THE DARK SIDE & SNOW

Headbones Gallery
The Drawers - Headbones Gallery
Contemporary Drawing, Sculpture and Works on Paper

January 3 - February 11, 2009
The Dark Side & Snow
Jack Butler
Daniel Erban
John Farrugia
Daphne Gerou
Scott Jensen
Nancy Watt
and a selection of works from
The Patric Lehmann Collection

Commentary by Julie Oakes
This catalog was created for the exhibition titled “The Dark Side & Snow” at Headbones Gallery, The Drawers, Toronto, Canada, January 3 - February 11, 2009

Commentary by Julie Oakes
Copyright © 2009, Julie Oakes

Artwork Copyright © Jack Butler, Daniel Erban, John Farrugia, Daphne Gerou, Scott Jensen & Nancy Watt

Many thanks to Patric Lehmann for lending the following works from his collection.
Tom of Finland, Angela Grossmann, Attila Richard Lukacs & Marcus Leatherdale

Layout and Design, Richard Fogarty

Printed on the Ricoh SPC 811DN

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, except as may be expressly permitted by the 1976 copyright act or in writing from Headbones Gallery. Requests for permission to use these images should be addressed in writing to Headbones Gallery. www.headbonesgallery.com

ISBN: 978-1-926605-05-0

Front Cover: Marcus Leatherdale - Tattoo Scream
Back Cover: Nancy Watt - Snowprint
The Dark Side & Snow

Commentary by Julie Oakes
Commentary by Julie Oakes

The Dark Side and Snow

On the winter solstice when the day is the darkest, the mind can follow suit and then the transition begins to happen. Having worked through the darkness, the light begins to dawn and hope is renewed. But it is only through the perception of the dark and the relative coming to the light that the epiphany can occur.

Both philosophy and religion has acknowledged the dark side. In some instances the dark side is associated with evil as in the Christian hell of fire and brimstone. The religions that recognise the existence of destruction as a part of the cycle of life incorporate maleficent deities (such as the Buddhist Mahakala) as protectors of the good or avengers of the righteous. The life giving properties of the sun and light exist both metaphorically and allegorically in most religions, with the ways of acknowledging these forces taken to greater or lesser fundamental extremes.

Philosophers as well have pondered the effects of darkness, working the acknowledgement of the dark force into holistic recognition or as with the more radical philosophers such as Machiavelli, Heidegger, Nietzsche, or Foucault; building a case for the necessity of knowing The Dark One in order to attain a realistic perception of life.

The modern dilemma has created a new range of dark sides and Headbones Gallery is exploring just a few. And in order to justify and balance the lessening of the light, it has also brought forth a curatorial analogy to the winter existence we know in Canada. Snow is offered as a contrast for the dark; snow with the capacity to reflect the light from a darkened sky. Nancy E. Watt's Snow Prints with their recognisable winter subject matter—the shape of snowshoes, the impressions of birds' feet in snow, the wide arcs of plough prints or pathways, refresh the white walls where black currently blooms. Watt's practice, based in abstraction, brings forth pristine configurations derived from the natural world and transforms them into formalist stylised minimalism. With Bauhaus concentration of imagery into the smallest possible amount of variables, the essence of snow yielding to the marks of the animal world is a reminder of the varying ecological footprints upon the earth. The bare feet of the bird stands in contrast to the snowshoes upon which man spreads his weight or the even heavier pathways pressed into the soft pliable
snow by industrialisation.

Large cut paper silhouettes by Jack Butler loom large. Grace Jones leans forward with her eyes looking back, the white cut-outs perfectly defining her glance. The surface is a patchwork of rusty images on black Japanese paper. The image, supersized but with the intrinsic fragility of paper is surprisingly durable, pinned to the wall with silver pins like the no-longer-fluttering wings of a dead butterfly. That Grace Jones, whose blue-black, unisex image became as famous as her vocals, should reign in splendour on the walls of Headbones Gallery during the inauguration of the first black American president, is a poignant example of art's piercing prescience.

Paris Haircut, struts dark humour with eyes and mouth cut from the hair on the back of a male head like a second bristly visage dramatically poised as hip-ness. The image was originally a by-product of the beauty business. Butler has creatively elevated the commercial advertisement with a new and impressive magnitude that manages to still retain a lacy and airy quality as the white wall is seen through the snippets.

