

Sighing, he informed Doreen, "I'm going in to page the responsible party."

He was gone for a long time. Doreen offered me a stick of Juicy Fruit. I took the gum, seeing there were no strings attached.

Finally, Tom came out. "Lookit, Doreen, no one knows who she belongs to. You're a woman, what do you say?"

"Take her down to the RCMP station Tom. Let them take care of her!"

At this the little man paled. "Throw her in the coop? Naw, I ain't no stoolie!"

Looking thoughtful, he threw a sideways glance at me.

Then he looks at Doreen, "I told you I got a spread. We'll leave word here for them to put up a notice at the post office. Anyway, word will spread through the moccasin telegraph."

"You'll get us thrown in the caboose," Doreen warned with a head shake.

This was where the conversation ended for me. My eyes had fought sleep for three days, now they closed.

I awoke in a dim-lit cabin and there was an awful smell. Turning my head, I could see Doreen across the room. She was cracking eggs into a smoking frying pan.

Between the egg cracking and grease splattering sounds, Doreen and Tom argued.

"What'm I to do with a child?" she asked. "Anyway who says I'm stayin'?"

The burnt eggs smell was now overpowering. I began to cough.

"You tryin' to kill us?" questioned Tom as he swung open the cabin door.

Walking to the stove, he dismissed Doreen away with a wave. He tucked a bleached flour sack into his striped coveralls. Clouds of flour arose. Soon there was bannock on the table. Finally he made bacon and good smelling eggs.

"OK kid, you can come out now!"

I pretended to sleep.

"Last call," he said, "you come and eat or I'll leave the cookin' to Doreen here next time."

I came and sat down.

As the days stretched into weeks, the arguments went on. Doreen would protest that Tom wasn't trying hard to find my family.

"The RCMP..." she'd say, then Tom would walk away.

"It's not the Indian way!" he'd say.

I was beginning to forget my mother's face, the edges of my child memory blurring. What I did remember was her eyes which were not much different from Tom's.

"The old women are talkin'! I may not be from this reserve, but I can hear them. I can make it out. They think this one is mine!" she motioned her mouth toward me. Clanking around the kitchen, she cleaned up.

"How many times I got to tell you, her name is Janet Marie?" scolded Tom. He was changing the subject.

True, it was my name. I had held out telling for what seemed a long time. But when Tom told me his spotted pony wanted to know, I told.

Weeks became months. Old Doreen and I, it looked like we was becoming family to Tom. No more was said about notices or telling the RCMP about me.

Then we came upon hard time. I guess I must have been about five. Anyway, it was before I started school.

It began by Tom bringing home very little game. We had already eaten most of the chickens without killing the best egg layers. Tom had already sold off a horse or two.

One night, they sent me to bed early. Lying there, my ears perked up.

"I guess I'd better leave the reserve for awhile. I heard there's work puttin' up fences south," Tom stated.

High-pitched, Doreen's voice accused, "you're not going to leave me here are you? Those women, they don't like me. I saw them countin' the months I been here, just in church, too!" Her fingers drummed the table nervously.

"Oh all right," soothed Tom, "I'll figure somethin' out. The mare's foalin. Probably, I'll get a good price later. Maybe later, I can get a down payment from a guy down south I know."

Next day, Tom returned from hunting with a few squirrels.

"I'm not eatin' them gophers!" Doreen says when she sees them.

"What kind of Injun are you anyway?" Tom looked at her in surprise, "these ain't no gophers!"

Doreen sniffed haughtily and stomped away. And she stuck to her guns too. Not one tooth touched that squirrel meat.

Not even Tom's concerned looks swayed her. He eyed her ample curves worriedly. "Say Doreen, you're not gettin' skinny are you?"

Now, hunger in the eyes of your loved ones makes you do contrary things. One night both Tom and Doreen were acting contrary to the usual.

"You can stay up late," Doreen says to me. "Then we're goin' for a nice truck ride. We'll see the stars and them nice northern lights!" That night, Tom was picking out all the special stars. "See that bunch there, Janet Marie? That's the Big Dipper."

"Is it cloudy enough yet?" Doreen whispered.

"Shh," shushed Tom.

"There's old man Dumont's farm." Doreen said in her church voice. "Right where you said it would be, Tom."

Tom didn't reply. Instead he asked me for the third time, "you sleepy yet, Janet Marie?"

Rae Davis: Breaking Out of the Play

I'm not stupid. I pretended to fall asleep, my head resting on Doreen's plump arm.

"That's it, she's asleep," whispered Doreen. Moving her arm gently away, she smiled at Tom.

Suddenly, Tom crouched closer to the steering wheel and the windshield. He looked up at the night sky. "Really good," he said, "it's getting cloudy."

He turned out the truck lights as we went down the hill. The silhouettes of old man Dumont's farmhouse and chicken coops came closer.

"Kill the motor!" Doreen commanded.

"OK, Okimaw," answered Tom in a strange voice.

The truck coasted forward slowly until it stopped right by the chicken coops.

"Leave the doors open," Doreen whispered.

"Naw, the mosquitoes will get Janet Marie. Jus' close it light like."

As soon as they had climbed the fence, I say up.

An awful lot of squawkin' was coming from the chicken coops.

It quit suddenly.

That's when I could make out Tom's slight figure running frantically toward the truck. From his hands dangled two chickens, one still alive and protesting.

Behind him, Doreen got hung up on the barbed wire fence.

There was a long ripping sound, then she too was in the truck. The threw a limp-necked chicken on the floor.

"Let it rip!" she shouted forgetting herself. "Geez, I left part of my pants back there."

I pretended to sleep. I think they wanted it so.

A dog began barking. One of Tom's chickens began jumping and squawking. Doreen made a mad lunge at it.

"Let's get out of here," whispered Tom loudly.

As the truck roared down the road, old man Dumont's light went on.

The next day was Sunday. We went to church. The priest never mentioned the chickens.

Doreen saw someone she knew. "Isn't that old man Dumont there?"

Tom pretended not to notice. After church, we went straight home.

Within minutes, Tom had changed out of his Sunday suit. Around the coveralls he tucked an old Red Rose bag.

"He was only a Sunday friend," he said to no one in particular.

Doreen brought up two chickens from the ice hole in the root cellar. They were cleaned. Tom had been up late.

Into the pot the chickens went. Tom added secret spices.

The most mouth-watering smell came forth. And as Doreen set the table, she eyed the stove longingly.

We were all waiting. Though what happened next was not what we were waiting for.

Around the corner, came old man Dumont's red truck. He didn't drive past.

He got out of the truck. Doreen mouthed the word RCMP and a look of apprehension passed between her and Tom.

But when Tom answered the door, he was a different man. "Why, come on in," Tom says to Dumont, like he was an honoured guest. "I haven't seen you in a coon's age!"

Old man Dumont sniffed the air. "About to have Sunday dinner?"

Doreen smiled a stiff smile.

After a few cups of tea, it became apparent old man Dumont was not about to leave.

"Sure smells good," he hinted.

Tom did what any self-respecting Indian would do. "We'd be glad if you'd stay for dinner. It isn't much for a man who eats chicken all the time. Jus' a little soup."

Doreen set another place at the table.

I sat by the window wide-eyed at all the goings on.

"Come and eat, child," Doreen called sweetly.

It was a marvelous soup, the kind that keeps women like Doreen happy. With a dreamy look, she served herself more.

Old man Dumont had three bowls. He looked like he would never fill up.

It was when Tom was biting into a chicken thigh, Dumont says. "Damn those chickens! They sure are good. Best soup I ever tasted. Tell me, where did you get them?" He slammed the table with his big fist. "Geez, I'd sure like to have me some of those."

I thought Tom would choke. He mumbled, "Biggar! got them in Biggar...ah...awhile back. These are the last of 'em."

"Well," says Dumont, "I heard you was having hard times so I stopped by. Thought I'd offer you some of my chickens, but I see you're doin' jus' fine. Damn good soup!"

That was a long time ago. Doreen liked old man Dumont's chickens so much she took up with him. Me, I was stuck with Tom. I was family. Heck, when you have family you do what you hays to do. This certainly was true for Tom, my father. Hunger made him contrary for that one time.

So this Father's Day when we were toasting fathers and roasting chickens I thought of Tom for a bit. I know he's up there in that big, open, chicken coop in the sky. I hope God has a sense of humour about Tom's Sunday chickens. **M**

This story was first published in Vol. 2, No. 1. It is reprinted here in full.



Wayne Walters, Ruth Mathews, *Ghiberti's Doors*, 1983
Photo by Fern Helfand

All quotes are by Rae Davis in conversation with the authors on May 6, 1992.

Making art is a necessity. I always have a thread going. I'm a reader. I read every day, it's like clothing. I make reading notes. It's part of the research that goes into a piece. I might be working physically on the structure and then go back and distill from the reading notes what's still important. Something's always going on. It's (art making) part of my life, they're interwoven."

Rae Davis' current performance piece, *Cataract*, was written and presented in her studio space in Toronto. *Cataract* (1. cataract: waterfall, floodgate, down-rushing. 2. cataract: an opacity of the crystalline lens of the eye producing more or less impairment of sight

by Barbara Sternberg
and Penelope Stewart

but never complete blindness) involved an audio tape, two video monitors, and a series of slides projected onto a billowing curtain. The video monitors were symmetrically placed, elevated on either side of the curtain. The right monitor showed an image of blue sky with cloud formations shifting almost imperceptibly; on the left monitor, Niagara Falls. Davis likes the Niagara Falls image because it combines many references. "Niagara is the flood, the fullness, the overwhelming flood of information we deal with. *Cataract* is an interior piece in which people become aware of their own fiction-making. There is fullness and density but with holes, it is permeable. The falls are clear liquid, but then there is the mist, like a cataract that rises up from the bottom. So you have falling and rising".

Thirty-one slides are projected, moving continuously from out of focus through the point of focus and past it. When the image is out of focus it is organic and visceral and one sees many different possibilities. As the slides come into focus, we become aware of our mistaken identifications. The moment of focus, where we know and can identify the source of the image, is very brief. *Cataract* has a one-hour audiotaped text, written by Davis over the period of a year. She allowed herself no editing; whatever came up those mornings in the studio was used. *Cataract* is made of fragments, "assemblages" is the term Davis uses for her works. This piece is about gaps and how we put the bits together. "*Cataract* has a density. We (the audience) are not able to take it all in. We know there are gaps; that we've missed something. That's ok."

When she was directing theatre, Davis found theatrical conventions too limiting. She had no interest in plot or characterization and so wrote an anti-theatre manifesto, "Breaking Out of the Play." She then proceeded to write her new plays. "What I wrote were plans for what was going to happen. You can have a play without characters. I thought theatre could be doing more, could be changing its structure." While Davis began receiving refusals from theatre companies, who found it difficult to categorize the scripts as "theatre," she was already in the process of defining herself as a performance artist.

