

photo: Life Magazine

palm-leaf house), the images are about grain; a machine-bound hay roll and grain structures raised from the ground by means of poles. This form has the practical purpose of preventing rats from feasting on human food. These structures resemble primitive shelters, like West African straw-roofed huts. Their massive load is heaped high upon the pole frame, its texture is irregular and brittle. The supporting "leg" poles are wrapped in grain skirts, most likely a further rat deterrent. There is a striking contrast between the machine-bound hay (seen on an Ontario farm) and the hand-constructed grain "houses". The former is a sample of Western order and mechanical efficiency whilst the latter relates to a slower-paced culture where survival is still dependant upon human ingenuity.

The pastel yellows, greens, browns, the flash of orange, combine to produce an unrelenting light. Do these functional structures in this parched landscape enclose a sacred space?

A work from 1980 sends one's eye into the opulent folds of a satin green, lace-white and velvet clad clown-girl. The girl holds in her left hand the rope rein of an expansive bull. Reading over the bony frame of the bullock's crevassed back is like trekking over a mountain route. The dwarfed presence of the clown-girl is an oddity amidst the dirt ground and animal hide detail. Through what path of blunders can this Western person be walking in India?

The bullock (which appears in two other works) is not the only animal in Massé's show. Prior to her year-long voyage to India in 1981, Massé painted nine oil canvases entitled *Merry-Go-Round Series*. Where the six *Shade* paintings belong to the physical, exterior world, these earlier works lead the viewer into an interior space. Two clues which help explain Massé's choice of imagery involve her interest first in Indian culture and secondly in Yeats' poem, "The Second Coming". Animal imagery in Indian mythology are symbols of both the divine and the diabolical. In the Ramayana, a classical Hindu myth, there are Nandi (the bull), Ganesa (the elephant-headed god) and Hanuman (the monkey god).

Massé extends the Indian reverence for animal powers with words, "And what rough beast, its hour come round at last, slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?"

There is without doubt an enigmatic quality to Massé's painting. Her images do not sit politely on the wall. They are charged with an energy that has the quality of the drama of demons and the directness of primitive visions.

The severed salmon tails and charging horse driven by a human skeleton (*Albino Ride*, 1980) are a reference to death in life. There is an intensity that matches Kathe Kollwitz' death imagery (*Death 1934/5. The facetious frog and double-headed donkey creature (Froggy Whirligig*, 1980) have the immediacy of ancient Egyptian cave paintings. Both of these paintings speak about the ritual passage of time.

Although Massé's visual language is highly symbolic it is not didactic; her symbols are partly veiled and partly revealed. Leaving this gathering (Massé's first one-woman exhibition) of images of light, colour, texture, line and pattern, one is provoked into thinking and feeling about the world she exposes in her paintings.

Carol Poser

Robertson, patriarchal elements reflected in *Patriarchy Takes All*, military and invasion, economic protectionism, etc., courtesy: the artist

blase because the tape was so I'd have said that *Patriarchy* have been shown on TV be- *Dallas* and *Dynasty*, (a short too long to be a commercial), if I suspect that even the lumpen bourgeoisie is on to what the media is in the lifestyles it sells.

Nothing, *Patriarchy Takes All* something about the limbo 'agit- has become. *Patriarchy* made out of the specific instance (ent) into the general statement (h), more or less the methodol- itation followed when it paved id to Oz with concrete bricks.

Patriarchy's specifics, stereo- to start and neutered by overkill y, generalized themselves into gness. Unlike agitation, *Patri- Takes All* did not demonstrate s to be done about the condi- simply showed things as they editorial comment notwithstanding their own way, *Falcon Crest*, *Go Road* and *Knots Landing* ow things as they are. It would rth remembering that those spic n' span *Leave It to Beaver* of lino kitchens helped fuel tts riots.

