



Swounds

JULIE OAKES

CANADIAN CLAY AND GLASS GALLERY

Swounds

APRIL 10 - JUNE 26, 2011

CANADIAN CLAY AND GLASS GALLERY

Swounds: Julie Oakes

Catalogue of an exhibition held at the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada from April 10, 2011 to June 26, 2011.

© 2011 Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery
25 Caroline Street North, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 2Y5
www.canadianclayandglass.ca

All rights reserved

Julie Oakes 1948-
Christian Bernard Singer 1962-

ISBN # 978-0-9784886-7-3

- I. Julie Oakes
- II. Christian Bernard Singer
- III. Alfred Engerer
- IV. Berango Studios
- V. Neema Bickersteth
- VI. Philip Bast
- VII. Sculpture
- VIII. Glass
- IX. Ceramic
- X. Installation Art

Curator	Christian Bernard Singer
Photography	Jennifer Bedford - Pages 3,7,13,15,18,19,21,23-25,27,29,31,33,36-39,43-51,56-67,75-79 Richard Fogarty - Pages 9,12,17,22,26,28,30,32,34,35,40-42,52,54,55,67-74,81-89 Karl Griffiths-Fulton - Pages 53,80 Raffaella Navarretta - Page 11 Stanzie Tooth - Page 86
Graphic Design	Richard Fogarty
Printed by	Rich Fog Micro Publishing
Publisher	Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery

The Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery gratefully acknowledges project support for this exhibition from the Musagetes Fund at the Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation.

The Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery gratefully acknowledges ongoing operational and programming support from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, the Waterloo Regional Arts Fund, the Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation, the City of Waterloo, and our donors, sponsors, and members.

Outside cover Image of Swounds Exhibition: Photograph by Jennifer Bedford

Inside cover Image: Photograph by Karl Griffiths-Fulton



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts
du Canada





JULIE OAKES

Swounds

Curated by Christian Bernard Singer

CANADIAN CLAY AND GLASS GALLERY

FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure that the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery presents *Julie Oakes: Swounds*, an exhibition about the fragility and individuality of life. Comprising seven installations in glass and ceramic, and complemented by additional sculptures and works on paper, *Swounds* took three years to make and the results are absolutely spectacular. Dramatic, poignant, beautiful, and affirming an impassioned message to really live life; *Swounds* really delivers!

Julie Oakes first brought this project to my attention in 2008 and I was immediately hooked. Through a series of twists and turns, setbacks turning into opportunities, and the enrolment of incredible collaborators such as the Lonsdale Gallery, Berango Studios from Murano, Italy, Alfred Engerer, David Montpetit, Philip Bast, Richard Fogarty, and a host of supporters and sponsors, the exhibition evolved into the tour de force that is documented in this catalogue.

Realizing an exhibition of such magnitude requires massive support. I particularly wish to thank Julie Oakes' dealer, the Lonsdale Gallery, who generously provided financial and organizational support to the project. Several members of the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, including Board Directors Holde Gerlach and Thomas Mennill, purchased birds created by Berango Studios under a sponsorship program that was designed to increase the remaining flock of glass birds. As well, I am extremely grateful to our exhibition sponsor, the Musagetes Fund at the Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation and for operational support from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, the City of Waterloo, and numerous sponsors and donors.

Most of all, I wish to thank Julie. Her fabulousness-ness-ness, incredible energy, ingenious resourcefulness, and unwavering resolve to seeing all aspects of the exhibition through has been truly inspiring and it has been an honour to work with her.

Christian Bernard Singer
Curator



Julie Oakes: Swounds

“When an elephant dies, its family members engage in intense mourning and burial rituals, conducting week-long vigils over the body, carefully covering it with earth and brush, revisiting the bones for years afterward, caressing the bones with their trunks, often taking turns rubbing their trunks along the teeth of a skull's lower jaw, the way living elephants do in greeting.”

– Charles Siebert

The awareness of life, death, mourning, and grieving are hardly germane to the human species but as far as we know, humans are the only species who ask such questions as why we live and die. These questions remain in the realm of the unknowable yet continue to define the human experience and have been a common thread in our art and stories since our earliest beginnings.

Julie Oakes is pre-eminently a storyteller who uses mythology, sexuality, and erotica as a vehicle for expressing contemporary issues. Whether working with feminist, humanist, or spiritual themes, her work flirts with autobiographical elements. Since 2005, Julie Oakes has been using spiritual narratives derived from Eastern iconography in her recent series *The Buddha Composed*. Continuing with the spiritual, but turning her attention to biblical themes, *Swounds*, an exhibition that was three years in the making, consists of a series of seven installations, complemented by additional sculptures and works on paper, that address the fragility and individuality of each life.

Opening the exhibition is the *Weeping Monkey* that lies on its back in a glass bowl. Like a prologue that foretells of things to come, the monkey has remarkable anthropomorphic resemblances to a human baby as it lies in a pool of his own tears.



Cradled in a pose that oscillates between vulnerable innocence and mischievousness, he cries gently and knowingly, acknowledging that suffering is part of life.

At the heart of the exhibition is *Sparrow Swounds*; a flock of nearly 120 glass sparrows suspended from the ceiling which seem to fly in formation through the Keith and Winifred Shantz Gallery, the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery's main space. The installation of the flock of birds makes full use of the room's stunning architecture designed by Vancouver architects John and Patricia Patkau. Over the course of the exhibition, some 40 birds smash to the floor below while a pile of broken glass grows beneath the remaining flock. A recording of the hymn, *God Sees the Little Sparrows Fall*, sung by opera soprano, Neema Bickersteth, precedes the fall. "If God so loves the little birds, you know he loves you too" is the pivotal prompt before the 'death.'

At the sound of shattering glass, we are more than simply startled because we not only react to the misfortune of irreplaceable loss, but are intensely aware of the danger posed by the unpredictable scattering of razor-sharp shards. Even the anticipation of this sound can have us freeze in our tracks, all the while cringing in high alert. The 'deaths' were scheduled for specific times during the exhibition, prompting gatherings of people to witness the falls. Although anticipating that something was about to happen, when a bird actually crashed to the floor, visitors' reactions ranged from surprise, shock, and awe, to being moved to tears. Some came just to witness the thrill of a 'good smash.' Immediately following the fall, gallery staff performed a ritualistic sweeping of the broken glass using a simple straw broom with a lavender-coloured handle.

Following the loss of three close friends to cancer,

Oakes contemplated the seeming unfairness of death and her anxiety of losing others close to her. The work acknowledges that we are all vulnerable to untimely death, the shattering affect that death has on the living, and that each person is unique and irreplaceable.

Another defining work to this exhibition is *Ark*, a painting of an immense ship. Animals are painted onto lines that follow the ship's wooden architecture - stronger animals at the bottom supporting the lighter. From an oval portal around which a snake is coiled, an inclined lavender plane descends as a graceful arc to the floor on which 28 animals emerge winding in single file represented only by their feet. The feet are almost jewel-like in the way that they are individually sculpted, hand-painted, and highlighted with gold leaf. Meanwhile, the number 28 alludes to the lunar cycle of menstruation and asserts a decidedly feminist slant on the traditional patriarchal story of Noah's Ark. A small female human black foot paired with a larger male white foot form the transition from ark to plane and the animals proceed on a ramp to arrive on the gallery floor. One cannot escape the eco-conscious message in the Biblical narrative in which man was given responsibility to protect the animal kingdom. It becomes particularly pertinent to our time given humankind's disastrous impact to the planet in what scientists are calling the sixth mass extinction, where the rate of loss is possibly greater now than at any time in the history of the Earth.

