

PRESS RELEASE

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ANDRÉ MARTIN **MY MODELS – SELF-PORTRAIT** **at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal**

“The water has erased everything, I can make out a couple of letters: a, t, r, o, m, e...”
André Martin, excerpt from soundtrack

Montréal, May 10, 2000. When the water has covered what was drawn in the sand, won't art, love and death be the only things left? That is what artist André Martin seems to say in his latest exhibition, titled *André Martin. My Models – Self-Portrait* presented at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal from May 11 to August 13, 2000.

“Three suspension points are pulling themselves out of the black cannulas, are emerging out of darkness.”

André Martin

In near-total darkness, three long double cones, hung side by side at eye level, contain two groups of translucent, luminous photographs, placed back to back. On one side, they show phosphorus images of three models seen from behind and covered with the words *arte*, *amore*, *morte* written in laser pen. The other side reveals three images taking up the same leitmotiv: for *arte*, the *Bocca della verità*, in Rome; for *amore*, waves breaking on rocks; and for *morte*, citrines. A spiral-shaped nebula is projected on one of the gallery walls. A sound recording, with such fictional backgrounds as the museum of torture in Florence, adds to the installation's enigmatic effect. The artist's voice can be heard evoking the photographer's relationship with his models.

Following in the path of his earlier projects, here the artist combines art and literature, as he did in *L'Impasse d'A.S.* (1999), *Chroniques de l'Express: natures mortes* (1997), *Darlinghurst Heroes* (1993), *Crimes passionnels, cinq faits divers photographiques* (1992), and *Points de suspension/Gedankenpunkte* (1984). Playing on dualities — fiction and reality, literary and photographic, sculptural and pictorial, visible and hidden, etymology and science — André Martin plays the role of a Sphinx and presents visitor-travellers with a riddle in the shape of a luminous spiral... unless he is suggesting the germ of an answer with *Arte*, *Amore* and *Morte*. Earlier, in 1980, the artist wrote about his *Anagramme* project: “The site of photographic seduction appears between two deserts, between two distressing facts taking turns disappearing.”

André Martin was born in Rimouski in 1956. In 1984, he earned a Master of Fine Arts degree from Concordia University under the direction of artist Irene F. Whittome. He continued his training as guest artist at the Staatliche Kunstakademie, Düsseldorf, in 1984 and 1985. He has taken part in numerous solo and group exhibitions, both in Québec and beyond. His most recent solo exhibitions include: *L'Impasse d'A.S.* at the Occurrence gallery, Montréal (2000); *André Martin: Chroniques et autres révélations* at the Centre culturel canadien, Printemps de Cahors, Paris (1998-1999); *André Martin: Darlington Heroes* at the Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (1998-1999); and *Chroniques de l'Express, natures mortes* at Oeil de Poisson, Québec City (1998) and Galerie Yves Le Roux, Montréal (1997). From 1988 to 1993, André Martin was co-director of Dazibao, contemporary photography centre, in Montréal and curated a number of exhibitions. He has also published many articles and art books as well as fiction, for Parachute magazine, Herbes rouges, Éditions Trois and Dazibao, among others. In 1994, he won the Jovette Bernier award for literature. André Martin lives and works in Montréal.

My Models – Self-Portrait: *also a catalogue and a book*

A catalogue accompanies the exhibition. This 24-page publication contains essays by the curator, Sandra Grant Marchand, and the artist, reproductions of the installation and a selective biobibliography. It may be purchased for \$11.95 at the Musée's Olivieri Bookstore and from other booksellers. The book *Mes modèles – Autoportrait* is coming out soon.

The opening is scheduled for Wednesday, May 10 at 6 p.m. André Martin will meet the public on the evening of the opening, at 5:30 p.m., when he will discuss various aspects of his artistic approach.

The artist thanks GROUPECORLAB for its support for the exhibition.