



George Armstrong Custer, 9" x 12", 1988
photo courtesy of the artist.

he title is held backwards), Jessie as Jessie, Jessie as Ma-losephine Humphrey's observing for family photographs grandmother Neta each hood in Charleston, South

My Real Invisible Self," "I have, as I will later so deep it is indistinguishable and nurtured it. She pictures of myself as if the serious and significant." It ellect, wit, and self-awareness between Mann and her child opportunity to view the lann together is one of the

with the work of Gowin, Wright are five untitled t and Patricia Dalzell's "St. Petersburg taken during 1992. Dalzell is a very good photographs the distance pher and her subjects creable distance between the ver. The images offer more ntions of Russian portrait the highly stylized poses zell's subjects) than of the hed. The subjects of these erved and self-conscious Dalzell has clearly not devith her subjects necessary l conventions which strucce and has chosen not to possibilities of the candid these polite Russians can with their less inhibiting nude or in elaborate cosphs of Gowin, Mann, and Dalzell's portraits would be smaller or presented in the book, where they could quiet world apart.

has written that "Holly re the sensuous and erotic by without any voyeurism Wright's work is about "the emplatation." Scattered and least advantageous spaces ight's postmodern diptychs inclusion in "Five Virginia pieces, which like the reopans use cropped close address theoretical issues nity, seem bizarrely out of me of the greatest merits of

these cool, postmodern fragments is their intellectual edge, they serve in this exhibition as a foil for those images that reserve the act of deconstruction for their audience.

The national consciousness may be near its capacity for Civil War memoirs, southern fried rock, and "Fried Green Tomatoes." The nomadism of artists in the '80s and '90s may mean the loss or hybridization of specifically regional cultural output. For the present, it remains some of the most compelling work being made and shown today. The most powerful aspect of the southern narrative vision and its lasting cultural legacy may be its assertion that the obscenity of contem-

plation, both of the self and the other, is both natural and unavoidable.

Jenni Lukac, Richmond, Virginia

CARTOGRAPHIES

National Gallery of Canada,
Ottawa, Ontario
February 18 - May 1

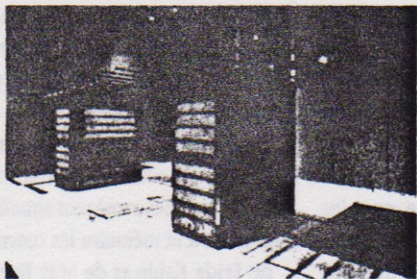
Bronx Museum of the Arts
New York, New York
October 6 - January 22

One need only think of Frida Kahlo's magic realist paintings or Jorge Luis Borges' fantastic novels to realize that Latin America is a region where myths, either pre-Columbian or those of a utopia never quite realized, are perpetuated amid the bloodshed and horror of the military junta or the impoverished ghosts of colonial Catholicism. Regional isolation furthers the sense that universal dreams, hopes, and secrets can be found in the symbols and meanings of personal cultural reference. Mainstream Western avant-gardism was previously shielded away from at the same time as a baroque excess and fantasy flourished. The Mexican painters Orozco, Siqueiros, and de Rivera, whose social realist mural paintings brought Latin American art to the world's attention, offered some hope in the past and revived this lost art worldwide.

The new generation of artists represented in "Cartographies" to the contrary are Latin America's post-colonial answer to the postmodern dilemma. De-Marx-icised, poststructuralist, and well versed in the main currents of international art, these artists' installations, paintings, and sculptures embody a confluence of cultural and political concerns that are the product of a region where success and prosperity are just words and nothing more.

Maria Fernanda Cardoso's bright white vertical arrangements of upturned cattle bones in *American Marble* (1992) used in the flooring of primitive huts in her native Colombia, have a vigorous energy. The patternings are so pure and unusual to the Western eye. Though we are not