An earlier piece, *Ghiberti's Doors*, began for Rae Davis from her observation of people looking at the doors, scanning them. She asked herself what made up this process of scanning. "People go through life creating, filling in the gaps, and are not aware of their own generative powers, and that they do it all

the time." In *Cataract*, the image of water, what is imagined to be seen in the slides are projected, are all suggestive of our generative capabilities. All the elements in the performance are continually moving. The video images of the falls and sky are uncut; the slides move through focus, and the audiotape composed of disparate days' impressions, fills the space with Davis' voice. Different fragments come together for different audience members as they construct their own version of this hour. There is always a sense of the ongoing, or as Davis calls it, "the beautiful present tense."

Part of the conceptual framework for *Cataract* stemmed from Davis' interest in the cognitive sciences: the study of artificial intelligence and brain functions. "I'm interested in the connections; neural connections in the brain and how these connections are established; a leap, a physical connection? I'm interested in that wild area." Davis' work is about how we know, ways of knowing the world and people, and how she 'knows' at particular moments in a constantly changing world.

We asked Davis to talk about feminism, its relation to her life in general and in her work as an artist. While her work does not deal overtly with feminist themes, and is not explicitly political, she reflected that feminism has politicized her. Also, she recalled her route to becoming an artist as having involved certain steps in defining herself. One important step was getting and paying for, from her own resources, both a studio space and the other costs of art production. She needed to get out of the house "because of my domestic routines - so I went to the carrell at the library and did my work there. I was out of the house, but still confined. I needed a studio. In '78 I got my first studio in a warehouse. It was a grand change. It was big enough to look into, and I did a performance there. I felt I had set out on an inexorable path."

We asked whether her gender affected the reception of her work. "How would I prove that? Well, one example of the marginalization suffered as a woman and as a performance artist, was in London." Rae Davis had worked as an artist in London since '59 and had con-

tributed a lot to raising the visibility of art and artists in that city. Yet, when an article appeared in *Provincial Essays* (Vol. 1, No. 1, 1984), which charted the activities of London artists over the years, Davis was not mentioned, but a certain male artist, who had a minimum of work was. "Was my activity erased? Yes. Was there a patriarchy in the contemporary arts in London? Yes." We wondered about how she felt at this stage of her life and this stage in her career. "When we are older we can see the themes in our life and in our work that we couldn't see while in the middle of it. Hindsight is one of the advantages of getting older. Am I at a turning point now?" She has entertained thoughts of making video, or writing. "But all the thoughts I have are performance thoughts, things come to me that way." The tentative title for her next piece is *Eddie's Swirls and Hand Signals*. "The title is my anchor at the moment. Tomorrow I start reading 'How Monkeys See the World.'"

Rae Davis was born in 1927 in New Jersey, U.S.A. She received her Master's Degree from Columbia University, 1952, writing her thesis on Dramatic Poetry. From 1957-1987 she lived in London, Ontario and was a freelance theatre director, directing the works of Samuel Beckett, Gertrude Stein and others. In the mid 70's, her work shifted from experimental theatre to performance art. In the 60's, Davis and nine other Londoners formed the 20/20 Gallery and she wrote critical analyses of the works of some of her contemporaries - Greg Curnoe, Tony Urquhart and Jack Chambers - for Canadian Art Magazine. Further involving herself in the local art scene, she programmed experimental film, dance and performance for the Forest City artist-run centre. Rae Davis has created over 25 performance works that have been shown in London, Windsor, Montreal and Toronto. Her works include: Simple Activities (1963); Pink Melon Joy, Gertrude Stein Out Aloud (1974); Putting Yourself Into It (1979); Ghiberti's Doors 1983, Taking the Plunge (1985); Vanishing Acts (1986); In 1987 she moved to Toronto. Her most recent work Cataract was performed in Toronto in April 1992. M



Rae Davis, *Taking the Plunge*, 1983
Photo by Martha Davis



Go! Granny Go!

Sandy Smirle visited with the Toronto Raging Grannies during their recent rehearsal and talked with founding member Betsy Carr.

SANDY SMIRLE: *What inspired you to create the Toronto Raging Grannies?*

BETSY CARR: I was inspired by the original Grannies in Victoria. The media just caught right on to them. CTV and CBC invited some of the Victoria Grannies to come to Toronto and they contacted us because a lot of the Grannies across the country belong to *Voice of Women*. That is our common background. We offered them a place to stay. I would squire, the ones that stayed with me, around town to the places where they were singing. They began to say to me "Betsy, start some Grannies in Toronto, here are some songs." And they'd leave me a stack of songs. They did that twice. I finally decided to make it known that the Grannies were thinking of starting up here. That was in November of 1990 but we didn't get going until the end of the winter. Well, immediately the *Toronto Star* picked up on it. That was the biggest boost we could ever expect: getting a big picture in the paper with my phone number at the end. My golly, I was invited to every birthday party in town. Gradually it simmered down and now we are getting some repeat requests and new requests too.

The Raging Grannies are caring older women who use song to protest and raise awareness of issues of peace, the environment and social justice. Satirical and serious, they are politically conscious but non-partisan.

Interview by
Sandy Smirle

SS: *Are the Grannies interlinked or are the groups separate entities?*

BC: We are autonomous but the Grannies out west feel kind of responsible for all the others and there are some standards that I think they'd like to keep. They decided to have an annual meeting in British Columbia. I've been out to the last two of them. The first one was in Suit just outside of Victoria and last fall the Gastown Grannies in Vancouver were the hosts. About 45 Grannies came from all around, so there is that link and now we have a newsletter where we can share news, songs and such. We even have a hospitality list for when we travel.

SS: *I was noticing that when you were practicing today, your songs would spark lectures and debates on whatever the topic in the song was. It seems as though your rehearsals are really information sessions on current events.*

BC: It is a real learning process, you have to keep up to date. We've had some songs that were just real killer dillers. We had a wonderful one about Joe Clark when he was Minister of External Affairs and we really poked fun at him. And the Gulf War, you

know it came and went and we kept trying to tinker with things because we think it was a bad thing. We are trying to say that we don't want another Gulf War and its aftermath. I have a book where I keep all the songs we accumulate but when we are singing I have to keep them on cards with the changes and updates that have been made.

SS: *Can anyone become a Raging Granny?*

BC: You have to be able to carry a tune, although there is no testing. Even more importantly though, you have to have a frame of mind. Being a Raging Granny implies a certain frame of mind. You don't have to have grandchildren.

SS: *The Toronto Star quoted you as saying that "the Raging Grannies is a frame of mind. When you're a senior, you have come to some conclusions about life and what is happening in the world. As a senior you can kick up your heels and nobody is going to get in your way." I thought that was great.*

BC: We're not sensitive about people thinking we are kind of daft, you know? We just want people to listen. We don't want to be

The Bad Old Days (to the tune of I'se the Bye)

We're the women who did the work
So men could get the credit,
We said, "leave it all to us"
And wished we'd never said it.

We're prepared to do the work
But we want more than credit,
Equal pay for equal work,
We'll sing until we get it!



confused with entertainers. We are not. We are a protest group. We are serious and that is a distinction that has to be made. The thing is, a lot of us have been in the peace movement for a long time and we have been trying to convince people that we need to do more for peace in this world. Everything is far too dangerous and a lot of the policies in our government are really off on the wrong track. We have found that the Raging Grannies can sing in their crazy outfits and show that we are not really taking ourselves seriously but please listen to what we are saying. That is the way we get our ideas across and that is what we want.

SS: *Do you have a favourite gig that you've done?*

BC: Well some of our gigs sound quite impressive. We've sung at Roy Thompson Hall and we've sung at Harbourfront and the Legislature at the City Hall. But the ones that we enjoy the most are the ones where we feel at one with our audience. When we get a real reaction that is stimulating to us; we do so much better. You can feed off of it; you can feel that they are with you. One of those times happened quite early on. It was an Ontario-wide meeting on environment issues, with a women's environment group called WEED. They are the ones that have put out the book *White-wash*, one of our very early triumphs in our estimations was this time we sang for them. The people were just with us, it was wonderful.

SS: *What kind of public impressions do you want the Grannies to make?*

BC: What we are trying to do is to get people to think seriously about our responsibilities to our environment, to leave our world undamaged for the upcoming generations. Those are the things that we hope we are doing; that we are changing how people think about things like war. Because war is the worst polluter ever. But we haven't stopped wars yet. We would like people who think about these things to take steps in their own way. They could speak to their M.P.'s, to other people in their circles and stand up for these things when they have the opportunities. We are hoping some people will turn out to be as dedicated as we are.

SS: *What about the way our society views older women. Considering that there are not enough positive role models for women today, do you try and fill that gap?*

BC: We love to sing for children, we are hoping that the kids will sit there and think "I wonder what my grandmother is doing?", because I think we are not the type who are looking for some way to fill our time. We are looking for more time to fill our needs. One of the results that we are looking for is for people to not only take seriously what we are singing about, but the fact that we are out there doing it.

SS: *It's a strong message for older women out there, if their children are gone and they are finding their days are long.*

BC: It's a question of growing old gracefully and usefully, because our lives are not over yet. I've been an activist all my life. I got away from the personal which I started with and got into the politics. I mean is it fair what women have to put up with in this world? Are our laws fair? Is our society fair to women? It just goes naturally into being a Raging Granny.

SS: *How does it make you feel to see that it is once again women who have to bring our concerns to society?*

BC: I've been asked where the Grumbling Grandpas are but you'll have to ask them. This is

something that the women feel is important. In a lot of these cases we are grumbling against what these guys are doing.

SS: *Do you feel that the Women's Movement is healthy today?*

BC: Yes, I believe it is healthy. Concerns about peace and the environment will continue long past any of us alive today. They are not going to be solved easily. You're going to have to fight some of the battles you've seen over again. They come around with a new approach and a new challenge. Even though some of the things with the Women's Movement seem to have been achieved, often you have to go after them again. We are challenging the status quo. Gradually we are seeing more women in positions of power. They will bring a different agenda. We want younger people to carry on because we won't be here forever. We want to make our world fair and hopeful for our children and comfortable for us. **M**

*We don't want to be
confused with entertainers.
We are not.
We are a protest group.
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MULTIPLICITY

When people hear the word "ageism," they often associate it with elderly people. But ageism against the elderly is not the only form that exists. There is also ageism against younger people: something I've experienced frequently.

