

MARTIN HIRSCHBERG – BODY OF WORKS

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1



'THE FAMILY' - 2003

A series of twelve 36" x 36" and eighteen 9" x 9" acrylic paintings a limited set of gleece prints, and an array of hand painted pins, Martin departs from the landscape theme of his previous collection of works.

Martin ruminates the nature of families in all their dysfunctional glory.

His colourful, childlike characters with their manic, depraved expressions and hollow laughter plot seduction and farewell simultaneously. The family world is a circus of human vanities. The lively use of colour elevates emotions, providing an element to ease the viciousness of the underlying mix.

2



'PROVENCE' - 1998

Inspired by the early summer light and brilliant colours of Southern France , where Van Gogh, Cezanne and Gaugin spend extended periods of time painting out of doors, Hirschberg explored the pure colour, light and shadow or Provène.

In a collection of dynamic acrylic paintings, his handling of colour and tone transforms shade into an unsettling darkness and the supposedly languid summer sun becomes harsh, almost toxic.

3



'REFLECTIONS' – 1993 - 1996

A series of 6 dipictures (side by side) paintings consisting of 12 acrylic on canvas landscapes 49' x 37' by Martin Hirschberg working between 1993 and 1996.

Each of the dipictures is based on his observations and interpretations of real dwellings and structures during lush summers in Georgian Bay , which was the main source of his inspiration for his past paintings, sculptures and installations.

The deliberate juxtaposition of the negative and positive (reflections) is a metaphor for life. The exaggeration of this aspect confronts the viewer with an inherent paradox.

4



'A MOMENT IN TIME' – 1900'S

In the early 1990's Martin explored the temporary idyllic state of Southern Ontario – Georgian Bay lakeside retreats with a series of acrylic paintings entitled "A Moment in Time".

Beneath the surface of these paintings and their unassuming setting, lies an atmosphere of apprehension, with chairs offering a solitary presence emoting a feeling of vacancy and abandonment.

5



'THROUGH TIMES CORRIDOR' – Installation 1981

One-man exhibition of sketches, drawings and notes, video / constructions / at the Art Gallery of Hamilton Ontario. Through 'Times Corridor' is about time process and about the observation and sensibilities of Martin Hirschberg.

Moving Beyond "FOR THE BIRDS" – "THROUGH TIMES CORRIDOR" consisted of four, large separate, but integrated wood sculptures, Sanctuary, Altar, Seating & Pyre, that work together to create a large environmental scaled work. Here Martin delves into a feeling of foreboding, despair and abandonment, based on lonely, primitive structures, decaying objects and rotting canvas shrouds found in Georgian Bay.

Rejecting the persistent underlying pre-occupation with disintegration, decay, life & death, Martin abandoned sculpture as an artistic medium and returned to painting.

6



'FOR THE BIRDS' – Sculpture, drawings, sketches 1980 – 1981

An environmental sculpture / sketches / drawings and photographs in the permanent collection Art Gallery of Stratford, Ontario.

Martin's focus on natural and man-made objects in "Earthworks" steered him toward the environmental sculpture "For The Birds".

Occupying a space of twenty feet by twenty feet by ten feet high, the sculpture is a literal maze of abstracted wooden birdhouses in various stages of decay, resting on slender rusting poles, strung together by torn and ragged, rusted wire link fencing.

The deliberate presentation of the bird houses in various stages of decomposition, act as a metaphor of life and death.

7



'EARTHWORKS SERIES' – Construction & Drawings 1976 – 1980

Martin continued to explore the natural, and man-made, found, aging objects that surrounded him in Georgian Bay. The sketch he drew to document his observations became the catalyst for the constructed involvement pieces "Earthworks", a concentration of the elements of light and form.

Motivated by the natural elements in "Sublumination". Martin further refined his thinking and developed a series of wood sculptures, combined with integrated programmed light effects. These multi-media installations of ramps, steps, walkways, bridges and platforms alluded to primitive origins that were truncated and isolated.

8



'LANDSCAPES' – Sculptures & Drawings Series 1975 - 1976

Moving away from the organic beach refuse, with the draped and etched, folded clear plastic, which created a feeling of dread in "Sublimation", Hirschberg concentrated on his abstracted interpretations of discarded, windblown plastic bread wrappers found buried in the sand, and the constant interplay of light and shadow on the reflective surface.

These sculptures – ten feet by ten feet consist of heat formed / painted & screened / three-dimensional uvex plastic, which reflect and refract light giving a sense of movement to the piece.

By taking the plastic discarded bread wrappers out of context, it becomes abstracted, not too far removed from the way in which a traditional landscape artist transposes his materials, paint and canvas into his interpretation of a scene he finds esthetically stimulating. Therefore the name "Landscape" to the title for this series of work.

