

curator Mari Carmen Ramirez, maybe it really is a fallacy "[t]o pretend that any type of alternative field of action exists outside of the web of market or institutionally dominated interests..." Or maybe the mechanics of art-world fundraising and financing are, in the end, a tedious subject.

"Catalogue" underscores a developing but subtle movement in institutional practices towards the embodiment of *Culture Incorporated* (to borrow from the title of Mark W. Rectanus's book on the subject) through the transformative fusions between art and marketing. Terada has staked out a complicit, complicated and risky position as a critical insider in this process and revealed a rich field of inquiry that will, like the publication of the catalogue, last well beyond the exhibition. He turns the critic Hal Foster's observation that "artists [have been] forced to exchange critical practice for economic survival" on its head to posit a role for the artist in making critical practice the means for economic survival. GREGORY ELGSTRAND

## Theodore Wan

◀◀ DALHOUSIE ART GALLERY, HALIFAX

The late Theodore Wan, in his best-known work, marked his own body and in turn marked his audience. Thanks to Christine Conley, a University of Ottawa professor and curator who first met Wan in 1982, this exhibit gives the artist a homecoming in Halifax, where he studied, and introduces his work to a new audience.

The Dalhousie Art Gallery survey of Wan's work includes text-based and video pieces, but pivots on photographs in which Wan plays a patient undergoing medical and dental procedures. These technically precise illustrations were completed at Dalhousie University medical- and dental-school sites in the 1970s.

The photographs, with a tip to the clinical, are installed complete with white matting, tacks and walls. Looking at the various procedures, viewers confront their own relationship with medicine, their bodies and their mortality. Responses to the images might range from fear to weariness to a delight in the sensual or erotic nature of Wan's well-toned physique.

The body is the seat of identity in the photographs. It provides pleasure, sensuality and vitality, even when bodies break down and require technology to maintain and repair them. The images were produced during and after Wan's MFA studies at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design between 1976 and 1978. Earlier, from 1972 to 1975, Wan worked under pseudonyms such as Mr. Normal while an undergraduate at the University of British Columbia. But his hallmark theme was already emerging, in self-portraits where he played the role of a studious, proper young man. In other images that round out an introduction to his work, he turned to nudists at Vancouver's Wreck Beach who proudly bear various scars and tattoos that mark and identify them. There's a playfulness in those images that echoes an ongoing sense of humour in Wan's work.

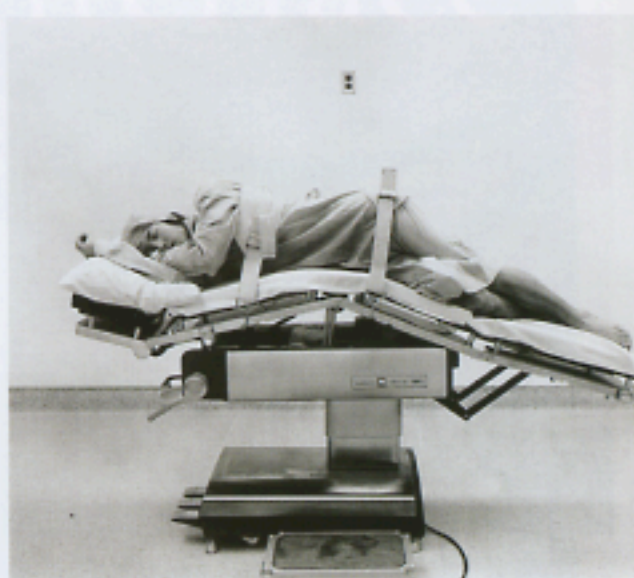
Poignantly, one of the final images is a self-portrait from 1987, the year Wan died, at 33, from cancer of the sinus. You can see the radiation burns on his face, marks that aren't easily erased from our minds. SEAN FLINN

## Three Generations

◀◀ KENDERDINE ART GALLERY, SASKATOON

If one accepts that painting is about colour, and also accepts that abstraction is the consequence of sluicing out the profligacy of representation, then post-painterly abstraction must surely be its ultimate enterprise.

Few still believe in this historical teleology, but Jonathan Forrest, Robert Christie and Bill Perehudoff are believers. No, more than that, they are priests in the now remote and secluded cloister of high modernism. "Three Generations" is an exhibition about a type of painting that, for many, represents outmoded hegemonies of modernism. This type of overview is usually reserved for movements gone and memorialized, but in this case, a more activist agenda is outlined by curator Kent Archer, who stakes a