Butler has a history of exploration in the nether realms. His imaging of the development of sex in the embryological and fetal stages broke ground for medicine and science as he made visual the growth of genitalia, hitherto unseen. The initial identification as to male or female was found to be not as black and white as it was believed to be. By shining the light of seeing upon the dark and undiscovered, he advanced man's knowledge of his humanity. He has also known the dark side in his forays into the land of the midnight sun. One of the pioneers for the advancement of the awareness of Inuit art, he has furthered the flowering of the art of indigenous peoples.

From dark matt shadow boxes, suspended by surgical clips, chains, pins and needles, Scott Jensen's sensitive graphite drawings bring a Goth flavour of celebrated horror. Skulls, gnashing teeth, guns, knives, razor blades and bullets tell smudgy stories of dungeons and punishments. Jensen has tales to tell, having lived through a shooting and a car accident where he was run over and then flung over a meridian and hit by a second car coming from the opposite direction. He has a bouncer's memories of evening evictions and in stature and style, he cuts a formidable biker-like presence with a hand so soft, rendering so delicate, attention to the small so loving, that the cutting edge is felt
personally, as keen as a slice.

The new romantics have a presence with works by Angela Grossmann and Attila Richard Lukacs. From the languishing angst of a Goethian passion, the romantic willingness to suffer for love, for sensation, or just out of morbid curiosity is evoked within their masterful styles. Marcus Leatherdale's photograph of a tattooed male shunning the penetration of the camera's eye or the drawings by Tom of Finland, call up countercultures where black leather and ink often decorate the denizens of the dark realms. From the collection of Patric Lehmann, they encapsulate a trend towards the dark side that are an acknowledged part of artistic counter cultures.

With the dark simplicity of graphite where the eraser has cast a glow of unearthly significance on the scene, Daphne Gerou's implied narratives bridge the genres of fantasy and reality. The dark depictions make a quantum leap from cute to ominous. The uniformed bunnies' passive expressions, their lack of identifiable differences, their cool personalities (or are they only timid?) set up a dynamic of menace. It is not the seething rage of horror about to pounce, but an insidious suspicion of the irrevocably unjust situation that the less demonstrative species are caught in by virtue of modernity and industrialization.

There is not hopelessness in the vista, however. The bunnies are outfitted and, naturally silent, they appear organized in their bid to adjust their dilemma. The bunnies are on the move. They are leaving in the dead of night like refugees exiting an occupied zone. They are navigating by signs that are foreign to their habitual naturalism. The bunnies are glowing in the dark as if they had eaten radioactive fodder. Uniformed, armed and signalling to far distant bunnies, they are migrating strategically. The bunnies have apparently discovered something that mankind hasn't quite grasped yet - that there is an imbalance - "the time is out of joint".

The advocate for acknowledging the dark side, Daniel Erban, perpetuates images of horror in simple primitive imaginings, almost as if they were done by a child which makes the horror more horrific and signifies intent. If the intent is to shock, it doesn't always work for often the response to Daniel Erban's work is a reactionary identification with it, an exclamatory response that has an affirmative rather than a negative reaction - perhaps because the resulting pieces are
stunning. Tutored to accept our dark side from the time of Freud onwards, a mature acceptance of negative imaging is almost common place from the perspective of an educated viewer. It's hard to shock in the light of media coverage. A regal depiction of horror, in fact, becomes attractive and the need to act out horror is nullified by the satisfaction of understanding it and with discretionary caution, embracing it. Acceptance of the dark side through visual knowledge allows the opportunity to vicariously purge any notions of violence and disgust. Daniel Erban's work is morally responsible work. It accepts the sorry condition of aborted philosophies and like the needles poked in a voodoo doll, the substitute effigy suffices to pierce the heart of the contemporary conscience. Erban's use of abstraction helps to distance for the immediate impression almost misses the subject. This is the 'stunning' aspect. Although the stark, bold, graphic depictions of severing, hanging, vomiting, and obliterating brutality is unavoidably understood, there is a security in the position of the viewer for witnessing is not participating in the violence. Or is it? By accepting Daniel Erban's work, is the horror being endorsed? No, absolutely no! The shameful truth of a mitigated existence is further understood and by acknowledging the crass it looses power. The evil is not allowed to creep up and catch, unawares, a blithe compatriot. Instead the common passion for art ignites compassion, empathy and recognition that this twisted depiction of existence resonates and rings, sadly, true. The work is blatantly honest.