personally familiar with the references, they are accessible and can be read either on a formal, symbolic, or vernacular level. As in other works, Cardoso has used corn, a food that has great symbolic and practical meaning to Latin American culture, in *Ranas* (1989). In this work, frogs are methodically impaled on a circle of steel wire hanging from a thin framework of steel. The compelling circularity of nature's intrinsic role in traditional Latin American culture is underscored by the omnipresent structural (read economic) impediments. One gets the feeling that the traditions are threatened, imposed upon by the invasion of foreign agri-business and investment. The farmworker must now work in foreign owned factories while eating corn and foodstuffs from the West imported at greatly reduced prices. Cuban born José Bedías' *The Revenge of the Periphery* (1993), with its centrifugal thrust of arrows and axes directed at a portrait of a white man, likewise furthers the feeling of the futility of maintaining cultural integrity however essential it is to maintaining a sense of identity. Four portraits of an Amerindian, a Chinaman, a Negro, and an Aborigine encircle the white man yet themselves are surrounded by a circle with haunting black missile-like forms drawn on the gallery wall. The pink bridal veil that looks lost and mysteriously tender, poised on an unforgetting slab of tyndal stone in Carlos Fajardo's allegorical installation piece, finds its violent echo in Chilean artist Gonzalo Diaz' cringing jackal who winces beneath a row of sickles and lights in *I am the way, kiss me a lot* (1993). Fajardo's black ball is equally dreamlike, brooding, and sensual. The Mexican Julio Galans' paintings represent a purely visual world of his own making. They collage and combine trompe l'oeil effects with a naive realism so labyrinthine it makes one think simultaneously of Frida Kahlo and Max Beckmann. The two cabin-like modules in Alfred Wenenmose's *Caracas* (1993), one of which is hermetically sealed and unable to be entered, amid the other reconstructs an airplane cockpit and includes background sounds, are built out of bubble wrap and aluminum. The viewer's sense of personal reality is con-



Alfred Wenenmose, Caracas, installation view, 1993
(photo courtesy of the National Gallery of Canada).

fronted at the same time as it suggests a voyage into another level of experience, perhaps that of our own unconsciousness. Guillermo Kutner's mattresses have painted maps superimposed on them. Sometimes obscure, other times recognizable, they embody the experience of the political exile looking inward from without—both physically and psychologically.

If political militancy and social activism are the pervasive characteristics of these artists' work, it is because the voices that cry for social change are silenced. Life can only be forgiving when it

remains elusive, a surreal mélange of Baroque excess and folkloric idealism. This is the land where the expectations of El Dorado were never realized yet dreams persist and life and death blend together. The postmodern idiom (a term the "Cartographies" catalogue notes was first coined in Brazil by Mario Pedrosa in 1966) becomes enigmatic yet has a poignant and cruel sense of urgency when surrounded by death and folklore, sunlight and poverty. "Cartographies" evidences an artistic vitality that draws its strength from a rooted, almost tribal sense of cultural identity.

John K. Grande, Montréal, Québec

DUANE HANSON: THE OTHER SIDE OF THE AMERICAN DREAM

Montréal Museum of Fine Arts
Montréal, Québec
February 3 - May 8

Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth
Fort Worth, Texas
July 10 - October 2

Clothed in the generic uniforms of their blue collar lifestyles, Duane Hanson's life size people sculptures are as homogenous as milk in a carton. Unlike the wax models from Madame Tussaud's, Hanson's humans are neither famous nor infamous but modeled to look as real as you and me. Hanson's sculptures are the real thing—the cannon fodder of a culture built on pragmatism, now forced to image culture and mediocre lifestyles—the other side of the American Dream. In Hanson's own words, "My images don't go near what you see in real life. The world is so remarkable and astonishing and surprising, that you don't need to exaggerate. What exists out there is mind boggling. I don't know what it is. They don't take care of themselves."

As object representations that also play on our perception of reality and actual space, Hanson's people sculptures both subvert and cleverly disguise Duchamp's legacy in the guise of "found humans." The illusion becomes all the more remarkable because of the complexity of Hanson's sectional casting, assemblage and cosmetic painterly techniques. The gap between art and life is seemingly eradicated, yet the concerns are quintessentially human, like the Fiberglas security guard who stares at you from one corner of the gallery and is virtually indistinguishable from the real one who stands inconspicuously nearby.

War (1967), with its monochrome mud-colored and bloodied soldiers slain in a rectangular field, and *Policeman and Rioter* (1967) with its image of a black man being bludgeoned to death, address '60s themes of social unrest, the Vietnam War, and racial tensions in the United States. Hanson's more recent sculptures are of everyday people. A photographer in a polyester shirt and Keds kneels beside his camera bag. Three construction workers take a break surrounded by scaffolding, drills, cables, tools, and lunch boxes. The cleaning lady from every office tower from Montréal to Fort Worth stands behind her Rubbermaid waste container with her feather duster in hand like a drill sergeant. These figures have a muted apathy to them that is no less political because it suggests the flip side of violence