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Inspiring Collaborations: In Honour of Barbara Godard

Inspiring Collaborations

In Honour of Barbara Godard

Sue Lloyd

Selection of Works, 1996 – 2006

In 1997 I completed my Master of Fine Arts at York University. My supervisory committee for my final year was Yvonne Singer, Jon Baturin and Barbara Godard. My work is influenced by concerns grouped under the terms: embodiment, language and representation (among other things). Barbara has always been unfailingly generous in her support, her sharing of wisdom, and her kindness, her collegiality. It seems to me that working with students who are producing “creative research” (aka visual artwork) is a bit of a gnarly pursuit requiring a special skill set. A special kind of multi-interdisciplinary thinking. When I was worried I was pushing the limits and going too far in my work, Barbara would tell me that I hadn’t yet gone far enough. I was surprised and thankful.

Sue Lloyd is a visual artist who lives in Toronto. She completed her MFA at York University in 1997 and presently teaches in the Visual Studies Program at University of Toronto.

Cheryl Sourkes

To: <bgodard@yorku.ca>, 2008

Millions of webcams constantly produce automatic viral images, which disseminate at great speed and disappear almost as soon as they come into existence. These images participate in the economies of the discard - virtual garbage traveling as mini-events or placeholders. The visual layer of *To: <bgodard@yorku.ca>* originated in an Internet cafe in Rio. The text layer came to me via Barbara Godard. When Barbara learned I was collecting spam she forwarded dozens of messages in various languages. I remain grateful for her involvement.

Cheryl Sourkes is a lens-based artist, writer and curator. She studied psychology and biology at McGill University before moving to Vancouver in 1967. There, she became involved with Intermedia, a Dadaist artist organization that prefigured Canada’s artist-run movement. Presently, she divides her time between Toronto and Manchester, England. Sourkes’s work investigates the visual dimension of technology, especially social and cultural developments that have arisen with Internet webcams. Selections of this work, *Public Camera* recently toured to The National Gallery of Canada. Sourkes is represented by Peak Gallery in Toronto, Division Gallery in Montreal and twenty + 3 projects in Manchester, England. Cheryl Sourkes also curates the project space at kau.

INSPIRING COLLABORATIONS

The artists represented here all testify in their unique way to Barbara Godard’s sustained involvement in the visual arts community in Toronto, and to her capacity to inspire work in a variety of media. Acting as advisor, teacher and critic, Barbara has informed and has been informed by the vitality of Toronto’s visual artists. These works speak to Barbara’s ongoing engagement with feminist semiotics, the body and textuality, and her ongoing interrogations of memory, the archive and the politics of representation insofar as they shape the conditions of cultural production, critical creativity, exchange and vision.

A varied homage to a person, her work and the dialogic communities she has been part of and helped to foster – constantly inspiring and inspired, always collaborating.

Elena Basile and Cheryl Sourkes

James L. Gillespie

The Conversation, 2008

My short films are often silent, and tend to destabilize traditional appearances, employing in-camera effects, hand processing, rhythmic solarizing, tints, toning, and cross-formatting. The intense psychological atmosphere of this film work also pervades my still photographs, both in photo-media print series and in collage works as back-lit transparencies. The impressions cultivated in my work are born from a curious activity of ‘witnessing’; then introspective thoughts on the human condition form a medium of gestation. I like to distill sinuous flows of imagery, from play with icons of behaviour and landscape, inviting viewers to re-consider established or ‘everyday’ connotations of the visual world, with their own ‘mind’s eye’.

James Gillespie is a Toronto based artist, writer, and filmmaker. Gillespie has shown his artwork in Canada, England, France, Germany, Russia, China and the USA. He has also lectured on contemporary art internationally, at art schools, universities and artist’s unions in Moscow and St. Petersburg in Russia, at the *Slade School of Art*, London England, and at the *Université Canadienne en France*, in Nice and Paris, France. His articles and reviews have been published in a number of Canadian art and cultural studies periodicals.

Jane Buyers

Arbor Fabula, 2006

The series of works, titled *Arbor Fabula*, are porcelain sculptures in the shape of open books. The fragile, thin, gestural pages of the books contrast with the weighty, dense “text”, which as the texture of bark, made from surface impressions of tree trunks. The seams of bark have in places split open, revealing a mysterious world, with coloured glass beads erupting out of an intricately patterned ground. These works explore the fertility and transformative potential of intellectual and imaginative inquiry. I felt them to be a fitting tribute to Barbara, her work and the effect she has had on so many people.

Jane Buyers works with sculpture in a variety of materials including wood, bronze and porcelain and in a variety of sizes including public outdoor works. Her practice also includes drawing and printmaking. For many years she has been making sculptures and works on paper that reference books as a cohesive architecture of information and imagery, that is at once physical and symbolic, both a tool and a site of knowledge. Jane is represented by Paul Petro Gallery in Toronto. She has been a Professor in Fine Arts at the University of Waterloo since 1988 and lives in Elmira with her partner, the playwright Don Druick.