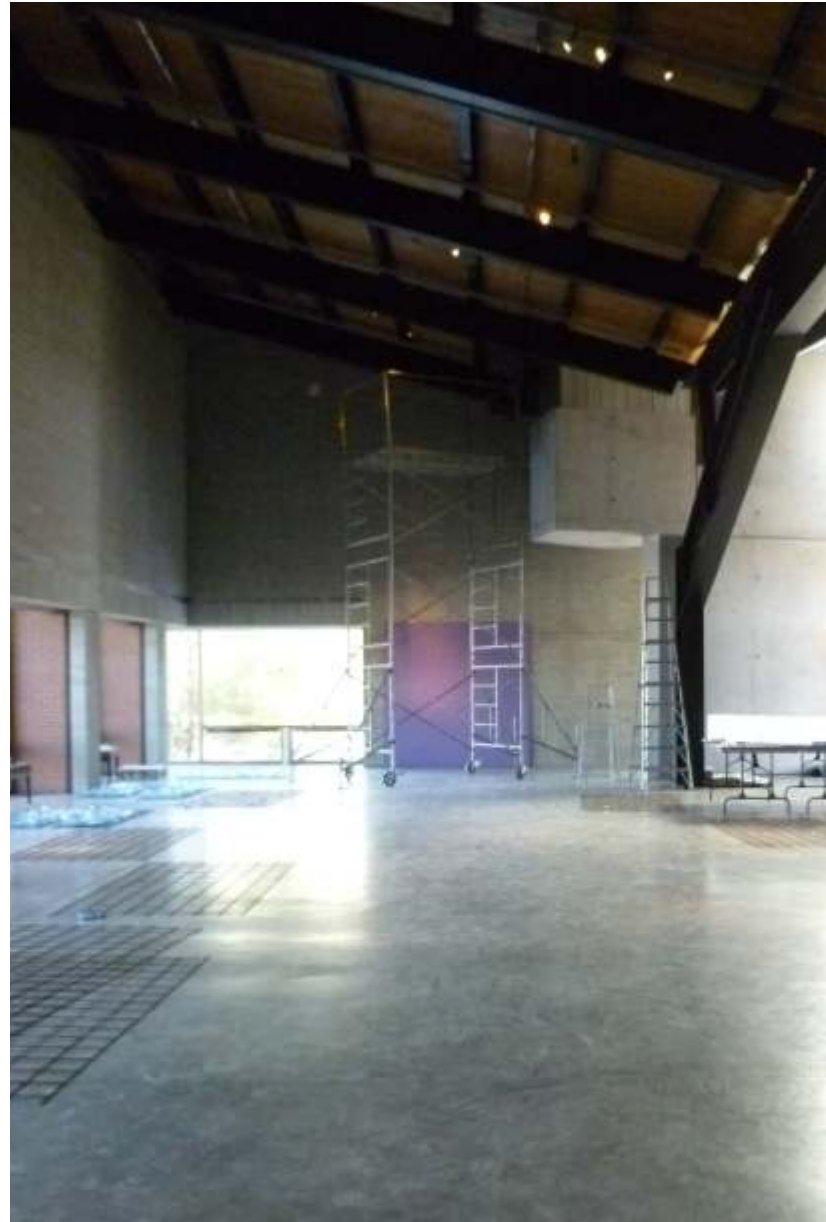
Oakes reinterprets another traditional religious icon in *Sparrow Christi*, a white porcelain bird splayed on a polished wooden cross, wings outstretched, directly referencing the religious iconography of the crucifixion of the Christ. Yet, this work is not a portrait of sacrificial selflessness and agonized suffering. Instead, the crucifix might be viewed as an altar rather than an engine of torture as the bird

seems to commune with his Maker as if in a state of acquiescent – or possibly sexual – ecstasy.

Hanging next to *Sparrow Christi*, is *White Raven* inspired by a First Nations creation story from the Haida people of Puget Sound. With its right wing outstretched and left wing folded across its breast, the life-sized porcelain raven holds a stone in its beak. The Haida narrative states that the White Raven originally lived in the “Land of the Spirits” but growing bored, he flew away carrying a stone in his beak. He eventually grew tired and dropped the stone in the ocean where it expanded and created the firmament on which humans now live.

Unlucky Bunny, located in the Bierstock Circular Gallery, evokes images taken from Dutch bounty-of-the-hunt still-life paintings which celebrated prosperity and abundance. Interestingly, these paintings might just as easily capture the lusciousness of dew drops on a grape as they could also serve as a reminder of the transience of life by depicting wilting flowers or fruits well past their prime. Still-life paintings often depicted rabbits as hanging downwards — “pathetic creatures with their feet trussed and lifeless eyes open, glistening wet as if they have wept for their own demise, like Shakespeare's Ophelia.” However, in this work, the hanging bunny appears as a spirit or ghostly image that hovers above a bunny with hauntingly human physical attributes that lies in a trickling pool of blood below. Suggesting a fresh kill, traces of dripping blood from the nose of the bunny's spirit still remain as if it has not yet completely passed into the next world. Its over-sized breasts suggest that a litter of kits might find themselves suddenly orphaned.

The Curator's Dinner is an installation of two-dimensional glass birds that flutter above and through a suspended triangular table-like portal,



Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery prior to installation of *Swounds*



Christian Bernard Singer, Julie Oakes, Alfred Engerer

below which, there is a mound of birdseed on the floor. The work winks at Judy Chicago's most famous work, *The Dinner Party*. Here, artists, curators, writers, art dealers, and collectors come together to feed on art and beauty in the form of bird seed, and to share ideas with a flurry of agitation and excitement.

The remaining porcelain bird sculptures and installations depict birds courting, sleeping, and dying. In *Die Liebenden Fliegen* (The Lovers Fly), birds playfully cavort and flirt with each other. In *Les oiseaux dorment aussi* (Birds Sleep Too), birds sleep in human poses, on their backs, sides, stomachs, sometimes gently cradling their significant others – vulnerable and innocent in a sleep that seems busy with dreams. Finally, in *Bits of Beauty*, birds again suffer untimely deaths as they smash into windows unaware of the glass barrier that prevents their passage through strange portals in our concrete jungle constructions. Oakes accesses the very moment of impact – awkward and tragic, with shapes that are poignantly anguished and contorted. Yet, in what she calls “the death of beautiful presence,” there is beautiful presence in death.

Julie Oakes presents an emotional range of life and death experiences with a delicate hand as if in a state of meditative observation in which the impulsive act of judging is absent. *Swounds* make us face the tragedy of death, share in the ecstasy of beauty and the beauty of ecstasy in ways that acknowledge loss and beauty against the backdrop of a larger unknowable picture. Most of all, this exhibition offers the opportunity to evoke a profound gratefulness and acknowledgement for the precious gift of life.

Christian Bernard Singer, Curator

¹ Siebert, Charles. *An Elephant Crackup?* The New York Times Magazine. October 8, 2006.

² Oakes, Julie. Artist statement, 2011.



JULIE OAKES

Swounds

“When an elephant dies, its family members engage in intense mourning and burial rituals, conducting week-long vigils over the body, carefully covering it with earth and brush, revisiting the bones for years afterward, caressing the bones with their trunks, often taking turns rubbing their trunks along the teeth of a skull's lower jaw, the way living elephants do in greeting.”

– Charles Siebert



White Raven



Sparrow Christi

The Haida narrative states that the White Raven originally lived in the “Land of the Spirits” but growing bored, he flew away carrying a stone in his beak. He eventually grew tired and dropped the stone in the ocean where it expanded and created the firmament on which humans now live.



White Raven - 2011, white porcelain, width 27" x height 12" x depth 8"





Sparrow Christi is not a portrait of sacrificial selflessness and agonized suffering. Instead, the crucifix might be viewed as an altar rather than an engine of torture as the bird seems to commune with his Maker as if in a state of acquiescent – or possibly sexual – ecstasy.