Being a multiple (or what the medical profession calls Multiple Personality Disorder) makes the issue of ageism even more complicated. My body's physical age is 19, but I,

AND

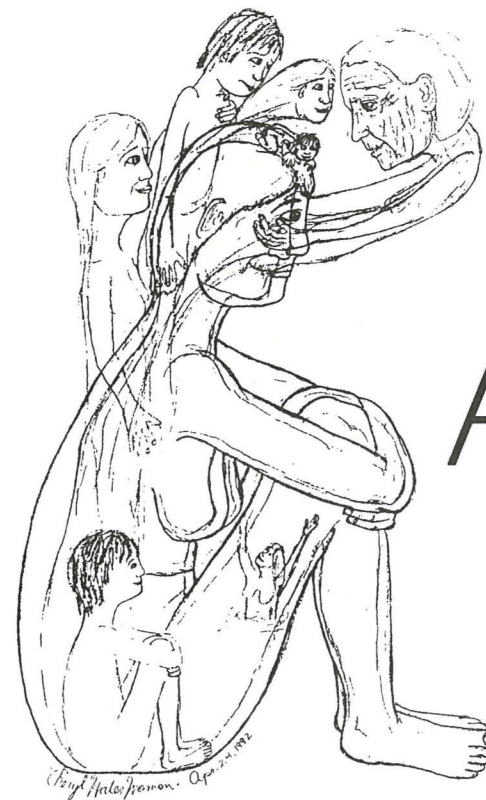
Cheryl am not that age. I am many ages at once. Because of the ritual abuse that made me a multiple, I feel a great deal older than my physical years.

A person with multiple personality can have a body of any age and still have child personalities. I have both very young and very old personalities who cope with the world and who interact with people. The majority of my personalities are either between infancy and eight years of age or 30 years on. Since I have

AGEISM

come to accept and understand my multiplicity, my personalities feel freer to express themselves. All my personalities are very important to me as a whole. My child parts know how to play and laugh, how to have fun and enjoy themselves. Some child parts have retained their "innocence" and still know how to be vulnerable, how to let people in. These parts act and think like all children do and sometimes embarrass the rest of me when, for example, they decide to sing, "waddle, waddle, quack, quack" with flapping arm motions as I'm walking down the street with my friends.

My child parts may also know memories of my abuse I do not yet know. At school, art teachers would try to stop me from drawing about the incest I was remembering. They would tell me to draw "nice things" and not to dwell on my past (thereby discounting my



by Cheryl WaterWoman

experience). Our society perpetuates the myth that childhood is a wonderful, happy and carefree time: full of bliss. But that does not seem to be anyone's experience: who has not lived some form of abuse or trauma in their childhood? Not only is this widespread denial but also a form of ageism: it assumes that children do not know or understand their own experience.

I've also always felt a lot older than my body. The extreme experience of ritual abuse I endured daily, and the ways in which I coped, reinforced my feeling "old." For example, I was required to take on responsibility for things I had no control over. While being forced to kill someone, I was at the same time being told how awful I was for committing such a crime. I would also be trying to understand why it was happening

Our society perpetuates the myth that childhood is a wonderful, happy and carefree time: full of bliss. But that does not seem to be anyone's experience: who has not lived some form of abuse or trauma in their childhood?

and to figure out how to stop the person from dying. Later, the horror of the experience was still there inside me, weighing me down. Repeated experiences like this can make one feel "old."

And although not yet adult, I had been functioning as one in many important aspects: being responsible, self-reflective and caring. In some ways, my experience was limited, but because of the abuse I went through and the kind of person I am, I had already deeply felt and thought about many of the issues most people leave untouched for years. I've always been very observant and serious, constantly trying to find ways of being more honest and

real with myself and others. This led me to remembering incest at 13, encountering and pursuing feminism at 14, acknowledging my lesbianism at 16 and remembering the ritual abuse at 17. In searching for support and acceptance in those communities, I felt I was ready for an incest survivor group. I wanted to be in the company of wimmin who had worked on their healing and who were mature. I'd already been in a teenage incest survivor group and found it unbearable. I felt the people were in the group because they had to be not because they chose to be. Because of my age, I could not get into an adult group, when I desperately needed contact with other survivors who felt similar about their healing.

I continue to deal with the incest through my art and my writing. I call myself an "artist" and a "writer" because that is what I do with my time and I know I would never stop doing them. Some people have asked me how I could possibly presume to identify myself in these ways without years of experience and education behind me.

I feel many people are judging me for my body's age and not my actions. I think this is encouraged by the fact that my body looks it's age and I am being judged on that – not me, the person (people!) inside. This judgement is a practice of ageism I experience frequently when I go to a medical professional or deal with someone in an institution. Often I bring a support person with me because such visits can trigger abuse memories. Professionals automatically direct all comments concerning me to my "older" friends. The number of times professionals have asked whether my partner (who is physically older than me) was my social worker is infuriating!

It's important to treat people of all ages with respect and equality and not to judge by physical age. My body may be 19 but I am many ages. I am much more than just a face, an age, or an experience. I am me, perhaps someone to get to know or not – but on the basis of me.

Cheryl WaterWoman is a lesbian feminist survivor of ritual abuse and a multiple. She is an artist and writer who loves wimmin and cats. M

FACES — OF — FEMINISM

If we do not want our historical experiences revised and repressed by the dominant, patriarchal culture, women and feminists must keep our own history and make our own self-definitions. *Faces of Feminism* is one piece of this process. The idea for the project came during a portrait session with Mary O'Brien in 1981. As part of the Toronto Documentary Photography Project, that idea became a collection of images and text on Toronto feminists in 1984. With the funding mainly from the Canada Council and Ontario Arts Council, I was then able to take the project nationwide, researching and photographing province by province between 1985 and 1989.

In *Faces and Feminism* I wanted to make a record of the Women's Movement that reflected its true breadth and diversity. My plan was to select an urban, rural and small town setting in each province. I would do portraits of a variety of women and groups in those communities and ask each to write about herself in the context of her feminism. Images and text would form a single unit – the faces and voices of Canadian feminists.

I began by collecting names and addresses of women in each province and wrote to them, explaining my project and asking for

advice on where and whom to photograph. I sent hundreds of letters, built-up a huge card file and spent a lot of time on the phone. If there were an issue or activity or group that didn't have adequate representation, I asked specifically about that category. I wanted to cast a wide net, encompassing a broad range of women both in those who advised me and those whom I would photograph.

I was helped by women from across the country. It was an energizing and humbling experience to receive letters full of encouragement, advice and information from women I had never met. In each community there would be a few who took me under their wings, setting up appointments, organizing my first few days, putting me up, helping me get around. It was this sisterhood and this sense of communal urgency that kept me going over the years.

In editing *Faces of Feminism*, I have tried to balance many criteria and to include women from all the provinces, women active in many different ways on a variety of issues, women of varying ages, races, classes, sexual orientation and lifestyles. *Faces of Feminism* isn't a who's who; it's a group portrait in which a community is represented by a selec-

Pamela Harris

tion of individuals. A few of the names are widely known, but more are familiar only within their own communities. Like a bouquet picked in a field in high summer, *Faces of Feminism* is a sampling from a great richness, an attempt to bring you some sense of the whole.

As in any documentation, it's central that use be made of the material collected. In 1990 the Toronto Photographers Workshop asked me to mount a show of *Faces of Feminism*. Many of the viewers who came to the exhibit commented that they would like to see it produced in book form, which had always been one of my aims. But publishing a photography book on feminism is not easy in our time and place. So this project of endless networking continues with yet another networking effort. *Faces of Feminism* will be published by Second Story Press, but first we have to raise

Like a bouquet picked in a field in high summer, "Faces of Feminism" is a sampling from a great richness, an attempt to bring you some sense of the whole.

money to pay for plates and printing. We are inviting people to become publication sponsors by pre-ordering *Faces of Feminism* for \$50. Those who sponsor the book will receive, in the winter of 1992, a special cloth-bound edition autographed and numbered. They will also be listed in the book on a page honouring our publication sponsors.

For the last year, the exhibition of *Faces of Feminism* has been a touring exhibition organized and circulated by the Toronto Photographers Workshop to eight galleries in seven provinces. Following the installation at the Art

Gallery of Windsor (November 14, 1992 till January 9, 1993) the exhibit will be available for further bookings directly from the artist. Finally, behind the book and exhibit there is a great body of material, so much more than has been used to date. The mini-archive of this material – with prints of all the women photographed, collected texts and the paper trail of letters, contacts and feminist process – would be a wonderful web deserving a permanent home.

Anyone who is interested in the book, touring show or archive of *Faces of Feminism* can write to Pamela Harris care of Second Story Press, 760 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5C 2R6.

Pamela Harris is a self-taught photographer who works mainly in black and white. Much of her work over the past 25 years could be described as documentary portraiture, representing communities ranging from Newfoundland fishing villages to the United Farmworkers Union in California to her own extended family. In 1972 she worked with a collective of women to organize and tour "Photographs of Women about Women," the first exhibition of its kind in Canada. In 1973, she produced "The Women's Kit," published by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. In 1972 and 1973 she photographed in Spence Bay, NWT, where she built a community darkroom and taught photographic skills to Inuit crafts-women. Her own images and writing from that community were published by Impressions as a monograph entitled "Another Way of Being." Pamela Harris has taught photography at the University of California at Santa Cruz and the Ontario College of Art. In 1990 she was the recipient of the Duke and Duchess of York Prize in Photography, granted annually by the Canada Council. "Faces of Feminism" is currently a touring exhibition and will soon be published by Second Story Press. The project was made possible by the support of the Canada Council, the Ontario Arts Council, the Toronto Arts Council, the Toronto Photographers Workshop, the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women and the artist's family. M

FACES OF FEMINISM

Sky Blue Mary Morin

*Native activist,
North Battleford,
Saskatchewan*



Photo by Pamela Harris

As You lie sleeping
in the winter season
I marvel at your Beauty.
Such a short time to rest
preparing for the work ahead,
My Mother, the Earth Mother
from whence life comes
in the circle of Life.

Our Mother, the Earth Mother
I see and feel your pain
constantly having to Heal
the wounds of profit makers.
I want to expel my insides
as I watch the chemicals
spew forth from Your Body.
The Scourge and Rape continues.

As Thunder comes to awaken
you from much needed slumber
I see your Rebirth, New Growth.
As you become Forceful
carrying Floods to distant places,
providing paths for Hurricanes,
Quaking from your Insides
I am certain you are strong.

But can you last, Great Mother?
I pray the offerings of Tobacco
I give to you will help.
I pray our Respect grows
for your Sacredness,
and keeps you Strong;
for should you Cease,
so will the People.



Photo by Pamela Harris

We must all recognize, at last, that misogyny is cultural and institutional, and that it acts insidiously on the brain and behaviour of every man and woman of this planet. Patriarchal cultures are ALL violent towards women, a violence not isolated, not accidental and not the work of madness but a systematic, daily violence, both physical and mental.