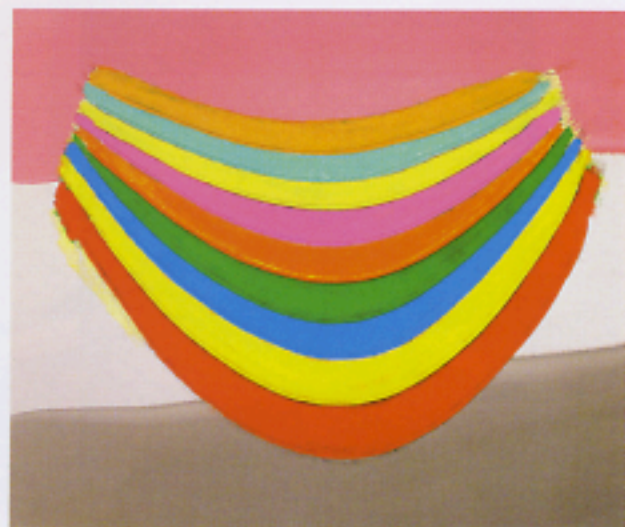
THEODORE WAN *Basic Surgical Positions* (detail) 1977 11 laminated silver gelatin prints on paper 40.3 x 50.4 cm COURTESY VANCOUVER ART GALLERY ACQUISITION FUND

Bridine Scrub for General Surgery (detail) 1977 10 laminated silver gelatin prints 50 x 40.4 cm COURTESY VANCOUVER ART GALLERY ACQUISITION FUND



Three Generations  
 Jonathan Forrest, Robert Christie, Bill Perehudoff  
 Kenderdine Art Gallery, Saskatoon  
 November 10 - December 10, 2004  
 303 W. 10th Ave., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
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ROBERT CHRISTIE *Untitled (Furrow)* 2004 Acrylic on canvas  
1.37 x 1.6 m

PETER VON TIESENHAUSEN *Zeichen* 2004 Oil on plywood  
25.4 x 20.3 cm



claim for the continuing legitimacy of big, bright, colourful abstraction.

Perehudoff is the starting point, displaying as he does a commitment to abstraction that goes back more than 50 years. His newest works demonstrate a mastery of the infinite relationships produced by placing one colour against another. His touch is brushy, a bit casual, but his understanding of the weight and structure of colour is awesome. Now in his 80s, his maturity and depth find few parallels in the annals of Canadian art.

Forrest is the torchbearer. It was at the Emma Lake workshops, amidst art stars and big personalities, that his vision was shaped by a commitment to the principles of colour and a desire to let the material processes involved in painting be his guide. His early work had a geological quality; it relied on erosion, on wearing away paint via water and its absorption. Abandoning this loose, accidental approach for a concise economy of rectangular shapes, Forrest has, recently and finally, allowed colour to occupy centre stage. Like compressed and stacked blocks of LEGO, his paintings now pit high-key colours against one another with sure-footed savvy.

Robert Christie is the link between formalist abstraction and its present variegated state. Having paid his dues by diligently maintaining the only serious commercial gallery in Saskatoon, Art Placement Inc., for several decades, Christie has in the last ten years spent more and more time in his studio. The results are evident. In his use of large, swooping arcs, the latest works recall paintings done in the 1980s, yet now the relationships are more nuanced and secure. In *New Furrow* Christie draws references to the landscape, but the sagging, inverted rainbow seems to buckle under its own weight, forcing itself down into the image and freeing the painting from any direct pictorial correlation. The colour *is* the image, and form is a vehicle for the immediate physicality of paint.

The paintings in "Three Generations" speak for themselves. At a time when painting has warded off its terminal diagnosis, Archer's show demonstrates how non-ironic abstraction continues to communicate something authentic—whether you're a believer or not. SKY GLABUSH

## Peter von Tiesenhausen

◀◀ CLINT ROENISCH GALLERY, TORONTO

Landscape in painting is the middle C of visual art—something elementary, familiar, reassuring, never surprising. But the best landscape art resounds in the mind like a fine bell tuned to C. The ordinariness of its comfortable old subject is transfigured by chromatic densities of overtones soaring over the basic note.

Peter von Tiesenhausen's recent oils peeled the landscape, proclaiming again and again the earth, trees and skies of the artist's own northern Alberta. His stormy, intense paintwork convincingly transcribed the features of the land, bringing them near, like all good nature painting.

Urban observers could know, or imagine we knew, the rush of water between high, jagged shoulders of rock in a mountain pass, the solemn forest floor under smouldering skies, the foliage of a tree snatched at by winds driving hard under cold clouds. We recognized the curious boats woven from twigs, vines or saplings, or hacked from charred plywood, the huts deep in the bush and the colossal wooden statues of men that the artist has taken to every part of Canada—all things that have long been at home in von Tiesenhausen's painting. This was nature raw, neither victimized nor virginal—inhabited, but hardly overwhelmed by human presence.

But nothing in this art was quite what it seemed—or, more accurately, everything was the mute rock or tree it was, while at the same time ringing with complex messages.

The ships in these paintings, like ships from time out of mind, were symbols of terrestrial odyssey and adventure, as well as the soul's passage through death. The hut in the thicket similarly refuses to be simple or ordinary. We learn from the old tales and epics of northern peoples that every forest dwelling is extraordinary—the home of a man or woman who has fled into the wilderness to seek salvation, or the lair of a witch, or the shaking tent in which the shaman receives the ancient energies of the earth. I do