Sparrow Christi - 2011, porcelain, w 13" x h 14" x d 2.5", cross, walnut, w 18" x h 24" x d .75"



Bits of Beauty and Les Oiseaux Dorment Aussi - West wall of the Keith and Winifred Shantz Gallery



Bits of Beauty

there's perfume burning in the air/bits of beauty everywhere

Anjani and Leonard Cohen from the album Blue Alert



Bits of Beauty - 2011, eighteen porcelain birds & fragments, each approx. 8 x 7 x 4 inches

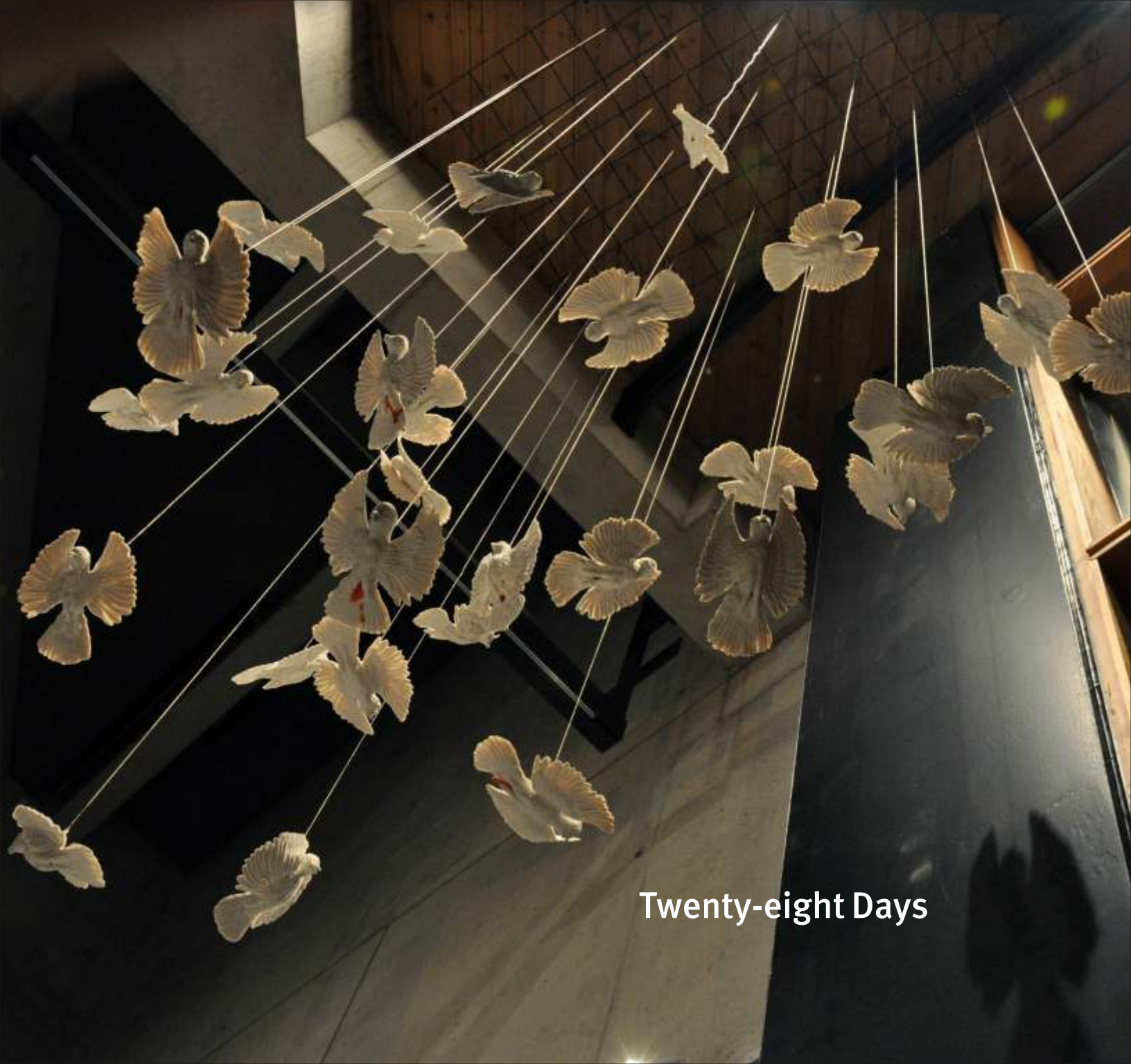


(detail) *Bits of Beauty* - 2011



28 Days - 2011
28 porcelain birds
each approx. 8x7x4 inches,
4 birds with glass detailing

Week One



Twenty-eight Days



Week Two





Week Three





Week Four





Die Liebenden Fliegen



The Lovers Fly



White Raven, Sparrow Christi and Die Liebenden Fliegen - Mutual Group Tower Gallery



(detail) *Die Liebenden Fliegen* - 2011, fourteen porcelain birds, each approx. 8x7x4 inches