9



'HEALTH & WELFARE SCULPTURE' –

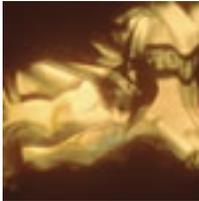
Research Centre Ottawa – Commissioned 1973 – 1975

A Custom commissioned kinetic sculpture, the largest in Canada, at that time designed as an integral part of the foyer, complete with it's own computerized program room, of a Health & Welfare Government building in Ottawa.

Consisting of twenty-five, four inch diameter, long heat formed clear acrylic tubes, arching, twisting and projecting out of a modulated and angular mirrored stainless steel back wall, reflecting and distorting the tubes through the mirror again and again.

Through the tubes a looped, and timed, heat and motion sensitive computerized programmer sends waves of pure white light, pulsating and flickering along the tubes – projecting, jumping and disappearing into the mirrored wall, only to reappear a short time later through other tubes. The sculpture captures the spirit of the scientific and technological work, taking place in the building.

10



'SUBLUMINATION' – Sculpture Series 1970 – 1973

Based on Hirschberg's observations and sketches of natural elements, and organic refuse being blown up by the waves on the beaches in Georgian Bay.

In "Sublumination", Martin offers a personal expression of his extension beyond the synthetics, and the light reflexives of plastic of "Out of the Blue", and "Transluminations", into more organic, natural materials.

Subluminations are a blend of formed and bent fiberglass plastic, the interaction of light, and how they play a subservient role to natural materials, leaves, sand, twigs and beach refuse.

Martin has draped each of these piles of organic materials with torn, etched, folded, melted, scarred sheet of clear plastic. The lighting as suggested from the title is projected from beneath the pile, evoking an underlying foreboding feeling of rotting ice in the spring.

11



“TRANSLUMINATIONS’ – Modular Sculpture System Series 1969 – 1970

In “Transluminations”, Martin explored the purity of light through a series of illuminated, etched, clear flexible plastic models, ten feet long and eighteen inches wide, which create a structural system based on the relationship of light space and transparency.

Designed to be installed in a variety of configurations, wall to ceiling, wall to wall, floor to wall, floor to floor, singly or in groups. The etched grooves running the length of the modus catch the pure, hot light, from the lighting housing at each end creating arched, arabesque or free spring patterns reacting against each other, that seem to soar into orbit.

12



'JACOBS LADDER' – Commissioned Modular Sculpture 1969

Galleria Toronto Eaton's Centre

A major lighting reflecting mural wall installation, 32' x 38' consisting of three dimensional, mirrored, stainless steel hinged modules, mounted in a grid format at 45° angles to the wall of the Galleria Eaton's Centre, Toronto. Reflective and colorless, except by means of color reflection, light in motion / people in motion the natural light of the skylight setting up a labyrinth of light.

The structured modular system is based on the relationship of light and space, sometimes a subtle colour change that is almost imperceptible, and at other times it has light patterns racing back & forth on it's surface, changing as viewers pass by, their colour, their involvement being reflected and refracted back into the sculpture itself, as if a metaphor for Jacob's Ladder to Heaven above.

13



'OUT OF THE BLUE' – Sculpture Series 1967 - 1969

Through the refinement of the kinetic series of sculptures eliminating the Kewpie Doll face & internal illumination, Hirschberg's continued to experiment with light & plastic by balancing bright blue, high reflective metallic / plastic cubes, in a variety of angles, linking them to each other with curving, bent pipes of clear, colourless plastic., fifteen feet long by thirty inches high.

The effect of light on the sculpture is used for pureness of meaning and it's mystical qualities.

14



"KINETIC" KINETIC SCULPTURE SERIES – 1964 - 1968

Eventually the "Kewpie" motif disappeared and Martin concentrated on the simplicity of programmed light, plexi-glass sculptures.

Beautiful and suggestive, cast acrylic tubes radiating in different intensities or programmed lighting, Martin continued to refine his ideas again and again, until the tubes disappeared leaving purity of light on it's own.

15



'KEWPIE' – Assemblages series 1960 – 1964

Moving from his early paintings of the rapacious, everyday people, in an engaging semi-pop, but facile hard edge style, he shifted from the two dimensional to the three dimensional, focusing on assemblages with painted celluloid "Kewpie Doll", devoid of personality with a mass produced motif, manipulated into a formula of regimented figures - a symbol of conformity that plagues our society.

"Kewpies" were an ironic commentary of the regimentation & foibles of the human race, a dolls view of the modern world.

From "Kewpie Dolls", Martin leapt to plastic and light. He enclosed the bland little "Kewpie" faces into elegant, vacuum formed plastic tubes & surrounded her with programmed lighting effect – eventually eliminating her entirely evolving into further work in plastic and kinetics.

16



'LOVE' – Acrylic Paintings & Watercolour Series 1960 – 1964

A series of satirical acrylic paintings of characters with toothy smiles, hollow laughter, hearts pasted on their sleeves, and personalities that plot seduction and farewells.

A circus of human vanities and a menagerie of glittering colour and material, projecting a feeling that "Love" is the only thing that matters – Lead Martin into a semi-pop art excursion of the world of "Kewpie Dolls".