



LISA EASTON: FIELD/WORK

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JUNE 1 - SEPTEMBER 12, 2009

Reception 5:30 - 7:30pm, June 4, 2009

ArtShare 6:00pm



ORGANIZED & PRESENTED BY:



Paris Gibson Square
MUSEUM OF ART

EXHIBITION SPONSORED BY:



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Museum programming is made possible by the generosity of museum members and supporters, with ongoing assistance from The National Endowment for the Arts, the Montana Arts Council and the Citizens of Cascade County.



Installation View

- (Clockwise from left) **Almanac**, 2009, found objects, soil, leather, oxidized welded steel and glass, 43 x 14 x 13.5"
- Red Horizon** (Triptych), 2009, encaustic and oil pigment on oxidized welded steel, left and right panels 60 x 40" each, center panel 60 x 48"
- Fare**, 2009, found objects, soil, leather, oxidized welded steel and glass, 60 x 18 x 17.5"
- Crop**, 2009, found objects, soil, leather, oxidized welded steel and glass, 68.5 x 15.5 x 15.5"



Installation View

(Upper row from left to right) **Planting 1** through **Planting 3**, each work 2009, encaustic and found objects on oxidized welded steel, each panel measures 16 x 22"
(Lower row from left to right) **Gleaning 1** through **Gleaning 5**, 2009, encaustic and found objects on oxidized welded steel, each panel measures 28 x 22"

"Feeding ourselves has become fraught with complications, personally and collectively. Our troubled, beautiful and increasingly complex relationships with the earthly processes that nourish our bodies are the focus of this installation. In choosing symbolic and material language that implicates human labor and technology, the work of bees and the biological wonders that are seeds, I am describing tensions between natural processes and human interventions, between agriculture and arrogance, sustenance and disaster. The successful collaboration between people and nature, requiring wisdom, sacrifice and the acknowledgement of human vulnerability, has long been celebrated and held sacred. I wonder whether pragmatic and profit-driven attitudes toward growing, raising and eating food make us the weak link in a planetary chain, and contribute to our destruction."—Lisa Easton ■



Handled, 2009, encaustic and mixed media on oxidized welded steel, 36 x 30"

Curator's Statement

Bob Durden, Curator of Art

Between the literal and the figurative forms of human expression lay an infinite world of visual possibilities describing intellectual and aesthetic concerns. In *Field/Work*, Lisa Easton has created a personal view that stems from specific concerns about agricultural production and delivery methodologies. In her exhibition statement, she poses a question about our ability to survive in the global economic and ecologic realities of our times, while visually transcending to a higher plane to nourish the viewer.

The structure of the work claims the artist's literal concerns in such elements as seeds and wax that stand for the essential ingredients and processes of life. The seed contains all information relevant to sustaining plant-life and by extension human-life. The wax alludes to by-products of the busy workers whose efforts culminate in the production of honey and wax while promoting the continuation of a plants genetic code. The graphic expression in Easton's work (paint, graphite, iron oxide, etc...) indicates a mechanical/methodical ordering of thought, subject and nature as well as the visual narrative. A grid appears often in individual works indicating rational order emphasized by the rectangular presentation of steel supports. Color is consciously minimized to avoid a sense of artifice/overt decoration or closed symbolic/emotional interpretations.



Gleaning #3, 2009, encaustic and mixed media on oxidized, welded steel 36 x 30"

Field/Work is intended as an amalgamation of the sum of its parts, which like a seed containing its own meaning alters itself naturally over time to respond to elemental changes. The consistency of shape in the encaustic paintings on sheet metal specifically reinforce the idea of structuralism applied to food production while simultaneously referring to the landscape of north-central Montana. In the former instance, the organizational structure reminds the viewer of strip farming, garden plots, and cultural and economic hierarchies. In the latter, Lisa Easton captures the sublimity of her subject with a reverential nod to the influential Montana landscape painter, Bill Stockton (1921-2002), who likewise observed and recorded the elements of nature in a wonderfully fresh manner with a lens toward the macroscopic view rather than recording vast romantic vistas.

Easton also borrows from the formal traditions of Modern painting demonstrated by the likes of Mark Rothko and Robert Ryman. The compositional structures in Easton's work lend themselves to be read as the intersection of land and sky. Surface and the transparency of encaustic and pigment are equally important in the dissection of meaning and add to the layers of interpretation. Her materials vacillate between the hardness of steel and the plasticity of encaustic and alternately between the longevity of metal and the fugitive nature of graphite. All elements combine to form an open-ended expression to engage the viewer who is willing to plow the ground laid by the artist and to consider the artist's literal and figurative concerns. ■



Fieldwork 2009, encaustic and mixed media on oxidized welded steel, 36 x 30"



Red Horizon (triptych), encaustic & oil pigment on oxidized welded steel (left and right panels 60 x 40", center panel 60 x 48")



Installation Views

A Great Falls native, Lisa Easton earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Art at Montana State University, Bozeman in 1995. She has taught art in the Great Falls Public Schools since 1999. Her work is sited on the museum grounds to the south of the building. Lisa works in steel, encaustic and salvaged materials, often applying techniques and skills acquired from working alongside her father in the building trades. Her work is influenced by the Byzantine art of the Greek Orthodox Church of her childhood as well as the prairie and mountain landscapes of the northern plains. ■





Paris Gibson Square
MUSEUM OF ART

Our Mission

Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art is dedicated to fulfilling the artistic needs of the general public. This is accomplished through:

- Fostering accessibility and understanding of modern, contemporary and self-taught art;
- Collecting, preserving, exhibiting and interpreting art that actively engages a diverse and growing audience;
- Providing educational programming that inspires artistic expression and understanding;
- Expanding public knowledge of, interest in and support for the arts and artists of the region;
- Serving as a cultural center, and continuing the preservation of the historically significant Paris Gibson Square building.

Approved April 29, 2008 by the Board of Trustee

Museum programming is made possible by the generosity of museum members and supporters, with ongoing assistance from The National Endowment for the Arts, the Montana Arts Council and the Citizens of Cascade County.



Admission to the museum is free courtesy of



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