(detail) *Die Liebenden Fliegen*



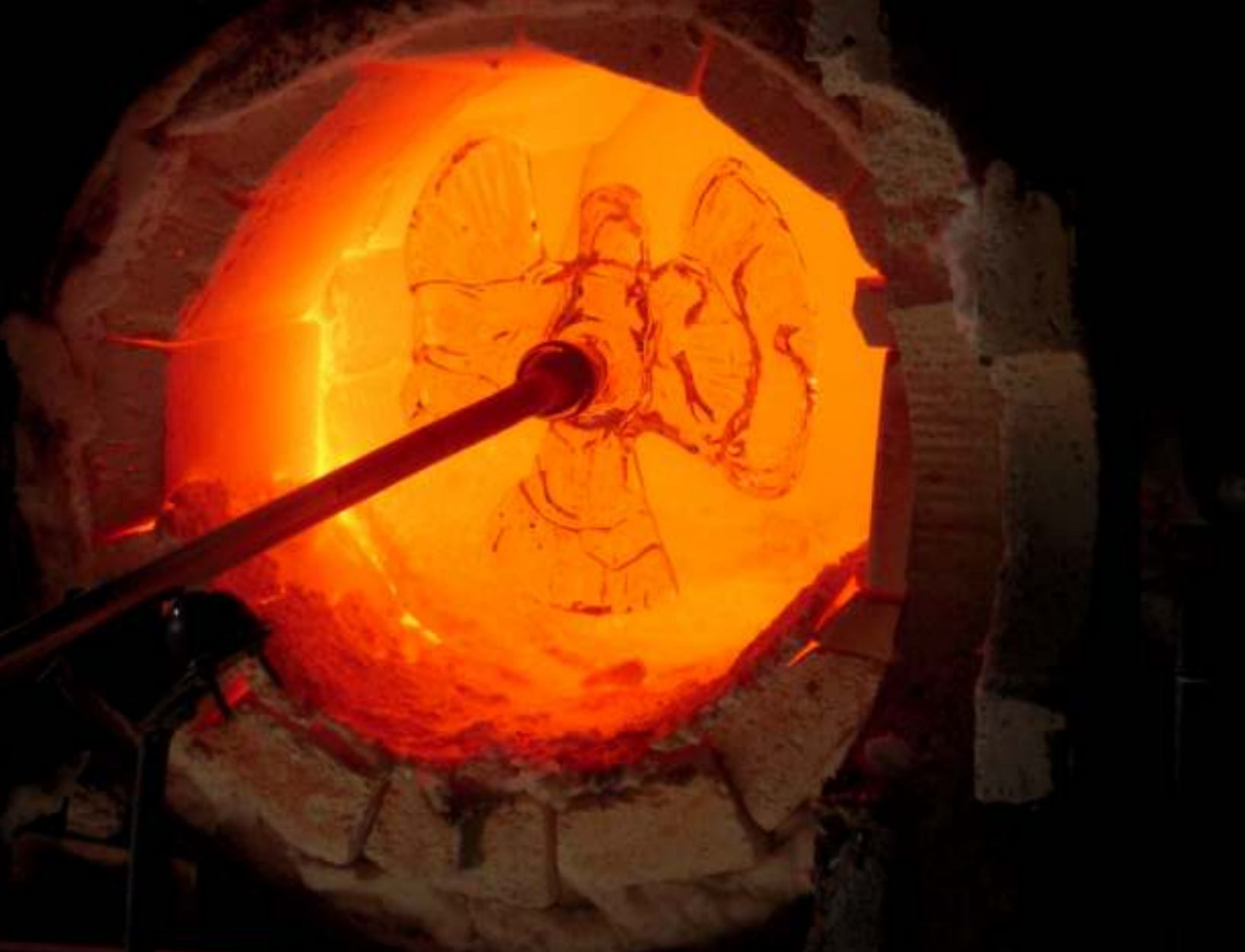


Sparrows Swounds



God sees the little sparrow fall,
It meets His tender view;
If God so loves the little birds,
I know He loves me, too.

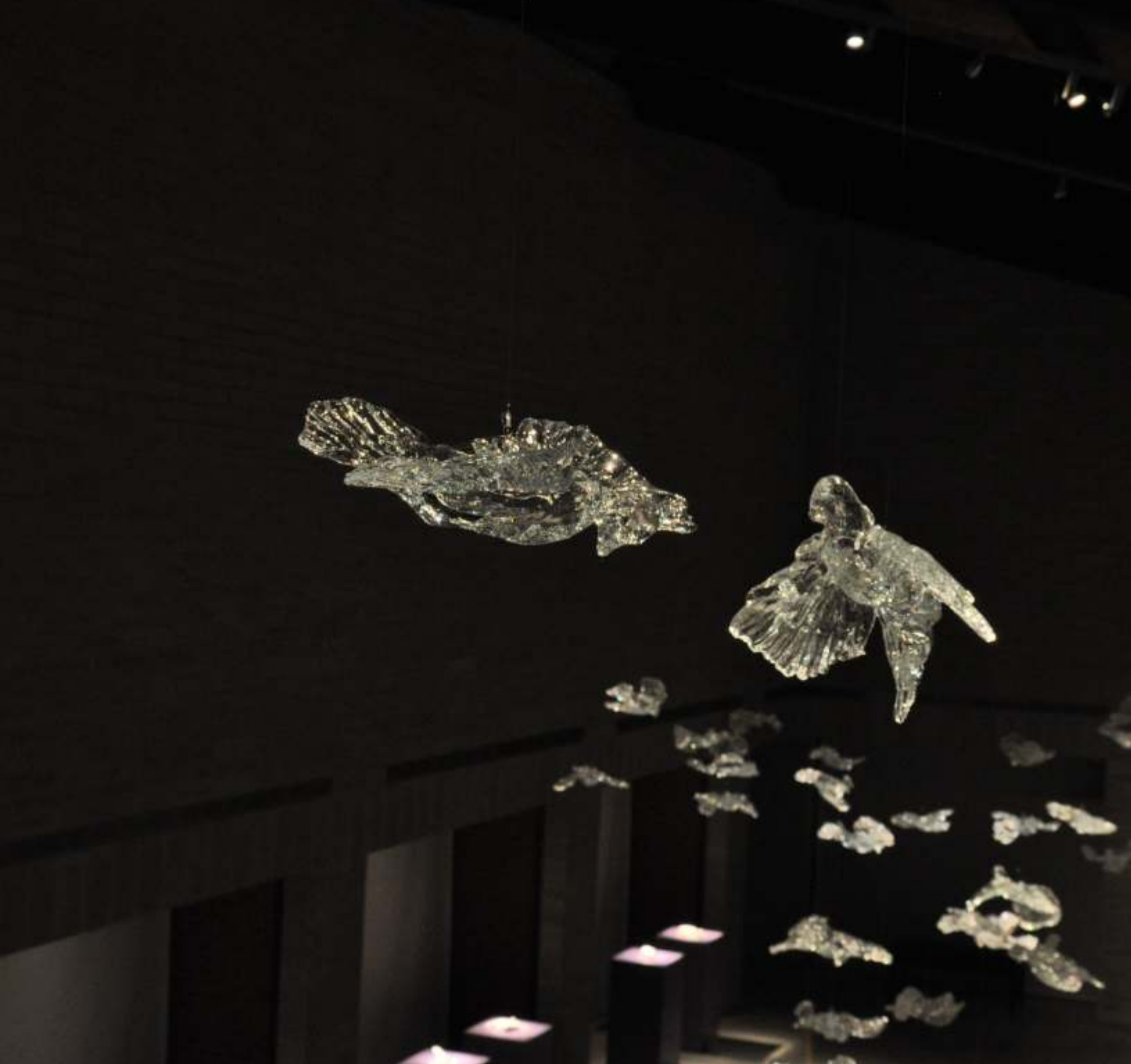
He loves me, too, He loves me, too,
I know He loves me, too;
Because He loves the little things,
I know He loves me, too.





(detail) Sparrow Swounds - 2011









Sparrow Swounds - 2011, one-hundred fourteen glass birds each approx. 11 x 10.5 x 4 inches, 8 steel plates
Installation size variable - Keith and Winifred Shantz Gallery













Pile of Fallen Birds, May, 2011 - Keith and Winifred Shantz Gallery



Les Oiseaux Dorment Aussi - 2011 - Keith and Winifred Shantz Gallery



Les Oiseaux Dorment Aussi

Sweet dreams

Rêves doux - French

Sogni d'Oro - Italian

Vise Dulci - Romanian

Sipak Snova - Serbian

Dulces Sueños - Spanish

Süße Träume - German

Holm Helu - Maltese

Sladké Sny - Czech

Makea Dreamsini - Finnish

Mimpi Indah - Indonesian

Dolços Somnis - Catalan



Les Oiseaux Dorment Aussi - 2011, twelve white porcelain birds, each approx. 8 x 7 x 4 inches
Keith and Winifred Shantz Gallery



L'Oiseau Dort



L'Oiseau Dort



L'Oiseau Dort



Unlucky Bunny

Still-life paintings often depicted rabbits as hanging downwards — pathetic creatures with their feet trussed and lifeless eyes open, glistening wet as if they have wept for their own demise, like Shakespeare's Ophelia.



*Ophelia: To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.
Then up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,
And dupp'd the chamber-door;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.*

Hamlet by William Shakespeare

Unlucky Bunny - 2011

two bunnies, porcelain, earthenware, acrylic, rope, glass
each approx. 27 x 6x 7 inches - Pamela Bierstock Circular Gallery









ARK - 2009, oil on canvas, 7 x14 feet, 28 pairs of animal feet, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, wood, size variable
Ark - 2009, gouache on paper, 37x23 inches - Keith and Winifred Shantz Gallery



ARK

Genesis Eight - King James Version

[13] And it came to pass in the sixhundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry.

[14] And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.

[15] And God spake unto Noah, saying,

[16] Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.

[17] Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.

[18] And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:

[19] Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, aftertheir kinds, went forth out of the ark.