Down through the centuries, in all ages and in every social climate, humanity has taken part in this bloody quadrille which divides human beings into two categories, the men on one side, the women on the other, to identify clearly those whom one can massacre, rub out, mutilate, beat to death, and annihilate with impunity.

"In masculine fantasy," says Robbe-Grillet,

"woman's body is the privileged place of violation." Only in fantasy, says this good apostle! Fantasies like the selective butchery at the Polytechnique, like the odious injunction on the body of Chantel Daigle, like the gang rape at McGill. Fantasies like the women who are beaten daily, or murdered by the men they live with, who are raped or tortured or burned alive for the lack of a dowry, who are sold or prostituted, fantasies like the little girls subjected to incest, pornography, clitoridectomies, infibulation, beatings, murder. Fantasies like all the many acts worthy of a call to the police. "Don't touch our fantasies," bawl the Robbe-Grilletts of free expression. "They don't hurt anyone!" ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

FACES
OF
FEMINISM

Louky Bersianik

Writer, Vercheres, Quebec

FACES
OF
FEMINISM

Maxine Tynes

Poet, Dartmouth,
Nova Scotia



Photo by Pamela Harris

women
we keepers and sharers of ancient secrets
of loving
and making homes of houses
of loving
and making love
of loving
and making life
of loving
and making our men whole
of loving
and being women, wives, mothers, sisters,
daughters, lovers,
strong, aunts, free, grandmothers, constant, nieces,
women, and Black
we women of colour
distant daughters of
the Nile, the Sahara, Kenya, Zaire, Sudan
the Serengeti
we dance the body-music of light and shadow

we share the palette spectrum
the obsidian sunshade
burnished blue-black brown tantan sepia
coffeecoffee cream ebony
delight of womanskin
strong in
alive in
free in
loving in
working in
laughing in
sharing in
mothering in
growing in
aging in
this skin
this night shade of many shades
this womanskin
we women
keepers and sharers of ancient secrets

Cathy Jones

as Love Murphy

*Actress, Playwright,
St. John's,
Newfoundland*

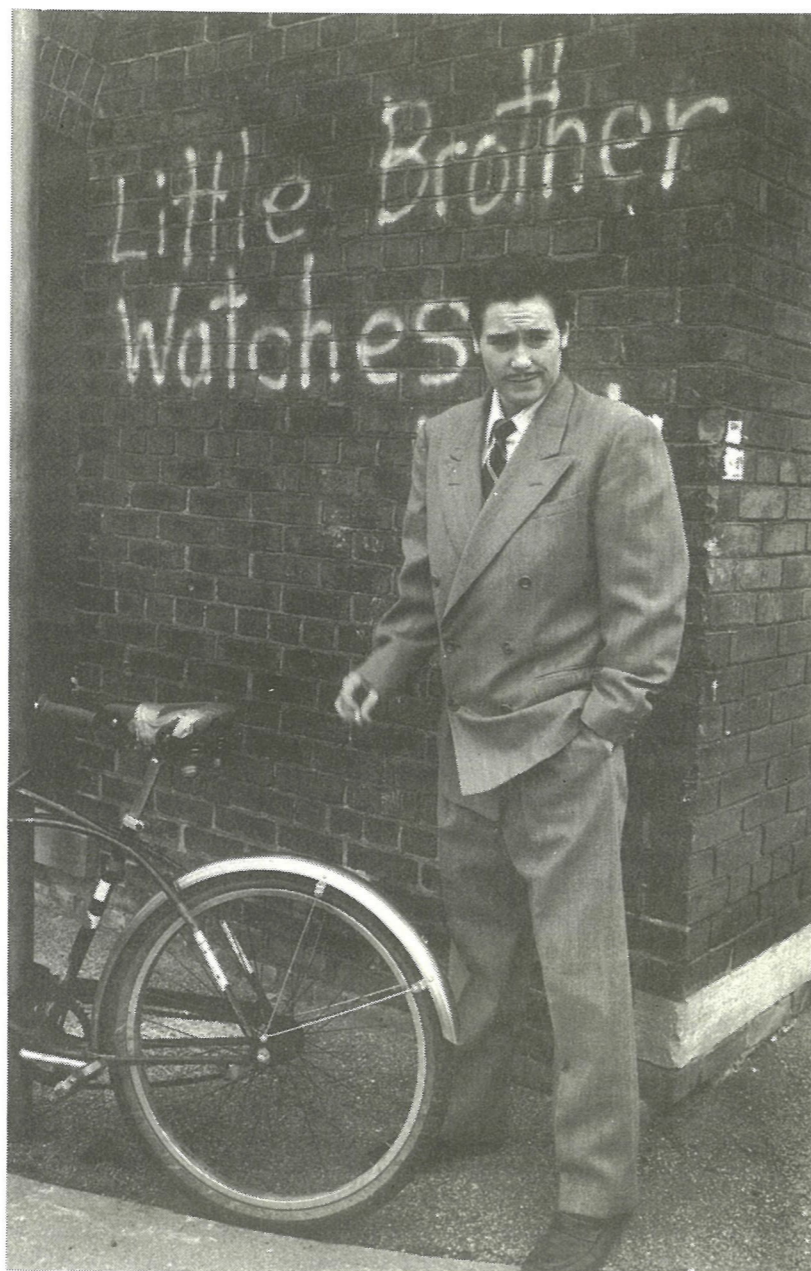


Photo by Pamela Harris

Love Murphy played a significant role in my life until I had him arrested when he broke a bond and came after me. A change is as good as an arrest, and right now Murph is in the slammer. I hear he's practising sitting meditation and rethinking his life. Good, I say. These are the new old days, and the way Murphy was modus operandi-ing just got to be obsolete. Much to his chagrin.

People like and hate Murph for the same reasons. I say let him rot. The male side of me was running the show for too long. I had a dream that a man was running loose and a woman was cowering in fear convinced that he would hurt her. I realize the man was in me and so was the woman. It was impossible to create with my intuitive, inspired female

side hounded by my facilitating male side. I got them together on a beach in my head. She had been blocked by his antics for so long that she was unwilling to trust him, and he had written her off as an emotional mess. I've called a cease fire and initiated negotiations. I hope that the peace I achieve will manifest itself in relationships full of respect and honesty.

Love Murphy was charming. Swift. A heartbreaker. So was Cathy Jones. Now he and Cathy are both on the road to responsible living. I love Love Murphy, for I have seen the enemy and he is me. In jail they call him Burt. But to me he will always be love. The Murphy you are looking for is no longer at this address.

OLD HAT

Joane Cardinal-Schubert

We began this year with trepidation, knowing that it would be a very different year, for it is the year that marks the 500th anniversary of the colonization of the "New World." 500 years ago people began that year knowing that things were different: for some it meant sharing a garden, for others it meant entrance to a garden – a garden that promised change and difference. Today we share the garden, but some are privy to a bigger section, more water, and there are fences – Oh, there are fences in the garden.

At the point of becoming half a century in August of this year, I suppose I have reached the "grace and maturity" that the Webster's dictionary associates with the word "age" and therefore I suppose that I can comment on age. But age does not as a factor exist alone; some people exist in bodies of ages that have defied gravity longer than others, some people by their sense of humour, manner of dress, and general outlook on the world seem ageless. For some people, age only comes up when they finally go down: it comes up after the final body plant. Age and agelessness sometimes ensures a person immortality – sometimes it makes them "old hat."

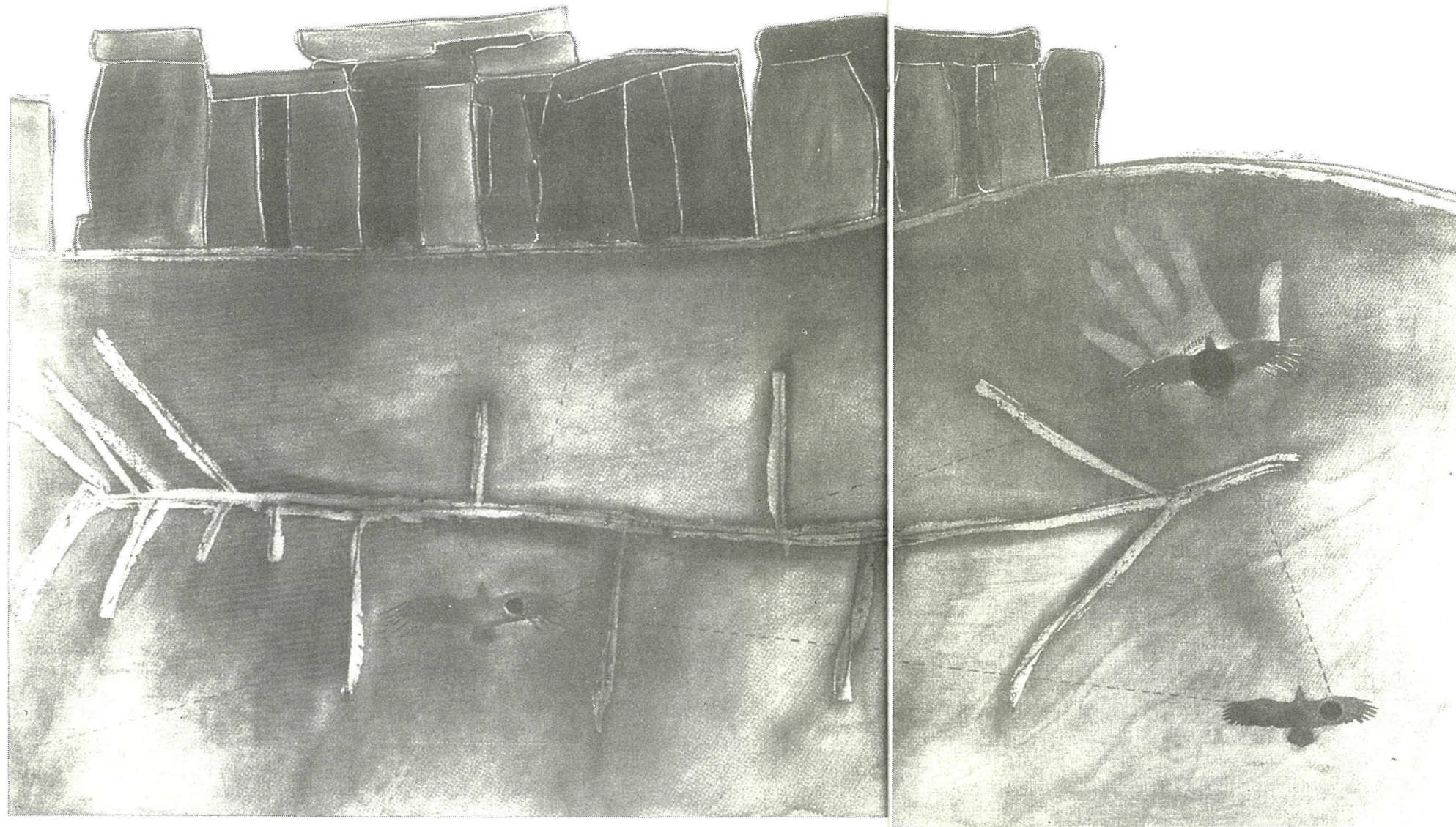
In a truly general way, I will say that the age of a woman is more important to society than the age of a man. I believe this attitude centres around a woman's capability to have

children. Although I was aware of this attitude it was never a major pressure or challenge to my womanhood, it never dictated my worth – possibly because my own mother had her last child at 48. In the last two years as I waited for the "heard of" menopause, I admit I did dwell on, I did question, the importance of my existence. As a person, an artist who, according again to the dictionary, arranges aesthetically pleasing meaningful elements, as in words, colours, shapes etc., I have to constantly question my compulsion to exhibit the "art hat." What would my father think, I wonder, after all those years of chasing me out of his workshop, resisting my attempts at helping him out: would he blame himself for letting me pound all those nails when I was nine?