Letting out the psychological stops to slash, rip, and seemingly torture with a heavy black line on blood red paper, Erban's work is simultaneously disturbing and thrilling. He has committed strange and horrid thoughts to paper. He has raised the primal fear of unleashed violence like an unavoidable predator stalking a dream and creating the spectres of nightmares.

John Farrugia stakes an absolute claim on death and the dark side with his skeletons. Fully present and impervious to change other than patina discoloration, Farrugia has committed the symbol of decomposition to bronze. We are all destined to eventually return to dust, but not so Farrugia's pieces. They will remain in state long after the artist's physical body has fallen and so he has invoked a challenge to mortality. His work will outlive him although imbued with the ominous message of death. The size, easily captured by the gaze, enables
the contemplation of the impermanence of life and the ultimate eminence of the dark unknown death. Crusty and yet endearingly individual, the skeletons, through their gestures, tell the stories of humans stripped of pretence, circumstance, clothes, features and defining flesh. The narrative is derived from religious themes or Arthurian legend. The sculptural depiction of the iconic struggles for position, immortality and Godliness strikes new chords with the symphonic realisation of the inevitable dance with death, the one name on the dance card that cannot be erased.

The overriding impression of The Dark Side and Snow is not depressing, oddly enough, but energising. The work is strong, confident and assured and in the presence of firm statements, creatively realised and technically accomplished, the reaction falls in line with the response to good art under any title. The Dark Side and Snow moves the viewer closer to the light of a greater understanding of art, life and the nourishing aspects of culture.
Jack Butler

Jack Butler - detail of Paris Haircut
Nancy Watt

Nancy Watt, Snow print - 2008, 600 gram paper, 30x43 inches
Nancy Watt, *Snowprint I* - 2007, 600 gram paper, 30x43 inches
Nancy Watt, *Snowprint IV* - 2007, 600 gram paper, 43x30 inches
Scott Jensen

Scott Jensen, Installation at Headbones Gallery - 2009, Graphite, Mixed Media & Surgical Instruments, each 28x16 inches
Scott Jensen, *Piece & Funeral March* - 2008, Graphite, Mixed Media & Surgical Instruments, each 28x16 inches
Scott Jensen, *Untitled* - 2007, Graphite on Paper, 7x10 inches
John Farrugia, *Strength And The Stone* - 2008, Bronze, Concrete, Wood, 27.5x28.75x58 inches
John Farrugia
John Farrugia, *Wee David* - 2008, Bronze, Concrete, Wood, 27.5x 28.75x52 inches
Headbones Gallery Installation Photo - The Dark Side & Snow
Daphne Gerou

Daphne Gerou, *Finish Line* - 2005, Graphite on Paper, 32x40 inches
Daphne Gerou, *Tea In The Workshop* - 2008, Graphite on Paper, 19x15 inches
Daphne Gerou, *Wardrobe* - 2008, Graphite on Paper, 19x15 inches
Daphne Gerou, Stepping Out - 2008, Graphite on Paper, 19x15 inches
Daphne Gerou, *New Homes For A Brighter Tomorrow* - 2009, Graphite on Paper, 23.5x18.5 inches
Daniel Erban, *The Deep Cut is The Hardest, Calling All Poutine & Hanging Bottle* - 2006, Ink on Hand-Made Paper, each 24x12 inches
Daniel Erban, *Why Me* - 2002, Ink on Matte Board, 60x40 inches
Daniel Erban, *The Adulation of My Juices* - 2002, Ink on Matte Board, 60x40 inches
Angela Grossmann, *Untitled* - mixed media, 9.5x8.25 inches

Angela Grossmann, *Untitled* - mixed media, 10x4.25 inches
A Selection from the Patric Lehmann Collection

Attila Richard Lukacs, *Untitled*, mixed media, 14.5x10 inches (wrapped)

Marcus Leatherdale, *Tattoo Scream* - 1985, photograph
Tom of Finland, *Untitled* - 1988, Graphite on Paper, 12x8 inches
Tom of Finland, *Untitled* - 1988, Graphite on Paper, 12x8 inches
JACK BUTLER

EDUCATION
1997  University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario: M.A.(Philosophy)

