

MENNONITE HERITAGE CENTRE Gallery

# CANVASSs

Volume XI, No. 5 July August 2008

<http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/programs/gallery/>

hours: Mon. – Fri., 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM; Sat., noon – 5 PM

an institution of Mennonite Church Canada

located on the campus of Canadian Mennonite University

**TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS:** The MHC Gallery's budget is met primarily through private, tax deductible donations. Please, help keep the gallery alive and growing. Make cheques payable to: MHC Gallery. Mail to: MHC Gallery, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4. Credit card donations, contact Connie Wiebe at [cwiebe@mennonitechurch.ca](mailto:cwiebe@mennonitechurch.ca).

(204) 888 6781; Ray Dirks, curator, [rdirks@mennonitechurch.ca](mailto:rdirks@mennonitechurch.ca)

## Material Circumstances by Deborah Danelley

July 31 – September 13

**OPENING:**

**7:00PM, Thursday, July 31**

### artist statement

Entering my studio is like walking into a well organized upscale version of a Goodwill, scrap-yard and recycling depot all neatly squeezed into a 400 sq ft creative think tank.

For the last 11 years I have been quietly and steadily working away at balancing life and a serious full-time career as a visual artist. Both have had their highs and lows and both have nourished the other when needed. It is perhaps this blending of life and art experiences that has enabled me to explore many different materials and processes with a self-disciplined freedom that many would envy.

Most know me as a printmaker — black and white etchings and linocuts are still a passion. Then quite naturally I fell into the lure of handmade books, and it was during this time when I was exploring bookmaking, that I met someone I like to think of as one of my art angels! Helga and I met at the University of Minnesota one summer — she had come from Germany to take a bookbinding course with our instructor, well known US book artist Shereen LaPlantz. The evening prior to our departure, Helga surprised me with a gift — she handed me a simple but precisely made, folded paper box. Inside the box was a little 3"x3" store bought book which she had transformed into a magical 3-dimensional object d'art! That one particular moment turned into the last 11 years spent exploring the prodigious world of altered bookworks.

The other part of the gift was a 3 1/2"x 5" piece of what I felt was the most beautiful paper I had ever seen. It was my first experience "really seeing" a tea bag — yes, a tea bag! — a used, brewed, dried and ironed tea bag. Since then I have also been experimenting with this otherwise everyday mundane material and transforming it into rich, earth toned, tactile collages that for me exude a contemplative stillness.

Allowing process to always lead me to my next creative thrust, one afternoon about a year ago now, I was in the studio literally pulling apart a beautiful old

**Canvas** — a piece of strong cloth on which to paint a picture



encyclopedia to re-use its pages in another bookwork. Once again something magical happened. Only the covers and a skeletal part of the spine remained but something about its simplicity, colour and energy forced me to see it as a finished work of art. This one moment would lead me to my next series of work — old, used or discarded book covers become the inspirational launching point for minimalist abstract assemblages on canvas, often in a monochromatic colour scheme using a variety of mixed media.

All of these cumulative creative moments have now lead to my first major solo exhibition since graduating in 1997 from the School of Art at the University of Manitoba. "Material Circumstances" is a fitting title for the exhibition. This body of work is as diverse in medium as it is thematically, yet it evokes an overall essence that is collectively quiet, engaging and surprisingly cohesive. This is art created not just for art's sake but instead in a search for understanding followed by a simple need to respond, by honouring people, places or events that have touched a nerve for one reason or another. *Deborah Danelley*

### from the gallery

From the day I first met Deb Danelley I have been attracted by her gentle, gracious spirit, her thoughtfulness and her creative process. She finds soul in seemingly soulless objects. Her art is unforced. She finds it. It finds her, or so it seems. The pieces brought together for this show reveal a gifted artist whose creativity is boundless. A significant solo exhibition is certainly well earned. *Ray Dirks*

### Proposals?

**Artists, please, submit your proposals to us!** The gallery hosts exhibits in approximate two month blocks throughout the year.

### Mailing list

To receive **CANVASSs**, invitations to all exhibitions and other gallery updates contact Connie Wiebe, [cwiebe@mennonitechurch.ca](mailto:cwiebe@mennonitechurch.ca).

### Contact

Ray Dirks, MHC Gallery, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB Canada R3P 0M4. Ph: (204) 888-6781. E-mail: [rdirks@mennonitechurch.ca](mailto:rdirks@mennonitechurch.ca)

### Thanks

Bill and Margaret Fast, Herb and Erna Buller, Frank and Agnes DeFehr, The Winnipeg Foundation, Friesens, Herb Peters and Donna Peters-Small, Ted and Mary Paetkau, other donors

examine carefully, discuss — **Canvas**

## next up

September 19 – November 1, fabulous art quilts by Judy Morningstar, Bonnie Voice and Pam Godderis Dangerfield

## still time

*Memories & parachutes* continues to July 26. If you have not seen the show, please, make a point to drop by. Raves are pouring in regarding this exhibition, including a wonderful review in the Saturday, June 28 Winnipeg Free Press.

Jairo Alfonso and Manuel Baldrich were in Manitoba from June 5-30. They touched many lives and they were profoundly touched by the generosity and hospitality of Manitobans. It was a privilege to bring them to Canada and it was equally wonderful to experience the reception they were given in schools, churches, at the gallery, in studios and in homes. They have left believing all Manitobans are decent, friendly people and that we all barbeque every day of our lives. More than baggage was overweight upon departure.