(detail) *ARK* Installation- 2009





Ark Feet

- 01 Tiger - *panthera tigris*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 02 Agouti - *myoprocta acouchy*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 03 Ostrich - *struthio camelus*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 04 Horse - *equus caballus*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 05 Bear - *ursus Americanus*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 06 Pig - *sus domestica*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 07 Caribou - *rangifer tarandus*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009



Ark Feet

- 01 Wolf - *canis lupis*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 02 Gorilla - *gorilla beringei*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 03 Hornbill - *tropicranus albocristatus*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 04 Camel - *camelus bactrianus*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 05 Elephant - *elephas maximus*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 06 Elephant - *elephas maximus*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 07 Human - *homo sapien*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009





Ark Feet

- 01 Rat - *rattus neotoma*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 02 King Charles Cavalier Spaniel - *canis familiaris*, ceramic, acrylic, leaf, 2009
- 03 Duck - *anus platyrhynchos*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 04 Beaver - *castor Canadensis*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 05 Bat - *lasiurus cinereus*, acrylic, ceramic, gold leaf, 2009
- 06 Tapir - *tapirus terrestris*, ceramic, oil, gold leaf, 2009
- 07 Texas Garter Snake - *thamnophis sirtalis annectans*, ceramic, acrylic, 2009



Ark Feet

- 01 Bearded Dragon - *pogona vitticeps*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 02 Flying Frog - *rhacophorus nigropalmatus*, ceramic, acrylic, leaf, 2009
- 03 Rooster - *gallus gallus*, ceramic, oil, gold leaf, 2009
- 04 Crocodile - *corcodylus osteoaemus*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 05 Aye-aye - *daubentonia Madagascariensis*, ceramic, acrylic, leaf, 2009
- 06 Turtle - *lepidochelys olivacea*, ceramic, acrylic, gold leaf, 2009
- 07 Timber Rattle Snake - *croatalus horridus*, ceramic, acrylic, leaf, 2009







(detail) *The Curator's Dinner* - 2011





(Julie Oakes and David Montpetit) *The Curator's Dinner* - 2011
glass, song birdseed, wood, 72" triangle, height variable - Keith and Winifred Shantz Gallery



(detail) *The Curator's Dinner* - 2011

(detail) *The Pool of Tears* - 2008, four colour silkscreen, 19x50 inches, edition 25





The Weeping Monkey

Cradled in a pose that oscillates between vulnerable innocence and mischievousness, The Weeping Monkey cries gently and knowingly, acknowledging that suffering is part of life.





The Weeping Monkey - 2008, bronze 17x12x9 inches, wooden plinth, glass bowl, pump and tank



(detail) The Weeping Monkey - 2008



(Concept drawing) *Swounds Sparrows* - 2009

SWOUNDS

Teamwork

Swounds consists of seven installations in glass and ceramic, and complemented by additional sculptures and works on paper shown at The Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery from April 10, 2011 to June 26, 2011. The pieces were accomplished using the following facilities and processes.

Bronze

The Weeping Monkey was built in wax and then committed to bronze by Art Cast Inc, Georgetown, Ontario through the help of an Ontario Arts Council Grant.



Pre-fired earthen-ware feet for "Ark"

Ceramics

ARK was painted in my Toronto studio. The earthenware feet were made in both the Toronto studio under the tutelage of Susan Low-Beer and the production continued in my Okanagan studio. Twenty-eight pairs of feet were fired at Ashpa Naira Studio and Architectural Ceramics, BC and Helen Cloney Ceramics, Toronto. They were hand painted and gold leafed in my Toronto studio and first exhibited at The Lonsdale Gallery in Toronto, ON,

2010.

Porcelain

There are four major porcelain installations, *Bits of Beauty*, *Die Liebenden Fliegen*, *Les Oiseaux Dorment Aussi* and *28 Days* with a total of over one hundred individual pieces.

First, I made an earthenware model of a bird from which a plaster body mould and two wing moulds were made. The plaster moulds were used in the hand building of the individual porcelain birds, either as press moulds or as casings during the building process. The porcelain birds were fabricated in my BC studio and fired at Ashpa Naira Architectural Ceramics Studio.

Two porcelain pieces, *The Raven* and *Sparrow Christi* were built without the reference of the moulds as their sizes were larger. *Sparrow Christi* is mounted to a wood component fabricated by Carl St. Jean of Out of the Woods, a company that specialises in custom joinery.

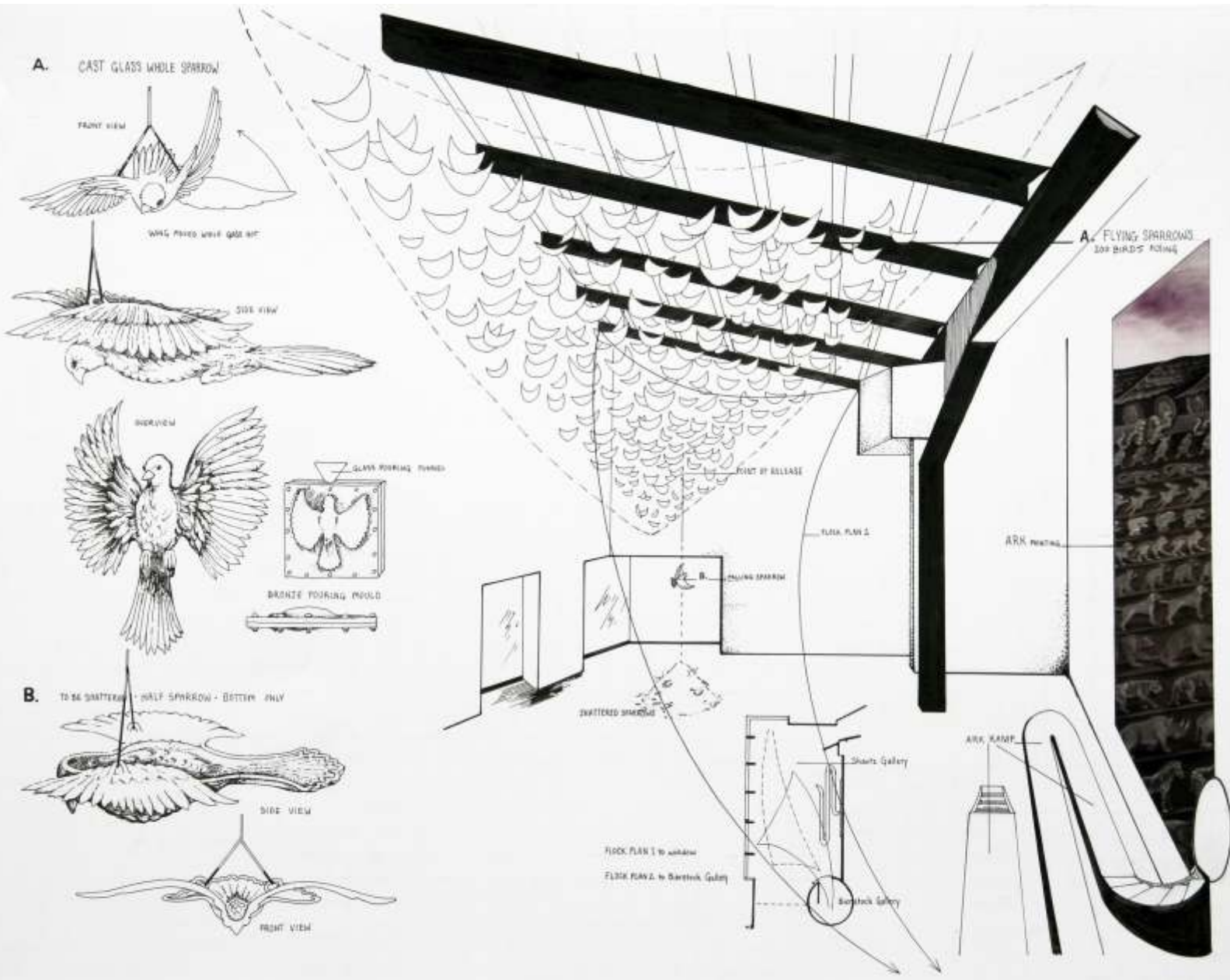


Carved slump moulds for "The Curator's Dinner"

Glass

The Curator's Dinner

For *The Curator's Dinner*, the triangular dinner table



(Concept drawing) Swounds Sparrows - 2009

was fabricated of moulded golden plate glass by David Montpetit. The wooden hanging frames were made by Carl St. Jean of *Into of the Woods*. I carved fifteen individual silica moulds to give three-dimensionality to the birds. From my line drawings, Jennifer Yamagato did the graphic formulation of the shape of the birds and Falcon Waterjets, Kelowna, BC, cut the glass. The conceptual format and moulding of the individual birds was accomplished in collaboration with David Montpetit of Working Glass Studio in Kelowna.

