



Communiqué

OPENING THURSDAY MARCH 9TH, 8PM

SALLE 1 - March 9th to April 22nd 2006

STEPHANIE CHABOT *Basement Landscape*
(*paysage en sous sol*)

In her new exhibition *Basement Landscape*, Stephanie Chabot sets out to explore those ominous spaces - physical and psychic - whose vertiginous ambiguity is so great that they provoke fear and laughter all at once.

The show combines broad pop cultural references and a pointed playing with psychoanalytical conceits in order to tease out the investment both have made in the uncanny. Garishly green hands, furred, tipped with claw-like scarlet nails protrude from the gallery's walls and floors, gripping or overturning furniture. A potted plant is impaled by a butcher's knife. Sinister black masks seem to preside over the scene. They call to mind zombies, ghouls, werewolves, the denizens of thousands of kitsch horror films. This tense artifice is set against a mural that - while reminding one of a peculiar uncle's rec room - stands in for the "natural" amid all this invocation of the "supernatural."

The exhibit gets its most powerful frissons from the fraught relationship between this grotesque esthetic and the dull esthetic of the safest place for all: The ordinary suburban home. The visuals of standard domesticity are entangled with visions from our worst nightmares, leaving us nowhere to hide. That tension teases at the buried roots of terror in the awed relationship our forebears shared to the primeval landscape and the indifference of natural forces; the same fright that animated the enchanted forests of our childhood fairytales and now haunts the flux of scary movies, comic books and television.

In this new work Chabot takes us back and forth between some of the oldest and some of the most contemporary incarnations of the perpetually renewed *other*. She takes us - and our nervous laughter - down a telling and rickety stairway to the basement of our mind and our culture, to the place where we store all of the things we tell ourselves we've outgrown.

Stephanie Chabot is a Montreal-based artist. She studied in the Fine Arts Department of Concordia University and has shown her work in numerous one person and group shows, most recently at the Caravanserai centre in Rimouski and l'Écart...lieu d'art actuel in Rouyn-Noranda.

IN THE LOUNGE

Until April 22nd 2006

JULIE DOUCET *À l'école de l'amour*
The last chapter

La Galerie Clark est ouverte du mardi au samedi, de midi à 17h
5455, avenue de Gaspé, #114, Montréal (QC) H2T 3B3
(514) 288 4972 - www.clarkplaza.org

Le Centre CLARK fonctionne grâce aux efforts soutenus de ses membres et de son personnel, adhère au RCAAQ (rcaaq.org) et à Culture Montréal (culturemontreal.ca), remercie le Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, le Conseil des Arts du Canada, le Conseil des arts de Montréal, Service du développement culturel de la Ville de Montréal et la Brasserie McAusland.

SALLE 2 - March 9th to April 22nd 2006

MARYSE LARIVIÈRE *Wild is the Wind*

Maryse Larivière continues her exploration of intimacy and relationship with her new exhibition, *Wild Is the Wind*, created during a recent residency in France.

In videos and a series of large-scale photographs Larivière presents couples, sometimes on their own and sometimes in the crowd. Men and women hold each other closely and dance out of time to a raucous music. They speak quietly, isolated from the manic activity of a football match that engulfs them. They recline together in a sun-soaked park. Regardless of their environment, however, the pairs are always in direct relation to one another; their single-minded focus mirroring that of the image's viewer and troubling its presumed ordinariness, its normalcy.

Coolly, almost casually, composed the images suggest the informality of snapshots while being deliberately staged, so their actual position seems closer to artifice and fiction. Larivière's purposeful distortion of these boundaries strategically disrupts conventional inscriptions of photographic literalness while stressing interpretive availability, a gesture to the works' thematic concerns and an underlining of the erotic, not to say voyeuristic, force of the gaze in any visual representation. And, in these images, with their strange take on gender roles, on contact and its fluid limits, on the most personal forms of conviviality - *living*, and *living together* - it seems a force that might be shared, and paradoxically pleasurable rather than circumscribing.

In *Wild Is the Wind*, Larivière stakes out a place both *about* and *for* relationship, between her models, and more intriguingly between her images and the world, which is to say, in many important ways, with us.

Maryse Larivière is an artist and curator. She holds a BFA from Concordia University and has presented her work in group and solo shows in several galleries and artist-run centres, among them SKOL and ISEA2004 (Finland). Most recently, she was awarded a residency at Villa Arson, France.

Texts by Peter Dubé

POSTES - AUDIOS

MIKE SHANNON - *Possible Conclusions to Stories that Never End*

CHRISTIAN MIRON - *Au placard*

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