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Exhibitions in Review

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Liliana Berezowsky, Installation View at the John A. Schweitzer Gallery, Montreal. Photo : Richard-Max Tremblay.

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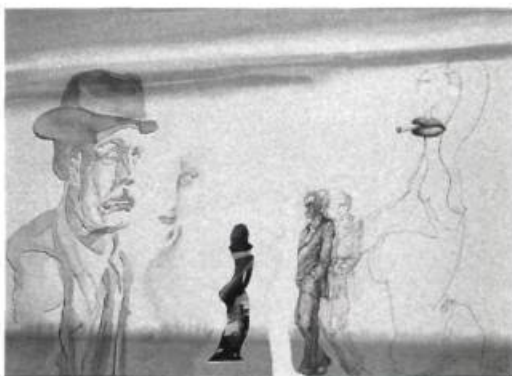
Liliana Berezowsky or metal poetry — This understanding of metal, Liliana Berezowsky owes it to blacksmith ancestors. In this second solo presented in March at the Schweitzer Gallery, she uses metal only. The wood or the found objects used before in her work have disappeared. The scale of her work has also become more important.

Metal, though often looked at as being cold and hard, for Berezowsky, is a very sensuous material. Fire is involved and the artist appreciates the dialogue and confrontation that occur, dealing with a material that stands up to her, that she has to confront in a very direct way. Metal remembers and it doesn't do exactly what one wants to do. One can make it do certain things but it reacts to what one wants to do and one has to take into consideration these characteristics. There is that interaction, interchange that is very important to the sculptor, who is not simply working on a material. But as a result of the interaction, there are certain changes that take place in the development of the work as it progresses. It is a very direct exchange, the sculptor compromises with the metal.

Added color has disappeared from the actual works, it gives them a sensuous austerity. The humour involved in the works prevents them from becoming too austere, or static or too formal. The purpose of the artist is not to make beautiful aesthetic pieces but to go much beyond formalism. Certain sculptures, or part of them, retain a quality of being found, for instance the wheels on kander or lague. It seems that they have some kind of function though we don't know quite what the function is. Or that they come from somewhere and have some function but it is obscure.

When one looks at the forms, there is a quote from the industrial world that gives them a grounding in the concrete reality. They also seem like medieval war machines of a castle, they have this ominous quality of the dark ages. One can read in these forms different levels of reference to the collective unconsciousness.

There are some drawings accompanying the sculptures. These are working drawings : exploring forms, they work as a complement to the elaboration of a sculpture. They are very important in the creative process. They also play with forms of the industrial world. Liliana Berezowsky can really change your ways of seeing industrial shapes and forms.



Hans Reorg Rauch, *Solitary Relations*, 1987. Watercolor and collage.

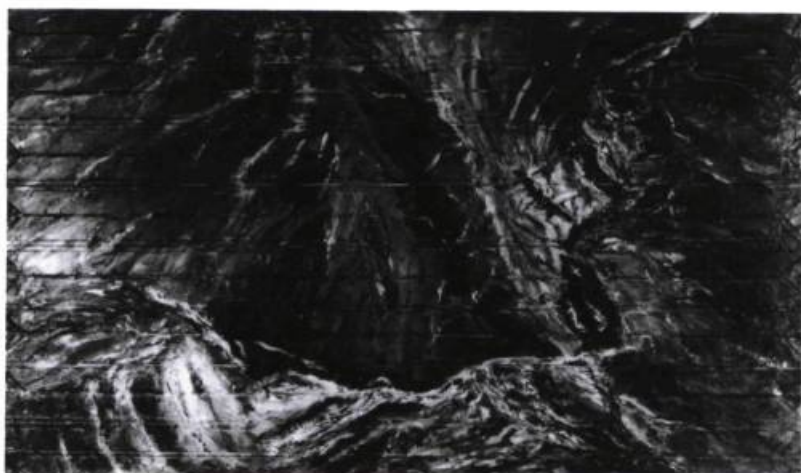
Acid Humour Amidst Glass — During the month of June, the Galerie Elena Lee Verre d'Art presented works by the famous German caricaturist Hans Georg Rauch. Forty-two drawings, etchings and watercolors were selected to represent the artist's last output.

