

PAINTINGS BY GLORIA MASSÉ

JULY 8 - AUGUST 1, 1982

Surrey Art Gallery
13750 - 88th Avenue
Surrey, B.C. V3W 3L1
(604) 596-7461

'Another world' - by this we mean the same world that the painter sees and that speaks his own language, but freed from the nameless weight which held it back and kept it equivocal. How could the painter or the poet be anything else than his encounter with this world?

- Mereauponty

Gloria Massé is an artist whose images describe another world, one which uses the familiar people, objects and places of everyday activities transformed into a poetic encounter of sensation and meaning. This new world she creates is not that of the Surrealists, one of the heightened fantasy of dreams and nightmares. It is closer to that of Symbolist painters and poets who made gentle, evocative and elegant images of a netherworld between the quotidian and the dream. Like the Symbolists whose poetry arose only through the act of writing, Massé's method is a search for imagery that forms only through the activity and materials of painting.

Blind Rider #2 depicts a female figure with an eagle's head and carrying a plate of eggs emerging from the back seat of a car. Precise meaning of the transformation is not important. What is striking is the frozen moment of an action we see daily and rarely remember changed to one of significance and magic. In the Merry-Go-Round series of nine paintings, the most fantastic world of childhood is used as a backdrop of transformations of animals and friends of the artist. The figures float through a blue space, neither sky nor sea, and present images that are, at turns, joyful, brooding, strange yet somehow possible.

Massé's year of travel in India lead to the newest series, the Shade paintings. In the first, Shade #1, two figures under an umbrella are set against a lush tropical landscape of white heat and haze. Their stance, knee-deep in the river, the incongruity of the umbrella, and their staring eyes give them the presence of deities, but deities whose spirit pervades this beautiful primeval garden. Shade #2 depicts a child's playhouse of huge palm fronds. In its clarity of detail and focus on the small hidden space, the painting evokes the sen-

sations of a childhood kingdom familiar to us all, yet mostly forgotten. Other works in this series present images of the grain storage structures made by rural people in Canada and India. Massé invests these forms with awe and ceremony appropriate their place in the harvest, the most important event of the agricultural year.

Massé's image making is potent and rich in its ability to startle and evoke, to mediate between our world and that of her visual poetry.

Jane Young
Curator

GLORIA MASSE'

BORN: Windsor, Ontario 1942

EDUCATION: B.F.A., University of B.C., 1978

AWARDS AND COMMISSIONS:

1979 Canada Council Arts Grant "B"

1979 Mural, Extended Care Unit, U.B.C.

EXHIBITIONS:

1979 British Columbia Artist's Show, B.C.
Credit Union Building

1979 Vancouver Fresh, Kamloops
Public Library

1979 Three Women Painters, A.M.S. Gallery,
U.B.C.

1978 Class of 7 & 8, Graduate Show,
A.M.S. Gallery, U.B.C.

1977 Collage, A.M.S. Gallery, U.B.C.

List Of Works In The Exhibition

Height precedes width. All works are oil on canvas unless otherwise stated. All works are collection of the artist unless otherwise stated.

DRAWINGS:

1. Untitled, 1980, pencil on paper, 12 7/8" x 20 3/8"
2. Untitled, 1977, pencil on paper, 23 3/4" x 18"
3. Untitled, 1977, pencil on paper, 23 3/4" x 18"
4. Untitled, 1977, pencil on paper, 23 3/4" x 18"
5. Untitled, 1977, pencil on paper, 23 3/4" x 18"
6. Self-Portrait, 1978, pencil on paper, 24" x 18"
Collection of Hagan Beggs, Media Consultant

PAINTINGS:

7. Self-Portrait As A Child, 1979, 4' x 4'
Collection of W. Hamlin
8. Blind Rider #2, 1979, 6' x 4'
Private Collection
9. Conceived in India, 1982, 4'6" x 4'
Merry-Go-Round Series, 1979 - 80, all 5'11" x 3'9"
10. Medieval Sun Rider
11. Obscure Rider
12. Salmon Ride
13. Fishtail Ride
14. Albino Ride

15. The Froggie Whirligig
16. Dung Beetle Roundabout
17. Birth Ride
18. Lone Rider

Shade Series

19. Shade #1, 1981, 6' x 4'
20. Shade #2, 1981, 4' x 6'
The Green House Collection
21. Shade #3, 1982, 4' x 6'
22. Shade #4, 1982, 4' x 6'
23. Untitled, 1982, 5'1" x 5'
24. Untitled, 1982, 4' x 6'