Perhaps the compulsion I had for "cleaning up" the sawdust with a plastering brush, dragging the bristle, making endless furrows, circling until I reached the edge of the workbench, perhaps this is what makes it important to me to spend endless hours playing with pigment on a surface that stretches through years of unrolled stretched canvas and the pulp of hundreds of trees.

Recently I put on my "volunteer hat": "Why do you use so much red," a docent asked me, "You use so many different colours; red, blue, green, brown, yellow." Exasperated at the disconnection I felt this

*My grandmother was my best teacher,
for she lived the longest, so I knew
about age best through her.
I know that her garden hat will always
be comfortable to wear, it taught
me many things, I was able
to look out at the world from the
shelter of its wide brim.*



Joane Cardinal-Schubert, *Ancient Voices Beneath The Ground—Stonehenge*, 1983, oil, graphite on paper, 48" x 32"



person had with nature, I pointed defiantly at my work: "red – blood, blue – sky, green – grass, brown – earth, yellow – sun," I said. "Oh!" she said.

This disconnection that people have with the world around them denies age and aging; this world wraps everything up in sterile, plastic wrappers, free from humidity, rot and mold – air tight, hermetically sealed to the grave. Have these people ever seen metamorphosis, have they ever walked across a field of prairie wool and felt its texture under their feet, have they ever heard the bubble and roar of a stream cutting a rock face, have they ever revisited the nests of birds and found new eggs year after year?

Once my husband and I had an argument over whether a tree was dead, its single spear, leafless, budless projected up out of the milk carton I had planted it in. "You have to water it," he said "and it has to be in bright sun all the time." Ignoring him I kept it hidden, out of sight, tending to it whenever it spoke to me. One day I found it tossed on top of the garbage. I placed it in the back part of the garden out of the limelight. Today it is a thirty foot poplar tree that plays havoc with the sewer system. Wearing a "garden hat" can sometimes be taxing.

What can I say about artists and age, it is a strange task speaking about an aging female person employed in the discipline of agelessness. As a member of a division of the human race, constantly bombarded with the image of "woman" in the media, an impossible image to live up to, it could be very discouraging for a woman in Canada. We have bought the American dictate of the search for the fountain of youth, whether that comes with a nose job, a boob job, a nip and tuck here and there, and now endless patches; creams and pills with compromising hormones guaranteed to change a natural process of aging. Sometimes I think there is a conspiracy to target each age bracket with expensive remedies – it's some big multi-corporate plan to use people all their lives. The ads even smell these days: scents guaranteeing to change your life exist in perforated splendour in most women's magazines. Women are still struggling past these peripheral controls to gain real control of their bodies.

And these peripheral controls go beyond the cosmetic changes that are becoming reality. "Perhaps you should get that taken care of," someone said to me last year referring to the fat padding under my chin.



"Everyone in my family has it," I responded to doctor and dentist as they checked this extra adipose tissue. "I've been thinking of getting rid of it" I ventured after my latest check up. "Don't," said the doctor, "You will end up with more problem than it is worth." Fortunately, that is the closest I have ever come to altering myself surgically. I know, that as a Native person my skin scars drastically, also changing myself would interfere with the whole aging process. I could never deal with not knowing how I really would have turned out.

Over the last few years I have found myself buying books that publish photographs, snapshots of artists in their everyday situations. Real people, struggling with children, the household, the image-makers; these artists through their images teach about the process of artist/aging, their textural surfaces hidden under glossy paint, beautiful fabrics or big hats. I knew about this process of aging from my own parents' photographs. As a prolific photographer, my father's photo albums have taught me many things. They are the source of all my black and white work of late, which has to do with yes/no; negative/positive; night/day and it also relates to blackboard authority, writing, in white on black. There are many planar levels of learning, looking and seeing. These photo albums showed me my parents at different ages, introduced me to the people they were and the process of them becoming the people that I knew. When I looked into their faces, past their smiles and frowns my eyes didn't rest on the outer surface of their skin. I did not scan that surface searching for indication of age rather my sight went beyond, finding the as-surty that comes with age, feeling that I had been, and was, in good hands.

I found my grandmother a frail, dark-haired woman, in a big hat with a big smile. She came into my life wearing a hat of the garden variety. I was fascinated with the round tortoise-shell reading glasses she wore and with her ergonomic movement, her hand stretched out as she crossed the room to pick up a letter from her desk, not wasting a moment, perfect confidence in using the space around her. The blue veins on the back of her hands never disturbed me, they were, for me, enviable, my own were quite pudgy and boring.

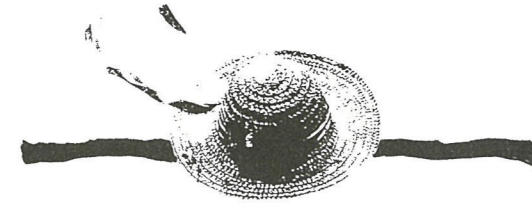
I gained some confidence that I was like grandma when I looked in the mirror and saw the blue veins on my chest and upper arms. Now as I look down at my own hands, at my going on fifty hands, I see one brown spot – it appears to be bigger than my whole hand. I am interested when the next ones will appear. It makes aging interesting – aging is after all just change.

Attending a meeting to save the hill behind my house (Nose Hill), I was handed the proposal put together by the parks department. The proposal contained the truism, "There will be," throughout. Amazed at the seemingly foregone conclusion of the writer, I decided to make an unprepared statement. "No," I said. No to paved pathways, no to an interpretive centre perched on the escarpment, no to public washrooms, no to bicycle paths. Reading through the proposal it seemed that all concerns were about erosion. Apparently people walking on the hill were creating their own footpaths and these were creating erosion. We discussed how best to avoid erosion. Four days later the revelation came to me – What was wrong with erosion? It seems that we want our world to be perfect too – no wrinkles, no gullies, no chasms on this earth, yet the natural world constantly expresses change, erosion, metamorphosis. How did the society we live in become so adamant about stopping change?

In the best of Native society, elders are cared for, revered, more for their knowledge and wisdom than for the "grace and maturity" of the Webster's definition. Grace and maturity sound like just a body in space – involvement with the physical being only. Perhaps this explains the aged, reduced to only physical entities, captured, pinioned, drugged, sitting or lying, their eyes shuttered forever.

Elders, however, are employed as the holders and keepers of knowledge, walking texts of best-ways, possible solutions, genealogy charts.

Perhaps I haven't touched directly on "Women, Art and Age" – I only know that if I am to move positively forward into my next fifty years, I'll do it with the confidence of knowing some of the outcomes of age and aging. My grandmother was my best teacher, for she lived the longest, so I knew about age best through her. I know that her garden hat will



always be comfortable to wear, it taught me many things, I was able to look out at the world from the shelter of its wide brim. It allowed me not to alienate people by directly staring them in the eye. I did not forever hide under its wide protective brim. Sometimes I added ribbons of first place to its band, sometimes medals and honours, sometimes I took the hat off, put it away and exposed my skin to the harsh reality of sunlight, but then I dusted the hat off, pressed the ribbons back into service and ventured into hat sales and fashion shows just to see how I measured up. My hat stood up with the best of them – it seems to be eternally in fashion.

Sometimes my grandmother's hat was challenged: was it the right kind, was it a name brand item? Once I was accused of wearing my elastic under the chin, when every lady knows the elastic belongs in the back of the hat, under ones hair and you must dip your head down in a windstorm and face into the gale, that way, most times, you won't lose your hat. Of late, I have taken to going bareheaded. I have looked in the face of truth and seen the wrinkles and erosion of age, of the imperfections of societies and the hard truths of getting your hat from the "wrong" hatier.

This looking around has been hard on my hat wearing of late. I am determined not to give anyone an idea of the kind of hook I really hang my hat on. Hat wearing can be dangerous, especially when you don't have it on and someone only recognizes you in your hat. You can die from it, as Chief Robert Smallboy did in 1984. I want, as a finale, for you, the reader, to put his hat on and consider the implications of hat wearing in the future.

Joane Cardinal-Schubert, a mixed media artist, has been developing her techniques over many years. Cardinal-Schubert moves freely between art forms, having studied in the disciplines of sculpture, painting and printmaking.

Currently she is concentrating on large environmental works that summarize her thoughts on life, nature and human fragility.

In addition to producing exciting new works in her Calgary studio, this Red Deer born artist likes to consult on selected projects.

There is no Hercules (Homage to Robert Smallboy)

You
with your face of wisdom
your
comforting hands
your older age should
Demand
Respect

yet
no one let you in
In Banff.

It was a cold night
you froze both legs
then,
they took you in
to the hospital
They took everything away from you
including your legs.

They gave you
new things.

You could not burn
your sweetgrass
or have your food.

You went home to die
Finally
Painfully
two years later.

Wasn't it you
who had
special audience with the Pope
Didn't you save
Your People
by example
on the Plains.

Didn't you refuse
The Order of Canada?

Too bad
There is no Hercules
In Banff
For an Old Indian
Out of Ceremonial Dress.

■

FOCUS ON
WARC
 UPDATE

Women, Art and Age is a theme of particular interest to WARC. For eight years now, WARC has been keeping the history of women artists alive by documenting and supporting women's cultural production.

Our eighth issue of *Matriart* emerges as a celebration of women artists who have filled their lives with creativity. Through the dedicated efforts of the Matriart Publication Committee, the magazine is becoming one of the most exciting and readable art magazines available.

The growing success of *Matriart*, the WARC sponsored *Out of the Drawer* exhibition held at A Space last December, and the proposed 1993 datebook *Emerging Images* have helped to expand and enrich the Documentation Facility/Slide Library at WARC. This fall, there are plans to have slide shows and artist talks to further our outreach and to continue to bring artist's work "out of the drawer."