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS
1987  Noah Project, theatre work, Main/ Access Gallery, Winnipeg.
      Man Is Only The Shadow Of A Dream, installation, Galerie Noctuelle/Michel Groleau, Montreal
      Man Is Only The Shadow Of A Dream, Mercer Union, Toronto.
      Suite Parisienne, Galerie Noctuelle/Michel Groleau, Montreal.
1984  Jack Butler/Constructions, Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan & the Winnipeg Art gallery
1983  Art/Science Tables, Gallery III, University of Manitoba; York University, Toronto; Ring House Gallery, University of Alberta, Edmonton; Centre Culturel, University of Sherbrook, Quebec; Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon; Art Gallery of Windsor; Nickle Arts Museum, Univ. of Calgary; McIntosh Gallery, Univ. Western Ontario, London.
1982  Brian Melnychenko Gallery, Winnipeg.
1981  Confederation Centre Art Gallery and Museum, Charlottetown.
      Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queens University, Kingston.
1979  Arthur Street Gallery, Winnipeg.
1978  Upstaris Gallery, Winnipeg.
1977  Winnipeg Art Gallery
1975  York University, Toronto
      The Upstairs Gallery, Winnipeg.
      Robertson Galleries, Ottawa.
1966  Galleries III, Charlottesville, Virginia
1965  Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh, Scotland.
1964  Yellow Door Gallery, Winnipeg.
1962  Design Associates of Winnipeg.

COLLECTIONS
Permanent Collections: Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh, Scotland; University of Virginia at Charlottesville, Virginia; Province of Manitoba Art Bank; Owens Art Gallery, Mount Allison University; Confederation Centre Art Gallery and Museum, PEI; Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queens University, Kingston; Winnipeg Art Gallery; Vancouver Art Gallery; the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax; Art Gallery of Peterborough; Tom Thomson Gallery, Owen Sound; Art Gallery of Windsor; Mackenzie Art Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan, the Canada Council Art Bank and the National Gallery of Canada.
DANIEL ERBAN

EDUCATION
1983 Master of Science, Concordia University
1980 Bachelor of Art, Concordia University

RECENT SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS
2004 Rouge Déqueulasse, Langage Plus, Alma, QC
2003 Big, Bad and Ugly, Harcourt House, Edmonton, AB
2002 Bloody Drawings, Definitely Superior, Thunder Bay, ON
Dessins de la laideur, Galerie UQU, Université du Québec en Outaouais, Hull, QC
Drawing as a Weapon, Artcite Inc., Windsor, ON
Abus et Violence: Politique et Art, Galerie d’art L’union-Vie, Drummondville, QC

RECENT SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS
2009 Gallery 106U 160 Roy street in Montreal, from April 2007 I exhibit from 4 to 6 new artworks on monthly bases so far I have participated in 22 shows with about 100 new artwork
2008 Dehuman a traveling show with a catalogue curated by Mark Laliberte showen at Thames Art gallery, KenderdineArt Gallery, WKP Kennedy Art Gallery, GalleryLambton, and Woodstock Art Gallery, catalogue is on the net at www.dehuman.com
2005 ...The Beast Not Found in Verse, McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton, ON
Au sense Large, Galerie Sans Nom, Moncton, NB
Parle-moi D’amour, Les Impatients, Montréal, QC
La Biennale De Quebec, Quebec, QC
2003 Contemporary Drawing 2003, T.W. Wood Gallery of Vermont College at Montpelier, Vermont USA
100 Prints, Open Studio, Toronto, ON
2002 Drawing Flesh, AKA, Saskatoon, SK
Quarry, Truck Gallery, Calgary, AB
Voir Grand Biennale d’estampe grand format des l’Atelier Circulaire 2002, Montréal, QC
Collectionneurs d’estampes, Bibliotheque national du Quebec, Montréal, QC
Grief Mopping, Neutral Ground, Regina, SK
JOHN FARRUGIA

EDUCATION
1994  St. Andrews College. Ontario High School diploma. 1800 Yonge Street N. Aurora, Ontario
1999  St. Francis Xavier University. Antigonish, Nova Scotia  BA. Major Philosophy/Fine Arts
2002  Nova Scotia College of Art & Design. Halifax, Canada. BFA. First Class Honours Sculpture
2009  Edinburgh College of Art. Edinburgh, Scotland. Doctorate (Practice-led)