Swounds Sparrows

The technical and practical genesis of the major installation, *Swounds Sparrows*, was, like many births, a product of labour. The challenge was endemic in the shape of a flying bird for with a three dimensional glass body and slender wings as well as the need for detail, there was a structural challenge. Each bird also needed to be light enough to shatter nicely. Because a number of the birds were destined to break, the cost had to allow for the expendable prospect.

Alfred Engerer at Geisterblitz Glass Studio, Toronto, was engaged to engineer the fabrication. He designed a two-part mould that would eventually be made in bronze. To ascertain the shape of the mould and discern any possible problems before committing to a bronze mould a series of plaster cast moulds were made from my waxbird model. Engerer made four plaster moulds. It was anticipated that the moulds would 'gas off' with the shock of the hot glass being poured into it and they did. This created an imperfect bird, distorted by the bubbles made when the hot glass touched the plaster but it revealed the direction that the final moulds would go in as well as seeing how coloured powders would read. The decision was made that the birds would not be coloured but be made of clear crystal.

These imperfect glass birds were shown to Adrianno Berango of Berango Studio, Murano, Italy. Adriano was interested in the project and asked that I send a wax bird that he could use as the model to produce a prototype. Four birds arrived in Canada a month later. They were perfect for they were beautiful, light, individual and yet the final cost of each bird made their disposability too expensive a proposition to be able to produce the flock.



Wax prepared by Julie Oakes for Berango blown glass bird prototype

It was determined that the flock would consist of two sets of glass birds, one made with Alfred Engerer at Geisterblitz Glass Studio, Toronto, and one at Berango Studios, Murano, Italy. There were 30 foreground birds made by Berango Studio in Murano Italy from my prototype which was first fashioned in wax. The Murano birds also funded the major portion of the budget used to produce *Swounds Sparrows* through a sponsorship program that was maintained through Lonsdale Gallery in Toronto and supported by The Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery.

The Berango birds would set up the necessary angst at the potential loss of beauty and since the point of departure for the bird that falls is not evident to the spectator, the beauty of these birds would set the stage for the anxiety of the pending 'deaths.'



Oakes approved Berango blown glass bird

Following the research pursuing the rough plaster mould, Engerer devised the method. I made a ceramic bird that was as close to a Berango



Wax prepared for hot-pour bronze mould

prototype as possible for the aim, targeted by Christian Bernard Singer, was that the spectator would not differentiate between the two sets of birds. From this model, a wax mould was made from which Pyramid Bronze Works, Kelowna, BC cast the case mould in bronze.

I rented Gregg Herman Studio in Toronto and with Alfred Engerer as the main technician, we produced over one hundred cast glass birds, each individually shaped, by means of a hot glass pour so that no two sparrows are identical. Seen from below, this bird 'shell' looks similar to the Berango bird, but is made from crystal rather than having a hollow blown body. The disposable bird was now thin and light enough to smash in the manner desired.



Oakes/Engerer hot-poured glass bird

The layout of the museum was considered to allow for the safety of visitors during the fall. Visitors

would be asked to vacate the Shantz Gallery and witness from behind the dotted line (page 84).

The pieces were installed at the Canadian Clay and Glass Museum from March 30 to April 7. The installation was accomplished by Gareth Lichty as chief preparator and a staff of six assistants. Rigging wire was crimped to eleven separate iron grids which were attached to the thirty foot high ceiling to form the flock pattern which stretches the length of the gallery. Each bird was individually harnessed with wire.

The flock of glass birds that makes up the major installation *Swounds Sparrows* required several technical experts. The sound recording was made at Voodoo Highway Music and Post Inc. in Toronto where we recorded opera soprano, Neema Bickersteth, singing *God Sees the Little Sparrows Fall*, a hymn written by Maria Straub in 1874. The engineer who made the mechanism that would release the falling birds was Aleks Moraru.

PostProduction

In order to incorporate a documentary projection during the exhibition, an exterior projection for CAFKA 2011, Kitchener, ON and to produce a full length documentary film of *Swounds Sparrow*, I have been working with Philip Bast, videographer. We are now editing.

Jennifer Bedford, installation photographer, and Karl Griffiths-Fulton were engaged to photograph *Swounds*. This catalogue is printed by Rich Fog Micro Publishing, BC.

The production, installation and presentation of Swounds was made possible by the support of the curator of the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, Christian Bernard Singer and the staff and volunteers who energetically facilitated the process. Richard Fogarty managed the shipping of the porcelain and earthenware from the BC studio to Toronto and was my assistant throughout the building and financing of the work.



Filming of "The Creation of the Birds" - (left to right) Julie Oakes, Gregor Herman, Alfred Engerer, Phillip Bast

Bits of Beauty List

- 01 *spizella arborea*
American Roubus
- 02 *passer domesticus niloticus*
Egypt (page 55)
- 03 *zonotrichia atricapilla*
Muqueam Indian Reserve
- 04 *calamospiza melanocorus*
Lark Bunting
- 05 *amophilia ruficeps*
Buffy Rump
- 06 *amophilia botteri*
Large Drab
- 07 *spizella passerina*
Chipping
- 08 *amophilia quinquestrata*
Rough Winged
- 09 *spizella pallida*
Palid Clay
- 10 *spizella pusilla*
Streaked Back
- 11 *Passer montanus*
der Spatz; der Sperling
- 12 *amphispiza belli*
Tail Cocked
- 13 *zonotrichia atricapilla*
White Throated
- 14 *spizella breweri*
Brewer's Sip
- 15 *accipiter gularis*
Japanese
- 16 *passerculus sandwichensis*
chip seep, Zink
- 17 *poocetes gramineus*
Vesper



1



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



11



12



13



14



15



16



17



Philip Bast

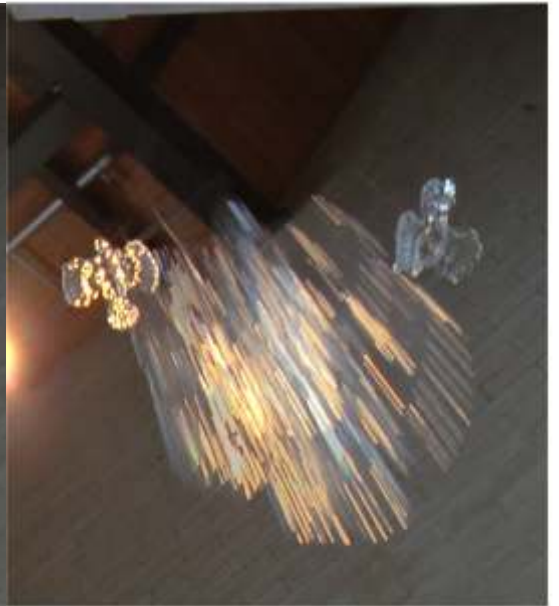
Philip Bast is a multi-media arts journalist documenting the cultural scene in and about Waterloo Region.

Bast produces weekly arts video reports for the newspaper website and for the Rogers television show Daytime.

