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Local artists Bound for glory

Exhibit has variety of vision from voices both established and new

Bound...
Teresa Burrows, Cliff Eyland, Kevin Friedrich, Glennys Hardie, Shaun Morin, Bev Pike, Paul Robles and Tim Schouten

ace**art**inc., Winnipeg, June 10 to July 10, 2004

BOUND represents the first show of Manitoba painters in recent memory. The title actually encompasses the entire dictionary definition of the word bound, but in its short form, what does it mean?

It could refer to the voluptuous nudes of Thompson artist Teresa Burrows, many of whom are depicted in various restraints. Or perhaps it could refer to the dream-like quality of Kevin Friedrich's work, in which nothing seems bound, and figures slip the surly bonds of earth.

Or, as the aceartinc. publicity material states, maybe it refers to that almost-clichéd idea of the Prairies as a world unto itself, where the inhabitants are bound to the land and each other through their sometimes-overwhelming isolation.

Talented

Whatever the title may imply, the works on display reveal a talented and diverse community of painters in Manitoba. *Bound* contains a remarkable variety of ideas and visions -- everything from Paul Robles' traditional doily art turned into peep-show erotica to the undersea dreamscape of Bev Pike.

Pike's 20-foot-long work, *A Hymenal View of Lunacy*, creates a visual illusion of an undersea world while also reproducing the lines and textures of fabric, using colour, detail and scale that recalls European masterworks.

The title of the piece is a clever word play that underscores the feminine tone of Pike's work. Referring to the female anatomy, it points out the gender bias inherent in language: to the ancient Greeks -- who felt that the womb, which they called the hyster, moved around a woman's body -- there was a certain madness, hysteria, that they believed was part of being a woman.

This madness, they felt, was compounded by the menstrual cycle, which, being tied so closely to lunar cycles, produced lunacy -- literally a moon-induced insanity.

A Hymenal View of Lunacy, then, shows Pike engaging with this idea, and the work itself is a visually remarkable piece that, in her own words, attempts to use painting as installation art, rather than simply "as a picture of something."

Cliff Eyland, a noted critic, teacher and artist who has displayed his work worldwide, contributes 70 works the size of index cards. The paintings are somewhat abstract in nature, and though no two are alike, they contain consistent images such as landscapes, human figures and mushroom clouds, and ideas that seem to borrow from sci-fi, *Alice in Wonderland* and *Lord of the Flies*.

Eyland's tiny paintings show an artist who is at ease with his medium, and who is able to skilfully compress detail into minimal space.

Eyland's influence shows up in Shaun Morin's work, hardly surprising since Eyland has had a large influence on a generation of young Manitoba artists.

Morin, part of the Two-Six art collective, has become renowned for his small paintings, as well as some of his less traditional works, produced under a pseudonym.

In *Bound*, Morin's distinctively urban work shows a keen eye for colour, space and the power of simplicity.

At another end of the spectrum is Kevin Friedrich, whose large and dense canvases pack detail into virtually every inch available. Using bizarre and humorous combinations of images and ideas such as spacemen, surfboards, orangutans and water towers and clever titles such as *Idiodyssey*, Friedrich proves here that his growing reputation is well deserved.

Tim Schouten's curiously blurred landscapes are reproductions of video stills, and deal with aboriginal land claim issues, while Glennys Hardie's found-object grid shows a novel approach to the art of painting, and like Pike's work, are as much installation as "pictures."

- Lorne Roberts
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