SOLO EXHIBITIONS
2008  New Works , GRV Studio 2 Gallery. Edinburgh. UK
2005  Jerusalem Cross, Rosemont Field Gallery, Ontario, Canada
2003  Rurally Monumental, Craganrock Farm. Ontario, Canada

GROUP EXHIBITIONS
2009  The Dark Side & Snow. Toronto, Canada
2008  Document, ECA. Edinburgh, Scotland
2008  Lyon & Turnbull Contemporary Art Auction, London. UK
2005  Group show, Dudelsack, Cologne , Germany.
2004  (Group Show) Zino Fit, MFA Group Show. Lauriston Place, Edinburgh College of Art
2004  (Performance) Fascination, Video & Performance Exhibition, Embassy. Edinburgh College of Art
2004  (Group Show) Visitation, MFA Exhibition Curated by Mike Nelson. Edinburgh College of Art.
2001  (Group Show) This is Metal Sculpurey, ,Anna Leowns Gallery, Nova Scotia, Canada

AWARDS
2005  Overseas Scholarship Scheme, Edinburgh College of Art
2004  Andrew Grant Bequest, Edinburgh College of Art.
DAPHNE GEROU

SOLO/TWO-PERSON EXHIBITIONS
2008  the photobooth project, Propeller Centre for the Visual Arts, Toronto, Ontario
2007  nature numine, Propeller Centre for the Visual Arts, Toronto, Ontario
2006  Sign, Signified, Propeller Centre for the Visual Arts, Toronto, Ontario
2005  Ylwa's Dream (w/Aleks Bartosik), Gallery 401, Toronto, Ontario
2004  Sign Language, Sis Boom Bah, Toronto, Ontario
2003  Territory, Fly Gallery, Toronto, Ontario
2001  Symbiosis, AWOL Gallery, Toronto, Ontario

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS
2009  The Dark Side and Snow, Headbones Gallery, Toronto
2008  Biological Imperative, Gallery Aferro, Newark, NJ, curated by Emma Wilcox
       New Life Visuals, Wooloo Productions, Mitte-Berlin, Germany
2007  On the Mark!, Turchin Center for the Arts, Boone, NC, curated by Hank T Foreman
       7th Annual Bienale Exhibition, AIR Gallery, New York City, NY
       Memento Mori, the:artist:network, New York City, NY, curated by Mariko Tanaka
2006  2X2, Propeller Centre for the Visual Arts, Toronto, Ontario
       Night of 1000 Drawings, Artists Space, New York City, NY
       Hello Dolly!, Spin Gallery, Toronto, Ontario
       Situation, Positioning, Location, Headbones Gallery, Toronto, Ontario
       Work on Paper, Flux Factory, Long Island, NY
2005  Love Potion Project, Propeller Centre for the Visual Arts, Toronto, Ontario
       Square Foot IV, Project Spaceman, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, NY
2004  XXX, Propeller Centre for the Visual Arts, Toronto, Ontario
       Panorama, Spin Gallery, Toronto, Ontario
2003  Square Foot, AWOL Gallery, Toronto, Ontario
       Elements, Scarborough Arts Council, Toronto, Ontario
2002  Touchy/Feely, Propeller Centre for the Visual Arts, Toronto, Ontario
2001  WhOLE, AWOL Collective (invitational), Toronto, Ontario
       PULP, Gallery 401, Toronto, Ontario

GRANTS/AWARDS
2006  Second Place, Drawing 2006, John B Aird Gallery
       Exhibition Assistance Grant, Ontario Arts Council, recommended by Visual Arts Ontario
2005  Honourable Mention: Drawing, Bank of Montreal, Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition
2004  Emerging Artist Grant, Ontario Arts Council
       Exhibition Assistance Grant, Ontario Arts Council, recommended by YYZ Artists Outlet
2003  Honourable Mention, Elements, Scarborough Arts Council
2000  Project Grant, Sheila Hugh Mackay Foundation
SCOTT JENSEN

GROUP EXHIBITIONS
2009 The Dark Side, Headbones Gallery, Toronto, ON
2007 Juried Drawing Exhibition, Glenhysrt Art Gallery of Brant, Brantford, ON

1979/82 Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, Toronto. Graduate. Clothing Design Diploma


