

**THE MORGUE: UNSETTLING PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
ANDRES SERRANO AT THE MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN  
STARTING OCTOBER 21**

Montréal, October 11, 1994. The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal presents **ANDRES SERRANO THE MORGUE**, a recent series of works by New York photographer Andres Serrano. The exhibition brings together 18 large photographs by one of the best-known and most controversial of American artists. This photographic series, which has already been exhibited in France, Belgium and the United States, is being shown here for the first time in Canada.

**Details and fragments that suggest a pondering on the subject of death**

In addition to the strong formal qualities of this series of photographs, curator Réal Lussier believes that it allows "an appreciation not only of the contribution of the great pictorial tradition to Serrano's art, but also of the original, exacting eye he casts on our reality." Using a bald, highly formal treatment, Serrano tackles THE taboo subject of our society: death.

According to the curator, "if Serrano's work is in any way provocative, it is because it demands that we gaze with a clear eye on what we tend today to shunt aside, to want to ignore, that repressed part of Western culture: death."

The careful framing of anonymous details allows the artist to avoid personalizing individuals. These fragments make it very difficult to recognize the sex, age or race of the people. The images offered suggest, above all, a pondering on the subject of death, both that of others and our own.

**Death: a recurring subject throughout the history of art**

In Lussier's opinion, "the pictures plainly illustrate the artist's desire to reveal the beauty of the subjects photographed, as well as the continuing influence of the great masters of painting. With these works, Serrano links up with the great Christian tradition of meditation on death which has already provided art history with a great many subjects."

The curator also points out that Andres Serrano was strongly influenced by his Catholic upbringing and quickly showed a particular fascination for religious subjects, creating images that have sparked great controversy.

Some of Serrano's works, for example, elicited heated reactions from religious leaders. In 1989, condemnation by members of the U.S. Congress, in particular Senator Jesse Helms, gave the artist an international profile. The Musée therefore invites you to dare to look at a taboo subject, and judge for yourselves.

Andres Serrano will meet the public on Thursday October 20 at 5 p.m. in the exhibition galleries, and will discuss various aspects of his work.

The Musée wishes to thank MusiquePlus for its support for the exhibition **ANDRES SERRANO *THE MORGUE***. The exhibition was organized by the Yvon Lambert gallery, Paris.

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