Swounds Cinematography:
Principal Video & Editing: Philip Bast

Additional Swounds video footage:
Stefan Myles: Fandy Photography
Jeff Thompson: Digital North Media
William Dove: Wings Productions





Christian Bernard Singer

Artist, curator, teacher, and art dealer, Christian Bernard Singer was born in 1962 in Paris into a family of artists and raised in New York City where he began as a company dancer with Laura Foreman's Composers and Choreographers Theater, performing in Spaces and Foreman's seminal work, Signals II. These were performed over several years in such venues as Judson Memorial Church, the Cubiculo Theater, and The New School, until the work was eventually performed at the Museum of Modern Art.

Moving from performance and choreography to costume design, he eventually headed the costume department for the Kawartha Festival Theatre in 1985 where he designed and produced over 100 costumes for 8 plays. Meanwhile, he began experimenting with various paint techniques, creating small paintings and constructions. He returned to school for formal training, spending a year at l'École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux Arts in Paris and graduated from the Ontario College of Art and Design. This was followed by a Master of Fine Arts degree from the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University.

Singer has managed grant application programs for both The Canada Council for the Arts and the Ministry of Culture and Communications (Ontario), was Director of the 2005 Contemporary Art Forum - Kitchener & Area (CAFKA), Curator and Associate Director of Lehmann Leskiw Fine Art until he co-founded Rouge Contemporary Art Projects where he remained as Curator until 2009, bringing Judy Chicago: A Survey of Important Works (curated by Virginia Eichhorn) - the first large-scale survey exhibition for Chicago ever to come to Canada. In addition to being the Curator of the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery in Waterloo, Singer has served on the board of several arts organizations including Visual Arts Ontario and continues to teach sculpture at the Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD University).

In his own work, Singer is best known for incorporating living plant life with glass, clay, bronze, found objects, and video into installation-environments and land art works that turn on notions of place, memory and time-passing. Since 1997, his work has been shown in commercial galleries in Canada, the U.S., and France, and since 2004, he has been included in numerous museum and land art invitational exhibitions across the country. His work is represented in Vernon, BC by Headbones Gallery.

JULIE OAKES

Born Julie Dawn Cowan 1948- Nelson, BC
Tibetan name - (Zangmo)

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2011 Swounds The Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, Waterloo, ON, April 10-June 26, curated by Christian Bernard Singer
- 2009 The Canadian Museum of Northern History, Kirkland Lake, ON
Lonsdale Gallery, Toronto, Ontario
- 2008 The Buddha Composed, Galerie Samuel Lallouz, Montreal, Quebec
- 2008 The Buddha Composed, The Varley Gallery, Markham, ON
- 2007 The Buddha Disturbed, Art Gallery of the South Okanagan, Penticton, BC
- 2006 Human Sacrifice, Conscientious Perversity, Lehmann Leskiw Fine Art, Toronto
- 2005 Human Sacrifice, The Revolving Door, Lehmann Leskiw Fine Art, Toronto, ON
Human Sacrifice, Quercia Stories, The Rivington Gallery, London, England
Poultry in Motion, The Absolute Gallery, Des Moines, Iowa
- 2004 Human Sacrifice, The Art Ark, Kelowna, BC.
- 2004 Forbidden Fruit, The Destination Gallery, Parrsboro, NS.
- 2001 Gentle Bondage, Vernon Public Gallery, Vernon, BC.
Private Parade, Bau-Xi Gallery, Vancouver, BC.
- 2000 Reptiles and Roses, Bau-Xi Gallery, Vancouver, BC.
- 1999 Venezia, Headbones Gallery, Vernon, BC.
Complimenti, Bau-Xi Gallery, Vancouver, BC.
- 1998 Rising Above, Bau-Xi Gallery, Toronto, Ont.
Feathers Flying, Bau-Xi Gallery, Vancouver, BC.
- 1997 The Venice Series, Headbones Gallery, Vernon, BC.
The Venice Series, The Grunt Gallery, Vancouver, BC.
Home Offerings, Bau-Xi Gallery, Vancouver, BC.
- 1996 Herstory, The Alternator Gallery, Kelowna, BC.
- 1994 Cunte Perfume Launching, Artimisia Gallery, Vancouver, BC.
Upright Man, Upright Woman, Headbones Gallery, Vernon, BC.
Born to Shock, Gallery 56, Vancouver, BC.
- 1993 B.P.A. RCA Visuals, Public Art Gallery, St. Johns, Nfld.
- 1992 Born to Shock, Alternator Gallery, Kelowna, BC.
- 1987 I am a Woman with a Past, Vernon Public Gallery, BC.
- 1985 Gardens and Clothes Lines, Assiniboia Gallery, BC.
- 1983 Lady Oakes, Temple Gallery, Nassau, Bahamas
- 1973 Chandoo Gallery, Toronto, Ontario, Zangmo

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2011 Avian, curated by Stanzie Tooth, Joan Kaufman, Amanda McCouper, Julie Oakes and Peggy Taylor Reid
- 2008 Kanadische Woken, 5 Canadian Artists, Barmsteadt, Germany on the invitation of the Canadian Embassy in Berlin
- 2006 Headbones Gallery, Inaugural Exhibition, Exotic Erotic Xmas, Toronto, ON
Heidi Cho Gallery, Parnassus, New York, NY
- 2005 Spot the Dog, Anchorage Museum of Art and History, Anchorage, Alaska
The Fugitive Gallery, Vernon, BC
Out of the Closet, The Rivington Gallery, London, England
Gallery Artists, The Totem Gallery, Venice Italy
- 2004 Big and Small Show, EVAC, Des Moines, Iowa
- 2003 SCOPE International, Curcio Projects, Miami, Florida
Gallery Artists, Totem Gallery, Venice Italy
- 2002 Meledandri, Fred Mitchell and Julie Oakes, Sugarhill Art Center, NY
SCOPE International, Gershwin Hotel, New York, NY
- 2001 Having Returned, Headbones Gallery, Vernon, BC.
- 2000 Master Program Exhibition, New York University, New York, NY.
- 1999 Gallery Artists, Totem Gallery, Venice, Italy.
Clara e gli Americani, Brescia Gallery, Brescia, Italy. Catalog
Masters Program Exhibition, Venice, Italy. Catalog
- 1998 Venice, Casa Italiana, New York, NY.
- 1998 New York University Masters Program Exhibition, Venice, Italy. Catalogue
- 1996 Jury Show, Vernon Public Art Gallery, Vernon, BC.
Gallery Artists, Alternator Gallery, Kelowna, BC.
- 1995 Gallery Artists, Grunt Gallery, Vancouver, BC.
- 1994 Emerging Artists, Museum of Modern Art, Miami, Fla.
Art of the Motorcycle, Redding Art Gallery, Redding, Ca.
- 1993 Images and Objects XI, Assembly of BC Arts Councils, Trail, BC. Catalogue
- 1992 Juried Show, Daniel Cameron, Pleiades Gallery, New York, NY.
In the Biblical Sense, Smash Gallery, Vancouver, BC.
B.C. Festival of the Arts, Vernon, B.C.
- 1991-1992 Earthlines, Deadlines, Lifelines is a group show of seven artists curated by John Taylor.
01/14-02/13 The Kelowna Public Art Gallery/Museum, Kelowna, B.C.
03/30-04/29 The Vernon Public Art Gallery/Museum, Vernon, B.C.
05/29-07/05 The Redding Public Art Gallery/Museum, Redding, CA
08/01-08/31 The Hama Sushi Gallery, Venice Beach, CA
12/01-12/31 Neutral Ground, Regina, Saskatchewan
09/06-10/20 The Art Gallery of the South Okanagan, Penticton, B.C.
Canadian Museum and Curators Conference held here in September.
- 11/22-01/05 The Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Victoria, B.C.