Our anti-racism workshops will continue to be scheduled throughout the year and will culminate in the publication of an anti-racism booklet.


Currently WARC is engaged in a membership renewal campaign. The following options are available: WARC membership - \$15; Matriart subscription - \$15; membership/subscription - \$25. A first-time member to WARC can waive the membership fee in exchange for 10-15 slides, C.V., artist statement, exhibition info/reviews with which we will open an artist file on their behalf. Members are invited to update their files at any time.

In closing, we extend an appeal for volunteers. WARC is now registered as a charitable organization and our Fundraising Committee welcomes your help. Also, the Documentation Facility would be particularly interested in assistance from anyone with library or archival skills.

Finally, THANK YOU! to all the volunteers over the past few months who have given generously of their time and expertise.

JOIN US IN OUR WORK TO KEEP WOMEN'S ART HISTORY ALIVE!

Introducing the Walls of WARC!

This summer WARC introduces monthly exhibits of artwork by members of our Slide Registry on the walls of the WARC Documentation Facility. July/August features *Jill Yawarski*, September; *Anita Mitra* and October; *Esbrat Erfanian*. For more information call Penny Stewart at 324-8910. We welcome you to visit and view these works. 

Irene Packer

FOCUS ON
WARC
 ART REVIEW

By Kathy Vatcher

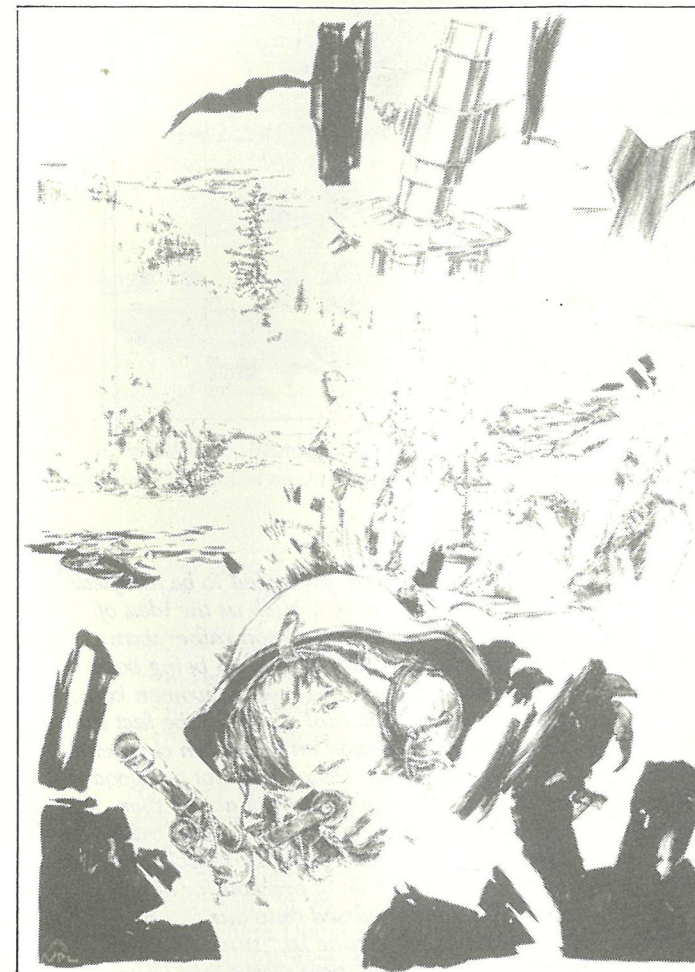
Diane Pugen's recent exhibit, *Recycled Transgressions*, at Workscene Gallery, May 12-30, was the stirring work of a mature artist concerned with the fate of our world in the face of transgressions repeatedly committed by "man." Pugen's work has taken on a new dimension as she is now using the written and spoken word effectively and freely in her work.

The artist had two rooms of work, each different in atmosphere, yet the thematic cohesiveness of the figurative wall-work and the sculptural land-work were clear to the viewer. Large mixed media canvases provoked thought about our geographic, political and psychological "landscapes."

The central room contained the larger pieces. Images and elements from the artist's earlier work are recycled in a fresh new way, using a collage technique to play on and highlight our concerns with each other and the earth. Questions, messages, phrases and instructions are there for us, on the drawings, printed, embroidered, or seemingly floating at eye level in front of one work. Images of war, soldiers in full battle dress with machine guns are juxtaposed with naked and vulnerable women. The innocent faces of children wearing battle helmets and holding submachine guns, microscopes, faucets, fans, telephones, elephants, Hebrew and Egyptian symbols pervade the canvases and smaller works. I asked Diane about some of these unsettling images.

Diane: "I want people to stop and notice the incongruities. The tension in the pictures is intentional. The viewer should be caught between the realities of the image and the incongruity of elements placed there. It upsets me that our society markets war and killing machines. People watched the Gulf War on T.V.!"

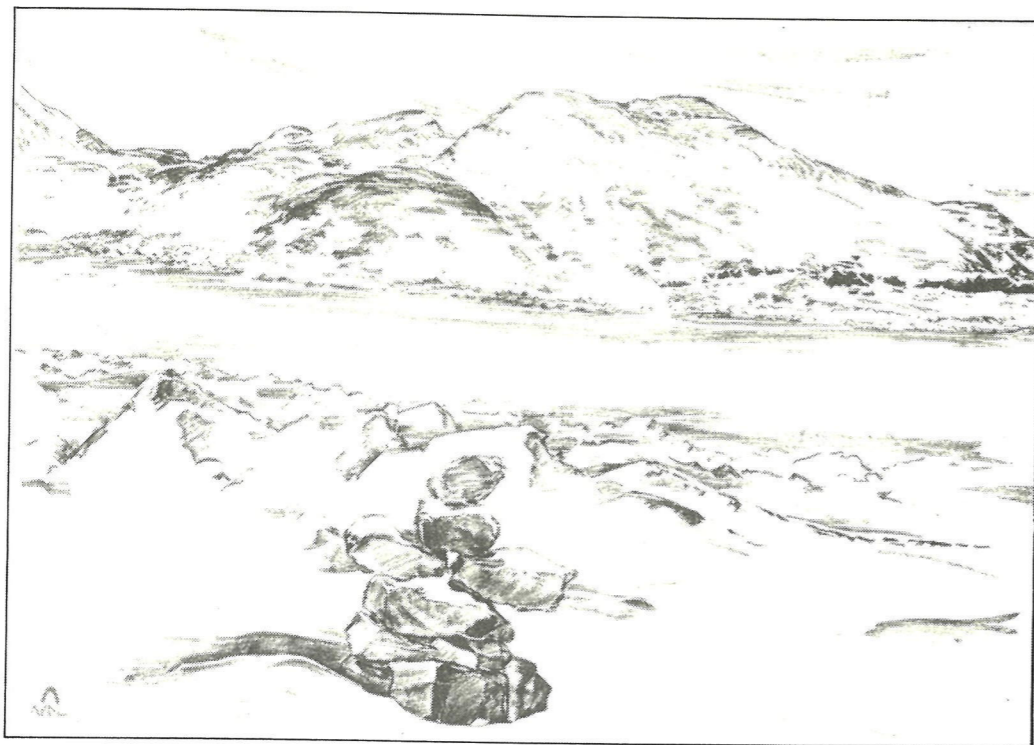
In her largest piece, "Interruptions Shouldn't Matter #1...Ma Kashe Lo," a naked man and woman sit apart from each other, on either side of the canvas. The woman holds a handgun and the man a machine gun, a telephone cord twines the two together. A modern Adam and Eve? The gleaming machined metal of the guns against the soft, vulnerable flesh is



*Diane Pugen, Recycled Transgressions #1, 1989, lithograph
 Photo by David Vatcher*

Diane Pugen

**Recycled
 Transgressions**



Diane Pugen, *Inukshuk Qagisug*, 1989, charcoal
Photo by David Vatcher

an arresting image. Sweeping black gestural strokes create tension between the figures, richly rendered in charcoal. A live cedar tree stands on either side of the work and a black cloth skirts and hangs from both sides. Printed on a large, clear acrylic panel suspended 3 feet in front of the canvas, a question is put forward; "What Is Bothering Him?" Below that, embroidered on the cloth under the drawing, is the text "Ma Kashe Lo." Diane explained to me that this Hebrew phrase was a personal link for her because of her Jewish heritage.

Diane: "Ma Kashe Lo" was initially used in reference to the biblical commentaries of Rabbinical scholars in explanations of sacred texts. It means, "What is bothering him?" or, "what is it that he feels needs further explanation?" If someone feels that they have to explain a sacred text because "he" is bothered by it, then "he" is bothered by something which has presumably been given by God. Because this has been given to us by God, "he" feels that "he" must accept it, yet "he" feels uncomfortable in leaving it without explanation. "He" feels "he" must explain it or justify it. Does this imply that there are precepts in Judaic-Christian texts, upon which our society is founded,

that are questionable and need to be justified? To me, certain concepts, such as the idea of man's dominion over creation rather than living in balance with it; women being born from man instead of the reverse; women being responsible for "Original Sin" and the fact that "Original Sin" is passed on to unborn children: all are questionable ideas. I do not feel good about these concepts. I cannot accept them. But in our acceptance of history and traditions based on sacred texts, we recycle this mind set; and this set of precepts for action and behaviour is passed onto our future generations. "Ma Kashe Lo," stuck with me while I was making these works and I guess it feels to me like it brings up that question again of accountability, personally and globally. That is the question I am asking myself and all of us."

The second room that I entered had a tremendously soothing affect. In one corner, there was a grouping of cedar trees which filled the air with their scent. The sounds of birds singing, water slipping over rocks and other sounds of nature acted as a backdrop to a voice, the artist's, which emitted from a speaker hidden behind more live cedar trees.



Diane Pugen, *Interruptions Shouldn't Matter #1... Ma Kashe Lo (What is Bothering Him)*, 1986-92, mixed media installation. Photo by Sabri Larnari

*For eight days
I sat on the rocks
well after the light was gone until
well after the light was gone
making marks
that recorded
my connection to this place.*

The voice spoke texts which were also printed as companions to the lush drawings of nature. The pines at Kahnasetake, done after the Oka crisis, Hiawatha Falls, Crystal Creek near Sault St. Marie and a view from the studio where Diane worked in Cape Dorset, Baffin Islands were some of the images in the drawings. I asked Diane about the poems.