Most of these have as subject matter a satirical comment on society. But this comment is sustained by excellent draughtsmanship. Contrary to most caricaturist, Rauch has us need for a written punch-line, the comment is fully present in the intelligent use of drawn lines. It is an intellectual delight to "read" Rauch's works but it takes a certain time of contemplation to reach a full comprehension of the subject matter. For instance, in *Rocky Mountains*, we see a deserted area with arid peaks until it becomes clear that we are looking at a cut tree trunk. The ecological comment becomes obvious and very persuasive. Each image has more than one interpretation. In *Blah Blah Bubbles*, the socialites speak bubbles which represent their futility.

His drawings are madly detailed; he becomes freer in his watercolors though the satire is not as readily perceptible. It is more difficult for the observer to grasp the meaning which has become more complex. But these works are more sensuous, more free-flowing. Using color pencils, he also draws doodle-like line figures. They refer to the naive world of children transposed into adult surroundings.

Rauch's works incite the intelligence. One never tires looking at them. Their aesthetic qualities as well as their content captivate the mind.

The Galerie Elena Lee Verre d'Art will continue to represent Rauch after the exhibition.



Christiane Cheyney, *Atelier à la dérive II*, 1987. Mixed Media, 27 x 48 cm. (Galerie Daniel)

The Professors choose, Galerie Daniel, June 1987 — The Galerie Daniel organized under the curatorship of Réal Turcotte an interesting exhibition of professors with students. Peter Krausz, Lorraine Benic and Tiu Yum Lau respectively from Concordia and Université du Québec in Montréal chose three of their best students to exhibit with them. At one entry per artist it was a rather small show and, excepting Claire Beaulieu and Christine Cheyney, it was, for the chosen students their first exhibition in a gallery. The reaction of the public was encouraging, more than half the exhibition was sold. Some of the works were historical quotations, others, prisoners of a new knowledge but all had strong qualities either of draughtmanship or sense of color. Seeing the works of the professors alongside the students showed that these were not disciples in the strict sense of the word. There was a feeling of freshness and sincerity in the presentation.

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Gilles Daigneault : Un point de vue sur la gravure — Antoine Blanchette, de la Galerie 13, maintient cette idée fort sympathique d'inviter un conservateur en début d'année à présenter une exposition. Gilles Daigneault, dont c'est le tour, a choisi de reprendre un court extrait du livre *La gravure au Québec*, dont il est le coauteur avec Ginette Deslauriers, et de vérifier la véacité de cette réflexion aujourd'hui. Il écrivait alors que certains artistes avaient eu recours à la gravure «à certains moments précis de leur cheminement parce que cette discipline leur apparaissait alors comme le seul moyen capable de traduire ce qu'ils avaient besoin d'exprimer».

Questionnement fort pertinent puisqu'il correspond, d'une part, à la situation même de la gravure qui est susceptible d'élargir la bivalence réservée de l'activité

artistique, à savoir : peinture-sculpture, domaine qui est à la fois les deux, et ni l'un ni l'autre, d'où une recherche d'identité des mécanismes et des frontières d'une revendication statutaire et de la mise en place d'un axe transversal, lieu peu exploré donc virtuellement chargé de formes nouvelles. D'autre part, cette exposition correspond à un renouveau d'intérêt pour ce médium si l'on en juge par les manifestations récentes.

Nous retrouvons donc Yves Gaucher, Betty Goodwin, Raymond Lavoie, Serge Tousignant et Irene Whittome avec d'anciennes et de nouvelles planches créées pour l'occasion. Le texte de présentation contient une réflexion de l'auteur sur la situation de la gravure qui, selon lui, bat de l'aile depuis quelques années et que «pour peu que les meilleurs s'y remettent, la situation pourrait facilement se redresser». La plupart des nouvelles planches présentées ne permettent pas d'augurer de ce redressement. S'il est vrai que ces artistes eurent une production intéressante en gravure, le fait de la reprendre d'une façon ponctuelle ne produit pas nécessairement un propos convaincant.

Phénomène du marché actuel, les collectionneurs ont acquis très rapidement les œuvres anciennes et nouvelles d'Irene Whittome, qui avait rehaussé chaque numéro du tirage de sa gravure d'une gestuelle colorée différente, et celles de Betty Goodwin qui, insatisfaite de son eau-forte, l'a transformée en collage rehaussé de couleurs. Des œuvres plus intéressantes, celles de Gaucher et de Tousignant, par exemple, furent négligées.

Cette exposition, au demeurant fort bien montée, nous permettait de revoir des œuvres anciennes toujours belles et d'apprécier le chemin parcouru par chacun des artistes.