GROUP EXHIBITIONS (continued)

- 1991 Helio Gallery, New York, NY Group Show
1990 OAL Gallery, Kelowna, B.C. Condominium Show
1989 Dome Gallery, New York, N.Y
1989 Vernon Public Art Gallery, Okanagan Artists
1989 Loch Mayberry Gallery, Winnipeg, Manitoba
1988 Okanagan Jury Show, Penticton, Kelowna, Vernon, Kamloops, B.C.
1986 Assiniboia Art Gallery, Regina, Sask. Two Woman Show
1986 Bessborough Gallery, Sakatoon, Sask.
1985 Rosemont Gallery, Regina, Sask. Two Women Show
1985 Penticton Art Gallery, Art Attack, four artists
1983 PIAFA Art Auction, Penticton, B.C.
1982 Okanagan Jury Show, Penticton, B.C.
1982 Kamloops Public Gallery, A bed of Ones Own, eight women
1980-1978 Grainary Gallery, Fintry, B.C. Owned and operated and
Exhibited solo and group shows
1977 Kelowna Public Gallery B.C. Two person show
1976 BauXi Gallery, Vancouver, B.C.
1976 Galerie Royale, (now Heffel Fine Art) Vancouver, B.C.
1969 Winnipeg Public Art Gallery, Winnipeg, Manitoba

VISUAL PERFORMANCES

- 1994 Cunte Perfume Launching, Artimisia Gallery, Vancouver, BC
1993 A Bevy of Beauties, Alternator Gallery, Kelowna, BC
1992 Breasts Protest Fashion Extravaganza, RCA Visuals, St. Johns, Nfld
Breast Protest Anonymous, Vernon, BC
1986 SWAT, OAA Gallery, Kelowna, BC
1983 I am a Woman with a Past, Vernon Public Gallery, Vernon, BC
1969 Purse Snatching, General Idea in conjunction with Felix Partz.

VIDEOS

- 1996 Women who Wax and Pluck, (5 minutes) produced and acted.
1993 Cunte,(3 minutes) produced.
1994 Crow's Feet,(2 minutes, 48 seconds) produced.
1994 Trashy Lingerie at the Cappuccino Bar, (12 minutes, 14 seconds), produced and acted.
1993 A Bevy of Beauties,(3 minutes, 4 seconds) produced, acted.
1992 Breasts Protest Anonymous, (13 minutes) produced, acted.
1989 Snuff Walls Around Townhouses (SWAT), 4 minutes, produced, acted.
1987 I am a Woman with as Past, 25 minutes, produced, acted.
1983 Lewd Wave, (5 minutes) designed, acted.
1984 Wives and Lovers, (4 minutes) produced, acted.

WRITINGS

- 2011 Hooks, novel, published by Dundurn, Toronto, Winter 2011, 360 pages
- 2010 Guest speaker for RBC Glass awards and Winifred Schantz Ceramic Award
Between the Idea and The Reality, Swounds
Toronto writer for Vies Des Arts, English Edition
#221 L'Hiver, 2010, Coercing Doubt, Stan Douglas &
Beyond the Beanstock, Maelstrom, Roxy Paine
#218 Printemps, 2010, Death as an Anecdote to Kicking the Living, Mark Adair
#219 Ete, 2010, Any Ever, Ryan Trecartin
- 2009 Toronto writer for Vies Des Arts, English Edition
#214 Printemps, 2009 When Women Rule the World, Judy Chicago in Thread
#215, Ete, 2009, Seven Days in the Art World by Sarah Thornton
Chris Cran, Bright Spiral Standard
#216, Automne, 2009, Ashley Johnson, Zoomorphic Gestalt
Overwhelmed and Engulfed, Mark Lewis, Venice
- 2008 Headbones Anthology 2008, Rich Fog Micro Publishing, 184 pages
Aligning with Beauty, Varley Gallery of Markham, ON, 80 pages
- 2007 Headbones Anthology 2007, Rich Fog Micro Publishing, 180 pages
- 2006 Conscientious Perversity, Rich Fog Publishing, 2006, 198 pages
Forward by Dr. Robert C Morgan
Headbones Anthology 2006, Rich Fog Publishing, 2006, 180 pages
Art Editor and writer for Riverside Quarterly Magazine, Toronto, ON
- 2005 The Revolving Door, 200 Pages, published by Rich Fog Publishing, Canada, 2005
Forward by Dr. Terry Williams
- 2004 Quercia Stories: Lay My Head on the Chest of the Dane, Gentle Bondage,
Editing Evil, 167 pages, published by Rich Fog Publishing, Canada, 2004
Forward by Susan Brandoli
- 2001 A Canadian Artist's Perspective of 911, Power Images, 68 pages
Personal observation reportage for "The Morning Show", CBC radio, BC following September 11
- 1974 White Socks Suck, young adult novelette, 87 pages, unpublished

CATALOGUES

- 2011 Swounds, Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery,
- 2009 Genesis, Lonsdale Gallery, 66 pages
- 2007 The Buddha Composed, Galerie Samuel Lallouz, 122 pages, text French and English by James
Campbell, published by Galerie Samuel Lallouz, 2007
- 2007 The Buddha Composed, The Varley Gallery of Markham Ontario, 90 pages, text by Katerina
Atanassova, Rich Fog Publishing, Canada, 2007
- 2006 The Buddha Disturbed, The Art Gallery of the South Okanagan, 84 pages, text by Paul Crawford,
Rich Fog Publishing, Canada, 2006
- 2004 Sync Collections, Retrospective Catalog, 80 pages, Rich Fog Publishing, Canada, 2004

SELECTED REVIEWS

- 2011 Toronto Star, The Irrepressible Ms. Julia Oakes by Peter Goddard
The Record, Symbolic Birds Take Flight and Fall by Robert Reid
Toronto Globe and Mail, Avian at Lonsdale Gallery by RM Vaughan
- 2007 Canadian Art, Julie Oakes Lehmann Leskiw Fine Arts by Ashley Johnson
- 2006 Mass Art Guide, Julie Oakes: Juliette and Justine by Dr Robert C. Morgan
MIX Magazine, issue 31.3 Justine Tells Juliette All feature article, back and front inside cover, pages 38-41
- 2001 Sights of Resistance by Robert J. Belton (University of Calgary Press), Julie Oakes, *Boys when the Spring Comes*, pages 167, 318, 319.
- 1994 Art in America, March 1994, *Cunte, a Performance Piece by Julie Oakes* pages 60,61.

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

The Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery
The Kenderdine Gallery, University of Saskatoon
The Glenbow Museum, Calgary
Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon
The Norman McKenzie Art Gallery, Regina
Credit Union Central, Regina
Canada Council Art Bank (2)
Lower Manhattan Cultural Council
Saskatchewan Telephone Company (2)
Vancouver Authors Society
Straub Clinic, Hawaii
University of British Columbia
Vernon Arts Council
Vernon Public Art Gallery
Vernon Performing Arts Centre
Vernon Public Library
Holiday Park Resort Corporate Collection
Gotham Restaurant, Hys Corporation, Vancouver
Cotes Hallmark Collection

Sponsors & Donors

Berango Studios silver sponsor

Lonsdale Gallery silver sponsor

Susanne Berger silver sponsor

Ashpa Naira Gallery

Miranda Bambi Reeves

David and Dolores Steinman

Eileen Loewen

Anonymous Sponsor

Dr. Bob Chaudhuri

Stephan Cipes

Bill and Jan Gilmour

Thomas and Jocelyne Mennill

Holde Gerlach

Angelika and Klaus Jaeger

Michael Barnstijn and Louise McCallum Musagetes Fund

Christopher Oakes

Lynden and Henry Beesley

THE CLAY GLASS
EARTH • FIRE • LIGHT