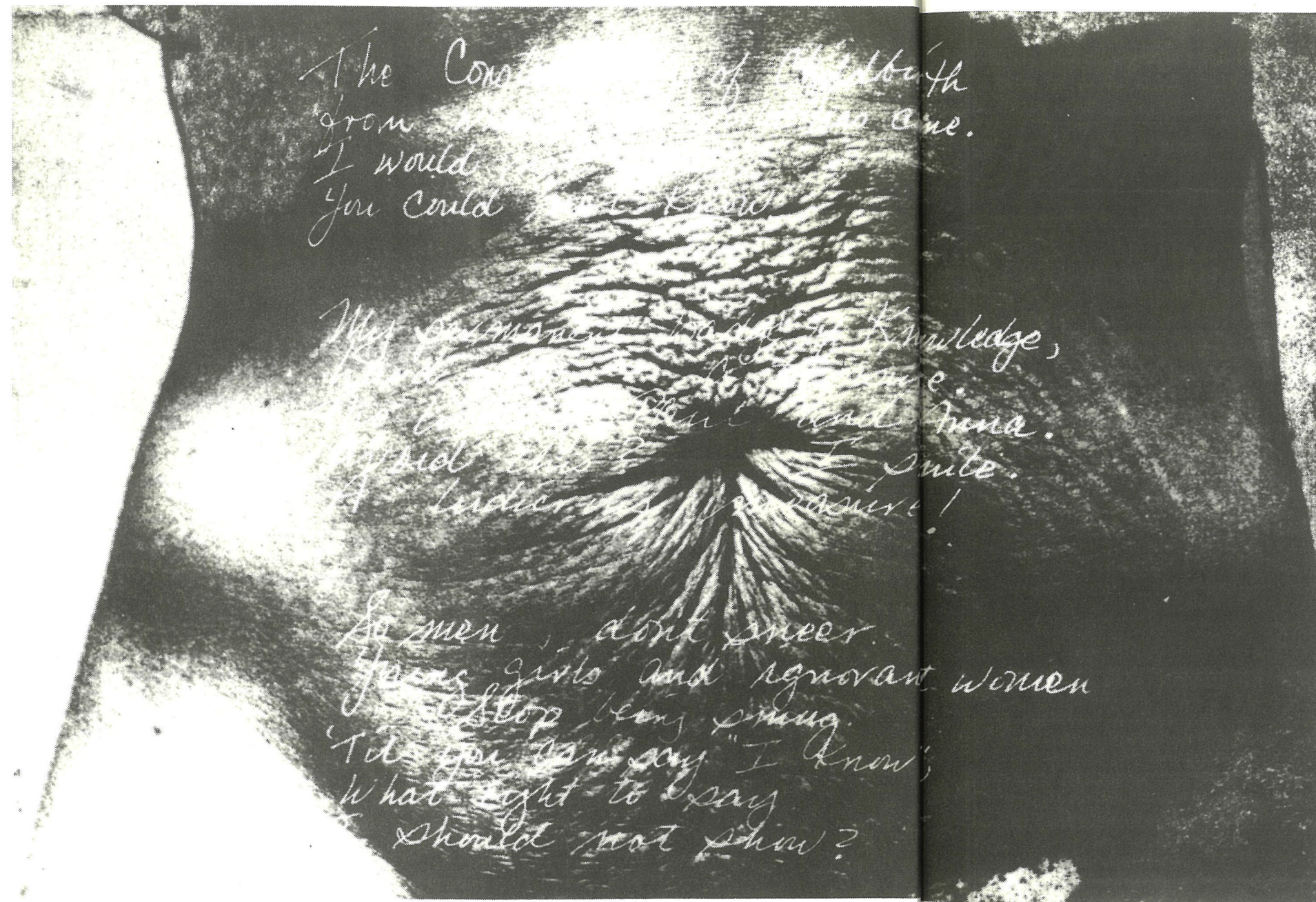
Diane: "I'm trying to share my experience with the viewer. I didn't know that I'd write. I felt I had to do more than the drawings. I wanted the viewer to feel and begin to build a relationship."

On the floor, arranged on red cloth, were some stones, cedar and water from Kahnasetake. Another red cloth had a small Inuit sculpture, ceramic tile and stone from Cape Dorset Harbour. Diane explained that these pieces and elements of nature were collected

with reverence. They were taken only after explanation and prayer and with the promise that they would be returned to their natural home after their use. In this harmonious and serene installation, the beauty of the natural world was recalled effectively by a wreath of cedar branches, which lay on the floor in the centre of the space. Closer inspection revealed a menacing coil of barbed wire in the cedar. Diane told me that she found the wire where she did the drawing. It was left behind after the battle at Oka. It's presence here was disturbing, yet it was a tangible symbol and a harsh reminder of the aggression man is capable of.

Diane: "Those values – kindness and caring and sharing, of honesty to see things as they truly are and to be honest with ourselves and each other, the strength to follow through with our convictions – those are the things that will help us, help us to preserve life on earth for future generations."

Kathy Vatcher currently lives in Toronto. She has written for the Globe and Mail and can be reached at 366-7707. M



June Clark-Greenberg

I made this image as part of a picture series assignment in a workshop given by Arnaud Maggs. It included twelve images of navels, including this one of mine. The navel series, I thought, would be an interesting change from the predictable facial portrait, navels being as distinct as fingerprints. I did nothing with the series beyond the workshop.

Six years ago, when I started making photo etchings, I began to recycle my photographs. I brought the navel series into the studio to see if I could do something interesting with it on the copper plate. I was not prepared for the reaction to mine. The responses ranged from shock and horror to blatant revulsion. I felt that I was being asked to "put perceived ugliness back into the cupboard" because it was unbearable.

I abandoned the series and got the biggest piece of copper that I could afford at the time (2' 1-3/8" x 2' 9-3/8") and committed this image to it. I had the need to show another definition of beauty. **M**

June Clark-Greenberg, *Untitled*, 1987, 2' 1-3/8" x 2' 9-3/8", photo etching,
Photo Ouellette Associates



Dust Bunnies or Profundities

By Anne Vespry

Daughters of the Dust

Julie Dash
1991, USA

If Dash had set out to produce a film that cannot be pigeonholed she might well have come out with *Daughters of the Dust*. It seems likely that she had higher aims, although it is certainly not clear exactly what those aims were. The publicity describes the film as a woman-centred investigation of African-American history, particularly the history of the Gullah people, yet this is no documentary.

Another reviewer described *Daughters* as "an art film in every sense of the word." (Angela Lawrence in *The Metro Word*, Toronto's newest, hottest, "Black culture Magazine" – look for it.) But "art film" sometimes means no plot and no budget, a film with unpleasant images shot from peculiar angles and thrown together to make little sense. How could this be historical?

Finally the contradictions in people's description of *Daughters* goaded me to see it.

I am still confused. Not about whether it is an historical film – viewers can't access the information and intensive research that are said to have gone into *Daughters*. Not about whether it is an "art film" – by local standards it was way too pretty to be art. Certainly not about what I think of the film – I enjoyed it immensely. The problem with Dash's film is that, like good LSD, it must really be experienced to be understood. Even then, one comes away with a feeling of having caught a glimpse of something vital – and without much solid to frame that in. Like an opera or ballet, it helps to know the plot before you see it. *Daughters* is set on the Sea Islands off the coast of Georgia. The islands were used as an entry point for slaves both before and after the trade became illegal. Due to the isolation of the area, Blacks on the islands maintained more of the traditions and culture of their African ancestors. The story is based on the last day spent together by an extended family

before most of them leave to the mainland hoping to join mainstream society.

The film is credited as being "a modern version of African oral tradition." I remember the stories my Trinidadian grandmother told as being direct. Perhaps these were just the children's versions of more complicated stories – she died before I would ever know. There is, however, nothing linear or direct about Dash's approach to her characters and their stories. Rather she wanders from point to point, touching a character here, a bit of dialogue there, a child's grave over on the beach, an argument in a graveyard, or a dream of slave ancestors dying their cloth.

The film's narrator, "the Unborn Child" skips through the bits and pieces of her ancestors' and family's lives occasionally becoming visible enough to tease her parents or others of the family. It is only at the end of the film that one sees her aimless skipping as like that of a grey spider in the corner of a barn door. Aimless and spasmodically repetitive, perhaps, but at the end she has created a beautiful spiralling web with each strand neatly attached to its neighbours'.

Dash's web is no less beautiful than the finest sunrise – lit dew – bedecked, arachnid offering. Her cinematographer, Arthur Jafa, won the award for Best Cinematography at the 1991 Sundance Film Festival. His shots of wind-bent trees on rolling, white seascapes are more than slightly reminiscent of the best painting of Northern Canadian winters: a celluloid version of the Group of Seven on holiday in the Caribbean.

It can be hard to focus through all the scenery, past the women who *Variety* described as a "two-hour Laura Ashley commercial," to find the story. The sceptical part of my mind wonders whether the sheer glamour* of the film plays a major role in its appeal to mainstream audiences. Yet is there anything wrong with this?

Mainstream filmmakers have been using women to lure audiences to their usually violent and misogynistic messages for a long time. If Dash can persuade people to enter,

for two-hours, into an Afro-centric feminist universe – why not? Perhaps it is time that activist artists remember the old adage about luring flies with honey – once you have captured them, you can educate all you please.

Dash portrays women's relationships with each other as being central to the workings of the world, a rare and valuable thing for people to see. Her *Daughters of the Dust* does not educate about African-American history in the sense that a documentary would, rather it teases the viewer into wanting to know more and wanting to educate themselves. Altogether a satisfying film.

*glamour: a spell of attraction – not about models and makeup.

Anne Vespry is a freelance communicator who specializes in helping people create messages that will be heard and understood by the intended audiences. As a member of MAVerick Consultants, she has worked on projects ranging from organizing financial and other data for easy accessibility, to editing research studies for the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, to running a progressive queer magazine, to writing reviews. M

Listings

Call for Submissions

Calling All Bisexual Women!

Call for written and visual work for the first anthology published in Canada by and about bisexual women. That means you! We are longing to read your poetry, essays, short stories, theory, oral histories, journals, letters, humour, interviews, conversations, rants, rages and (wo)manifestos about all issues and experiences related to being a bisexual woman. We would love to include your drawings, photographs and other visuals.

At least half of this anthology will be written and produced by women of colour. First Nations women from all of Turtle Island (both sides of the "border") are welcome. We are excited and honoured that this anthology will be published by Sister Vision Press, a Black Women and Women of Colour Press.

If you can, please send your writing on IBM compatible disc and a printed copy. Send self-addressed, stamped envelope (and if outside Canada, international Reply Coupons) for return.

Share your work with us: Bisexual Women's Anthology
c/o Sister Vision Press
P.O. Box 217, Stn. E
Toronto, Ontario M6H 4E2
Dead(Life)line: September 1, 1992



Call for Materials for an Anthology on Lesbian Erotic Fantasies. The working title: Graphic Details

This will be a mixed media collection of visual art, fiction, poetry, Haiku, creative non-fiction, performance art, interview, recipes. The anthology will explore the different ways that women of colour create, think, and act on erotic fantasies.

