

Montréal – Lesbian-style

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Studiolo, a retrospective exhibition of the collaborative work of Martha Fleming and Lyne Lapointe. Fleming, an art critique and curator, and Lapointe, an up and coming visual artist, met in the eighties and fell head over heels in love. Their emotional and artistic union sparked a remarkable body of work revolving around a series of large-scale, site-specific installations they created in Montréal and all over the world. Studiolo incorporates bits and pieces of all of these projects, regrouping them thematically to create a new exhibition which stands on its own beautifully. Highly recommended. Studiolo runs until September 13.

If you don't speak French, you won't be able to enjoy Montréal's thriving theatre scene. There is of course, Theatre in English, but the pickings are slim compared to other English cities. Montréal, however, is the North American capital of dance (you didn't know that, did you?), and there is always an interesting, provocative show going on somewhere. Lesbians have a very visible presence in the dance community and you should check out Hour and the Mirror looking specifically for what is going on at places like Studio 303, Graffiti Tango, Usine C, L'Agora. See anything that features dancers Sarah Williams or Nathalie Claude.

As for food: there are so many great restaurants in Montréal that choosing one might be bewildering. Montréal's lesbian restaurateurs have a flare for hamburgers, throwing the vegetarian stereotype right out the window. La Paryse ((302 Ontario East) is a small, fifties inspired diner which serves the biggest, juiciest, freshest burgers and downright delectable fries. Prices are great. Look on the walls and you'll find lots of art by local gay and lesbian artists, which La Paryse proudly supports. For more ideas, pick up the summer special issue of Fugues (it might be hard to find by now, but if you call (514) 848-1854, they might be able to send you one if they have any left).

Some final notes: Montréal is a safe city to be out in. That said, gay and lesbian bashings have occurred and you should use your judgment at night as in any large city. And if you are a non-smoker, brace yourself: restaurants are not smoke free here, and smoke often wafts into the token smoke-free areas. It's annoying, but you'd be wise to just let it go. Complaining will get you nothing but attitude from your waiter. And all the bars are very, very smoky. Don't bother asking if there is a smoke-free area in a bar, because you will end up having to help the server get up off the floor from laughing so hard. Chalk it up to a cultural thing and be prepared to dry-clean your clothes.

Volumes more could be written about lesbian Montréal, but I'll leave some of the mystery for you to discover. We hope to see you soon! A bientôt!

Johanne Cadorette, 3426 St-Andre app, 5 Montreal Qc H2L 3V3, (514) 528-9690 / jcadoret@total.net Writer, Book Reviewer, Broadcaster/Journaliste et critique littéraire Ecoutez la Ballade des furies & Dykes on Mykes a CKUT 90.3 fm lundi @ 19h00!!

letters

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ity health to try to understand the health concerns of the BLT community. More recently, the "Ladies First" program, through its community educator in St. Albans, Doris Hughes, has begun an outreach pilot project to encourage lesbians in Vermont who need financial assistance for mammograms and pap smears to enroll in the "Ladies First" program. Later this year, we will distribute a brochure addressing lesbians' concerns about breast and cervical cancer. This brochure was designed with the help of members of the former Lesbian Health Network as well as a small focus group of older lesbians.

We understand, however, that we cannot effectively reach BLT women in need of screening without the support of the lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered community. We hope that we will be able to work with the BLT Health Network to define and reduce the barriers to cancer screening faced by Vermont's BLT community. We also have a great need for women from this community to work with the screening program as volunteers, to educate themselves and then share what they have learned with other women.

Sincerely,  
Jean Ewing

Crows Caws

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Letters from a Warzone: "Words can be used to educate, to clarify, to inform, to illuminate. Words can also be used to intimidate, to threaten, to insult, to coerce, to incite hatred, to encourage ignorance....Words matter because words significantly determine what we know and what we do."

Of course as these things go, it wasn't smooth sailing the whole 4 days. It rained a lot, the land was a bit swampy and buggy, and the Peace Camp is located next to a defunct army depot and nuclear waste dump which gave me the creeps. I spent a number of hours trying to come to terms with the demon inside that tells me we're just a remnant of rag-tag dykes on the fringes of the fringes hopelessly clinging to an ideology that is no longer useful in stemming the onslaught of corporate takeover, the massive war against women, and widespread pollution. Why not just pack up my tent and spend the rest of the weekend in my dry condo turning my back on these pathetic voices in the wilderness?

But by Sunday I rallied. I felt that surge of openness that floods through me when I finally recognize it's not these wimmin or the rain or the mosquitoes or the cars swishing by on the road that's to blame for my grumpiness. It's my resistance, my fear and my lack of hope that gets me down; and it's way worth it to stay still and wait for it to pass than to run away. So here I am a week later more hopeful than ever that there is a significant resurgence of lesbian feminist culture on the horizon. I no longer (today, anyway) think of ourselves as buried underground bulldozed by the "queer nation" who are into throwing the lesfem baby out with the bathwater (if they even have a clue what lesfem is about in the first place).

I have connections with some motivated dykes in Vermont willing to bring a fabulous radlesfem visionary to the area to do some workshops (stay tuned); I have a new radlesfem publication to contribute to being started by Lierre and Claudine from Chicago; Louise from upstate and I plan to do a radlesfem workshop at NEWMR this year (probably the only one offered, I'm sad to say, but better than nothing); and there's a new radlesfem moving to town who's been reading "Crow's Caws" on the Internet from Philly who may well be contributing her radles perspective to OITM in the near future. And one more thing. There's going to be yet another radlesfem gathering in October in Kansas City put on by a bunch of dykes I never even heard of, would you believe. Go, girls, go! (and call Crow at 864-5595 for more info.)

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