Barbara Sternberg

A memento from Barbara to Barbara (with nods to Virginia and Gertrude).

"Barbara Godard has supported my film work, as she has many other artists and writers, by her attendance at screenings and by writing on my films for various catalogues and journals. This compilation of clips from several films and videos is an appreciative thank you to her." - Barbara Sternberg

Barbara Sternberg has been making (experimental) films since the mid-seventies. Her films have been screened widely in North America and Europe including the prestigious Museum of Modern Art in New York, George Pompidou Centre in Paris, and Ontario Cinematheque in Toronto. Her films are in the collections of Queen's University, the Art Gallery of Ontario, and the National Gallery of Canada. Sternberg has also participated in gallery exhibitions with mixed media installations, performance art and videos. She was co-founder of Struts gallery in Sackville, New Brunswick, was a founding member of Pleasure Dome: Film Artists Exhibition Group in Toronto, is founding member of AffA (Association for Film Art), and taught in Film and Visual Arts at York University.

Vid Ingelevics

The Metamuseum Archive, 2008

This collection is drawn from a larger body of photographic work titled "Between art & Art", begun in 2000. This work results from my "impersonation" of a museum staff photographer and is based on observations made while doing research in the institutional photography archives of a wide variety of public museums in North America and Europe. Some of these images were shown in Barbara's classes at York to which I was invited numerous times to present on questions related to the archive, a subject we all know is dear to her. I always accepted with the greatest pleasure.

Vid Ingelevics is a Toronto-based artist, writer, and independent curator. His artwork and curatorial projects have been shown in Canada, the US and Europe while his writing on art has appeared in numerous arts publications in Canada and Europe. He currently teaches at Ryerson University in Image Arts.

John Greyson

14.3 Seconds, 8 min, 2008

During the war, American planes bombed the National Film Archives in Baghdad, home to what was considered one of the foremost collections of Arab cinema. Eight scraps of celluloid, totalling 14.3 seconds, were rescued from the wreckage. In this short film, these are used by an apocryphal US military agency, I.C.A.R.P., (Iraqi Coalition Archival Restoration Project) to 'restore' some of the Iraqi films lost to history: *Al Qadisiya*, (1982), *Al Terjuba*, (1968), *Al Mas' Ala Al-Kubra* (1983), etc.

I was given these scraps in 2004, but for years was stymied by what to do with them. They had undeniable aura, yet were also extremely intimidating: abject, mute, wan artifacts, barely here, no longer there, nevertheless insistently demanding both veneration and deconstruction. Playing them again and again, they offered only the briefest of glimpses, blinking clues glimpsed between the rushing cars of passing trains. Barbara's class on the archive proved hugely instrumental in helping me discover their peculiar agency and 'found' poetry. It was her focus on the stories that archives tell (and withhold) that opened the door; her weekly juxtapositions of archive theory with works of archive art (novels, plays, videoart, films, poems, photography) that provoked and inspired. Most of all, it was Barbara-as-archive herself, a weekly whirling centrifuge of inspired retrievals and brilliant associations, precise citations and visionary cross-filings, both theoretical and artistic, that built the bridges and dug the tunnels, and that later helped me chase the 'stories' contained within these 343 frames. Thanks, Barbara.

John Greyson is a filmmaker/video artist whose works include *Fig Trees* (09), *Proteus* (03), and *Zero Patience* (93). He teaches film at York University.

Janice Andreae

Edgework: Sites of Critical Exchange

Edgework consists of *Precipice*, 1991, *Epitaph*, 1992, and *lesbian leaves*, 1999-2001. An installation of mixed media, *Precipice* was exhibited in *Political Landscapes Two: Sacred and Secular Sites* at the Tom Thomson Art Gallery and at the Ojibway Cultural Foundation, Manitoulin Island. A later version of the work, *Epitaph*, which included a projected image and Matt's journal, was exhibited in *Gathering: The Memorial Project* at A Space, Toronto and in *Memory/Elegy* at Woodstock Art Gallery. The bookwork *lesbian leaves* plays with two unrelated images: a photographic detail from the architectural language of a financial building on Bay Street, Toronto; an appropriated 1887 portfolio of photographic sequence studies of the human figure in motion by the Victorian British photographer Eadweard Muybridge (*Tessera*, 30, 2001).

Toronto visual artist and writer Janice Andreae's primary interest is contemporary literary and visual textual practices, informed by feminist and queer theoretical perspectives. A former member of *Fuse* Board of Directors, she has contributed numerous reviews and essays to *Canadian Art*, *Fuse*, *Parachute*, *Mix*, *C magazine*, *Tessera*, *Resources for Feminist Research*, *Matriart*, *artscanada*.