Thanks again to Rose Plett for all her hard work, dedication and passion. Without her this exhibition could not have taken place.

## entrance display

Over the past many months visitors to the gallery have noted an empty black display at the gallery entrance. Finally, that display is filling up. The MHC Gallery is a Mennonite institution. The permanent entry display is a quick walk through Anabaptist history. Mennonites fit into the Anabaptist strain of Christianity. So, if you've ever wondered what this institution is rooted in, stop and take a look at the display the next time you visit the gallery.

## 10 years

In August I will have been at the gallery 10 years. For the gallery to have existed 10 years is quite a feat. The failure rate of galleries is high. For the gallery to be as vital and interesting as ever is wonderful. The future promises to be even more exciting. This gallery exists to be something a bit different than any other gallery in Canada. 10 years and growing, I think, proves it has established that reputation.

The gallery's operating budget, met almost exclusively through tax deductible donations from you our audience, is little changed over the 10 years. I'm an eternal optimist when it comes to thinking of big projects and an eternal pessimistic when it comes to the nuts and bolts of daily operation. Many energetic, fantastic projects are in the formative stages. The future is bright for exhibits. Of course, me being me, I'm always worried about donations to make sure these projects have a place to unfurl. Out of necessity and intentionally the budget is small. I want people to know we are running a unique facility with top quality programming without a wasted penny. Our budget is literally 10 times smaller than some comparably sized publicly funded galleries. I hope and pray that the combination of quality programming and a tight, miniscule budget helps attract donors. We continue to cherish and need your donations.

**CANVASs**



## Material Circumstances by Deborah Danelley



## Please, consider a donation

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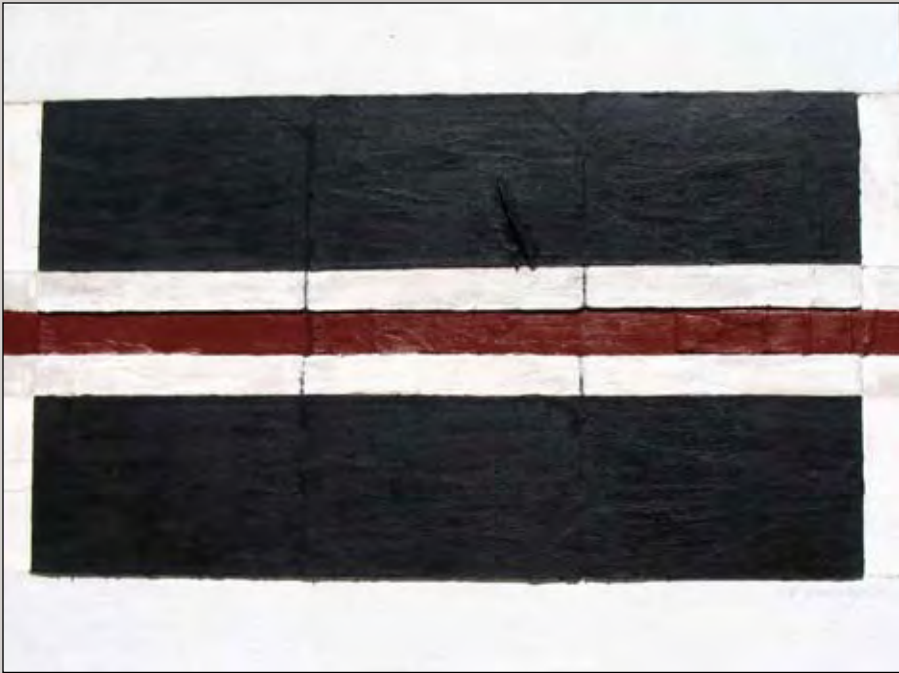
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contact Connie Wiebe at (204) 888 6781 or [cwiebe@mennonitechurch.ca](mailto:cwiebe@mennonitechurch.ca) to donate by credit card

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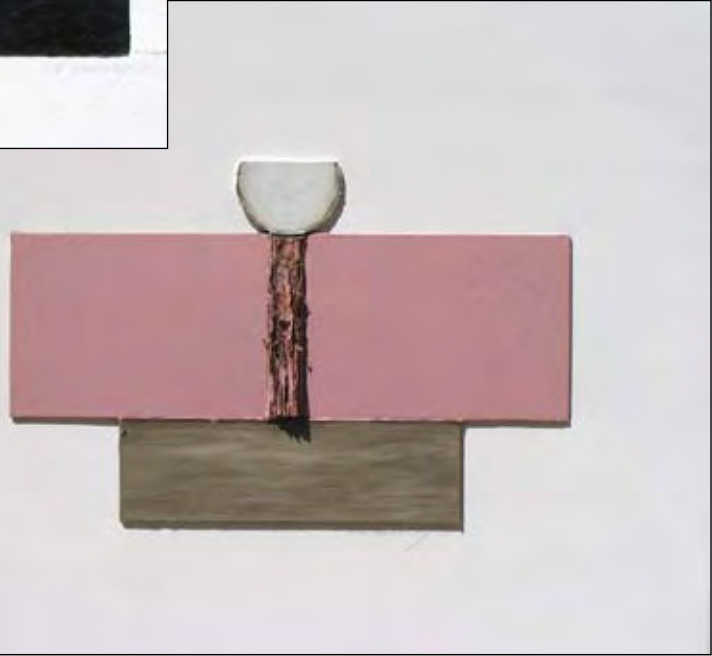


sublime foresight



cfs1 detail

one is a lonely number detail



prairie angel 2

apology close up