Jennifer Oille

Gloria Massé
Surrey Art Gallery
Vancouver
July 8 to August 1

Why are two Indian figures standing knee-high in a muddy river beneath the protective span of a black Magritte umbrella? A humid sky spreads hot light over the multi-green vegetation behind the two figures. It is not raining. Hands on hips, the couple stand in a gesture of authority and anticipation.

Who are these two figures? Their eyes are not human eyes, they are piercing, dark and unseeing. These eyes belong to statues, to the frozen life of an icon, their solid presence waiting for some future change.

This image (*Shade #1*) comes as the first in a line of six oil paintings entitled *Shade Series*. Whereas *Shade #1* alludes to man's relationship to spirituality, the remaining five paintings speak about basic survival. The *Shade #1* figures are in fact two devotional gods from the Maharashtra Hindu temple in India...

With the exception of *Shade #2* (a

T. Michael Gardiner
Manolides Gallery
Seattle
June 29 to July 22

What was Lenin's definition of progress? Two steps ahead and one step backwards? That sums up the advances in Michael Gardiner's latest exhibition, his sixth at Manolides. It was another example of a young artist facing up to problems inherent in his work, mastering some, faltering at others, but definitely moving out of the rut his work had fallen into. T. Michael Gardiner's art has been distinguished for a tongue-in-cheek simulation of early modern artists. Miró, Picasso and others were sent up in a beautiful way in his last show (*Lady With a Rose for A Nose*). This time, there was a "Paul Klee" by Gardiner (*Swimmer in Distress*) in the back room and a big take-off on Max Beckmann (*Afternoon in Beirut*) in the small main gallery proper. Gardiner seems to be one of those artists — like many — searching for and sometimes finding a style of his own by studying others' and satirizing theirs in the process.

That is one way to look at Rousseau's evolution, after all. He steadfastly claimed his masters were Poussin and Gerôme (whom he met) and yet his pictures were taken as absurd parodies of classical composition. Gardiner's emulations led for a while to a genuine look of his own which had, of late, become almost too familiar: careful portraits, textbook masterpiece-type titles, and mild surrealist fantasy drawings. All this suggested Gardiner was possibly going to spend his whole life moving from one modern-ism to another.

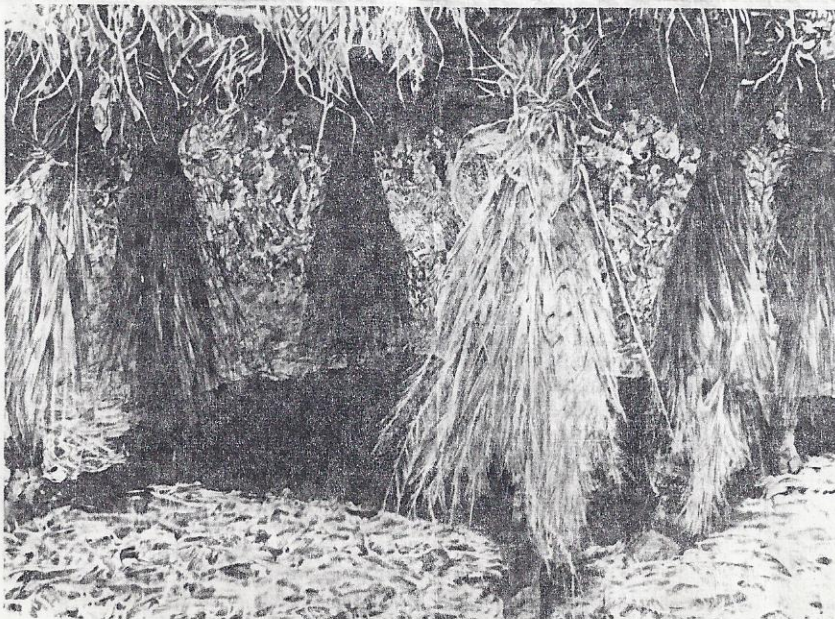


photo: Jim Gorman

Massé, *Shade #3*, oil on canvas, 83.5 cm, coll: the artist