

Labyrinth of Paradox

translation from *Der Deutsche Kourier*, MB, July 1999

It is common knowledge that among the highlights featured in the Winnipeg Concert Hall is the promotion of visual art. Over the years, one could often view engaging and unexpected work by Manitoba artists on the first balcony, the Piano Nobile Gallery. One of these noteworthy surprises is Ingrid Roeder's exhibit of 30 pencil drawings, entitled, *Labyrinth of Paradox* and eight colour portraits entitled, *Textures of the Heart*.

Ingrid Roeder completed her education with a Bachelor's in Fine Arts in Painting and Photography and Bachelor of Education both at the University of Manitoba. She teaches art full-time in the Fort Garry School Division. Her work is held in private collections, and can be purchased or rented at the Rentals and Sales in the Winnipeg Art Gallery and at the Leonard Marcoe Gallery in Winnipeg.

Ingrid Roeder's artistic development began with emotionally charged representations from her personal life and the life of friends, followed by abstract, curvaceous shapes, and finally spaces dominated by zebras and galloping fairy-tale horses. Those who have followed her artistic career will find this somewhat aggressive expression unexpected. One will also suspect a talent that is deserving of continued attention.

Ingrid Roeder achieves a creative play of shapes, leaving nothing to chance, and lifts negative shapes that not only correspond with positive shapes, but also evoke them. The pencil drawings show a merging and transforming of human beings and animals into a mythical kingdom that Ingrid has always implied in her work. With precision and technical skill, she draws human existence, part reality and part fantasy, and challenges us towards self-examination. This contradicts the initial impression of "dream world" and places us into a harsh reality.

This harsh reality is the "paradox" referenced in the title of this series. Paradox achieves its own dynamic not only with its duality of black and white, and negative and positive shapes, but also concurrently through the merging of opposites. It is the human to animal, transience to eternity, reality to fantasy, love to fear, and the full scale of the human condition that is held here in thirty drawings. Indeed, laughter and humour are not excluded. This dynamic itself reflects a labyrinth, so to speak, because its characteristics

are the misleading avenues of intricate systems that do not offer an exit, where even the descent into a magical underworld is symbolized.

The question of the classification of these works on paper is perhaps best addressed with Max Ernst, although he delved much deeper into Surrealism. Also, the work of Tom Lovett as was featured last year at the WAG comes to mind. Although, Lovett's work charged with religious, social, and political allusions, places itself into a different category.

The eight colored portraits have quite a different effect. Interestingly, they are not intended as portraits but rather as expression of life, the sheer joy of storytelling in colour and form, a creative translation of human experience. The textured clothing is symbolic of conscious and unconscious protective covering, layers with which we reveal or conceal who we are. But the faces project a naked sincerity, a simplicity, as the main condition for assimilating into the world with ease.

Reality exists because it was first imagined.

With appealing modesty, Ingrid lays no claim to talent and diligence.

"For me it's completely natural that I draw like this; it's just intuitive. In my work - be it in oil, chalk or pencil – I am always surprised by the lines and shapes that emerge, bound equally to conscious- and unconsciousness" she said. "I work from memory. Everything in my daily life becomes a mosaic piece in a future image."

Ingrid Roeder, however, has a deeper source than memory and daily experiences: understanding the power in her ability to draw. She represents the principle that there is no reality, but only personal perception.

Ingrid Roeder's drawings are thought provoking.

The creation of these 30 content-rich drawings and eight colour portraits within one year is a remarkable achievement for a single mother of two children and full-time art teacher. Ingrid's personal thoughts about the creation of this series and a brief outline of her education are attached as general information about the exhibition, which runs until July 23. For more detailed information about opening hours call phone 489-2850.

Images: *O the Glory of Silent Surprise*

Wrapped In Armour

Man with Green Sweater

Submitted by: Gisela Roger, assistant to Dr. Ferdinand Eckhardt (1902-1995), appointed
director of the Winnipeg Art Gallery 1953-1974