Deadline: September 30, 1992

Please respond immediately.

Send queries on works to:

Graphic Detail

Attn: Makeda Silvera or Leleti Tamu

Sister Vision Press

P.O. Box 217, Station E

Toronto, Ontario M6H 4E2

Writings should be typed, double spaced.

Do not send originals as we cannot guarantee return.



Submissions needed for Anthology on Mixed Race Women

- How has being of mixed race affected who you are?
- What race/ethnicity/culture do you identify with?
- Have you felt welcomed? Isolated? Reaffirmed? Ostracized?

Send stories, poetry, interviews, photographs, essays, graphics, journalism, oral stories, letter...

Mixed Race Anthology

Sister Vision Press

P.O. Box 217, Station E

Toronto, Ontario M6H 4E2

Deadline: October 31, 1992

Please ensure that your piece specifies your bi- or multi-racial heritage. Writings should be typed, double spaced. Do not send originals as we cannot guarantee return.

Call for Papers

Women and Writing

Resources for Feminist Research/Documentation sur la recherche Feministe is planning an upcoming issue on women and writing. The following topics are examples of possible areas for articles, but the editors are looking for a variety of approaches in the theory and practice of women's writing.

The Process of Writing

Autobiography

Literacy

Creative Nonfiction Writing

Modernism and Women's Writing

Boundaries Between Fiction and Nonfiction

Feminist Publishing

The Politics of Reviewing

Women and Language

Deadline: August 31, 1992

Maximum article length: 5000 words

Send articles, in English or French, to:

Resources for Feminist Research, OISE,

252 Bloor Street West,

Toronto, M5S 1V6, Canada

Tel: (416) 923-6641, ext. 2278

Exhibition

Laurentian Museum and Art Centre, Sudbury, Ontario.

"Transformations," Agatha Schwager, Aug 26-Oct 4, 1992



Scadding Court Community Arts Festival

The festival consists of three days of workshops leading into the final day of Arts Fair on Saturday. All events are open to the public. Each workshop is conducted in two 3-hour sessions per day with morning sessions being for children. The workshop leaders will be paid and the supplies will be provided by the organizers. The artwork produced in the workshop will be exhibited in the Fair. The Fair is open to local artists who would like to exhibit and sell their work. We particularly encourage artists from all cultural backgrounds and women to participate. All forms of creative expression are welcome. Bring to us your paintings, baskets, embroideries, cakes, jewellery, songs, sculptures, etc. We ask those who would like to lead a workshop to give us a brief description of their plan and how it relates to your community. The deadline for this is July 17, 1992. If you would like to show and sell your work in the Arts Fair, you can make arrangements with the organizers between July 17 and August 10, 1992. If you would like to volunteer your help or have ideas and suggestions, call us anytime. For more information call Gita at Scadding Court 363-5392 or Liz at the Meeting Place 366-3571.

MATRIART, a quarterly publication of the Women's Art Resource Centre (WARC), is committed to the support and documentation of Canadian women's cultural production. MATRIART provides a forum to empower and honour women's creativity. We actively solicit submissions representing the diversity of feminist communities across Canada. MATRIART will not publish submissions that are sexist, racist, classist, lesbo-homophobic or otherwise oppressive in nature.

The MATRIART Publication Collective is composed of artists, writers and activists committed to women's issues and the arts. Each issue of MATRIART focuses upon a specific theme of interest. We welcome feature articles and interviews; original artwork; artist statements; fiction and poetry; reviews of exhibitions, books, films, performance and theatre.

Women's Art Resource Centre

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Toronto, Ontario M6G 2S9

Tel: (416) 324-8910

Fax: (416) 324-1396

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

FOR ALL SUBMISSIONS:

Please ensure that you retain a copy of your submission for your own files. Include your name, address and phone number on the title or face page of all submitted work. Please include a brief biographical statement with your work. If you would like your work returned, you MUST enclose a self addressed stamped envelope of adequate size and sufficient postage. IF YOU DO NOT SEND THIS ENVELOPE AND POSTAGE, WE WILL ASSUME THAT YOU DO NOT NEED YOUR WORK RETURNED.

If the work submitted has been published previously, please note the date and publication in which it appeared. If you are sending this material simultaneously to another publication, please let us know.

You will be notified if your submission is accepted for publication. Based on our current funding, artist/writer's fees are as follows: .05 cents per word for all articles, reviews, statements; \$16-32 for poetry; \$8-32 per image. Along with payment, you will receive two complimentary copies of the issue in which your work appears.

FOR WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

Work should be typed double-spaced with one inch margins. Your name should appear on each page. Articles should be 1,500 - 2,500 words in length. Reviews are 750 - 1,000 words in length. We encourage submissions to be written in accessible language.

All publication decisions are made by the Publication Collective and are final. We reserve the right to edit for brevity and clarity. In addition, many manuscripts will require further editing for structure, length or philosophical considerations. An editor will contact you if such changes are required. If the writer and editor cannot negotiate mutually acceptable changes, the Publication Collective reserves the right to withdraw the work. In this event, the writer/artist will be entitled to 50% of the artist fee.

FOR ARTWORK AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Please submit clear quality black and white prints. We cannot be responsible for originals. Prints of artwork should be no larger than 8" x 10". Please do not send slides or negatives. Indicate on your submission "TOP" as necessary. Attach your name, address, phone number, media used and the date of the work. Also include the name of the piece(s) and any additional credits as appropriate.

Please indicate if you wish to have your work added to the WARC registry of Canadian women artists.

Matriart Premiere Edition Vol. 1, No.1

Women writers and artists on a variety of subjects including tradition as a celebration of cultural identity; Satanic Verses: censorship within a cultural context, and physical and psychic distance: relations between the "Third World" and the West.

Lesbian Artists Vol. 1, No. 2

Matriart's second edition addresses lesbian visibility and (self)representation. Among the topics discussed are: lesbian sexuality and censorship; lesbians, the black community and AIDS; and sexuality and spirituality.

Empowerment and Marginalization Vol.1, No. 3

Number three examines the creation of marginalization and breaking the barriers of race and religion. Matriart's discussion includes contemporary suppression of Jewish Art history, cultural appropriation of First Nations, and Ritual Abuse.

Art, Motherhood and Reproductive Technologies Vol. 1, No. 4

The medicalization of childbirth; fragmentation of the body; women's birthing experience; the artist/mother as subject and teacher; and the future of reproductive technology are some of the subjects addressed by artists and writers.

Women Artists of the First Nations Vol. 2, No. 1

Poetry and short stories to plays and political exposes by Native women artists. Featuring pieces by Shirley Bear, Joane Cardinal-Schubert and Jane Ash Poitras.

Women Against Violence Vol.2, No.2

This issue focuses upon a continuum of violence that stretches from the authority of family to the force of the military. Our contributors share their personal examinations of crimes committed against themselves and others.

Spirituality Vol.2, No. 3

Women writers and artists explore spirituality in relation to their work, lives, and communities. This issue contains a teacher of Buddhism on *action; connection* from an Ojibwa perspective; and a variety of topics such as body image, dissolving the mind/body split, Goddess imagery and myth, and envisioning the spiritual as space.

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Deadline: August 14, 1992

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Body/Self Image

Submission deadline: January 1, 1993

Doctoring the Mind: Women in Therapy

Submission deadline: April 1, 1993

Woman Space

Submission deadline: July 1, 1993

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The next issue of Matriart will feature an interview with Pauline Barrie, WASL's coordinator.

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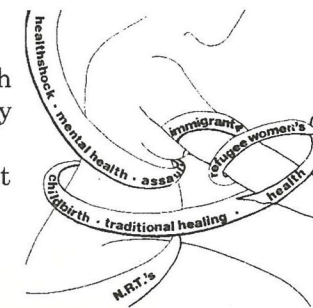
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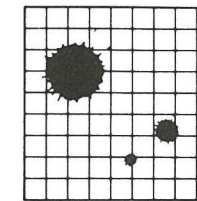
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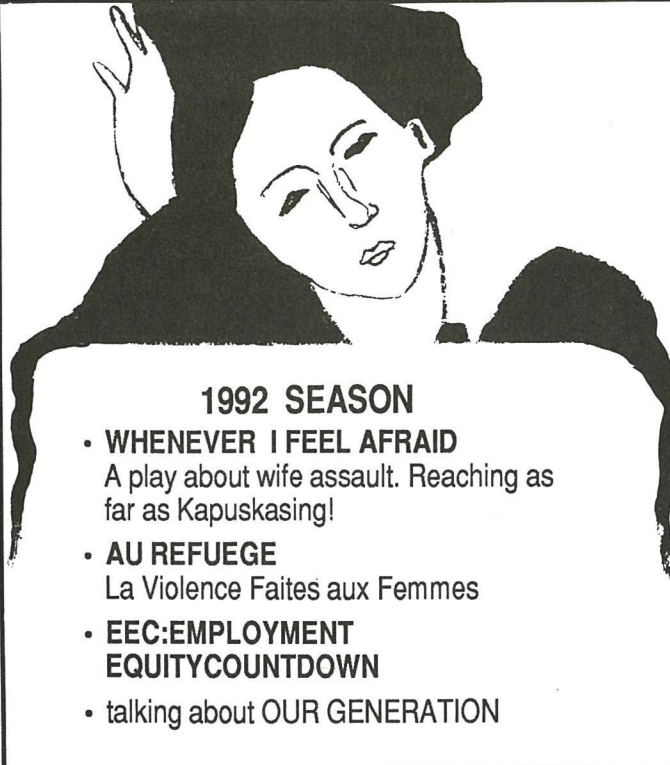
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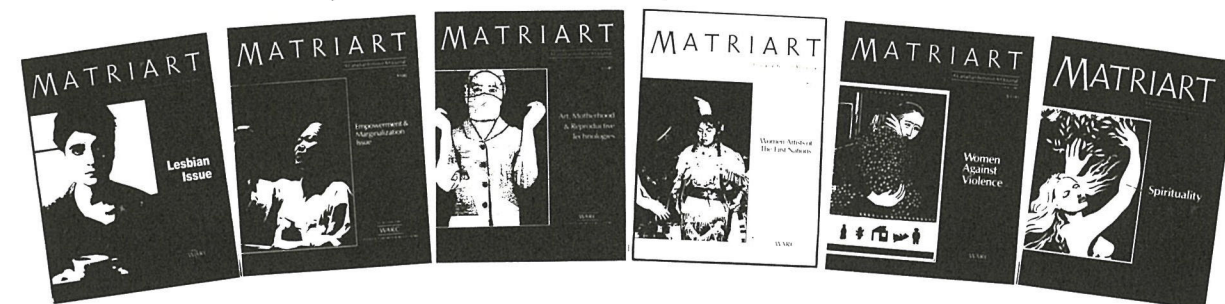
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