



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

**Tricia Middleton exhibition at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal
October 10, 2009 to January 3, 2010**

Montréal, September 8, 2009. From the moment they enter the “grotto,” visitors are plunged into the depths of a grotesque, baroque fictional world that closes around them. Two videos project a light that emanates from the bowels of the installation. A contemporary metaphor for Plato's cave or a sensory experience of metamorphosing materials? From October 10, 2009 to January 3, 2010, the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal presents the exhibition *Tricia Middleton*.

Dark Souls

For the exhibition, the artist is creating a new installation here in which she explores the question of the transformation and destruction of materials, a process characteristic of the industrial production cycle, the outcome of which is that “natural resources and the labouring being's élan become denuded and erased.” The title *Dark Souls* is inspired by that of the Nikolai Gogol novel *Dead Souls*, in which the author decried the decay of Russia's social system. Middleton updates this critique with her denunciation of today's consumer, and waste, society, which strips objects of their meaning and recognizes them only for their value as a form of currency.

Drawing on such architectural icons as the Palace of Versailles, and Notre-Dame Cathedral and the catacombs in Paris, Middleton uses painting, sculpture, video projections and recycled materials to create a phantasmagorical environment, a world of opulence and ruin, grand yet decadent, laid out along a series of Dantesque paths.

The artist

Tricia Middleton investigates the process of creating a work, in installations that borrow from the disciplines of sculpture, video and painting. For Middleton, the material itself is the subject of the work. Often site-specific, her pieces bring together the studio, which she views as a kind of “absurd laboratory,” and the exhibition space, ultimately making them one and the same.

Born in Vancouver in 1972, Middleton holds a B.F.A. from the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, and an M.F.A. from Concordia University. Over the past decade, she has taken part in numerous video festivals and biennials in collaboration with Joel Taylor: New York Video Festival (New York, 2001 and 2003), Rencontres internationales Paris/Berlin (2002 and 2003), Les Rendez-vous du Cinéma québécois (2004 and 2005), and Video Art Stars Video Biennial (Ottawa, 2007). Among the main group shows she has participated in are *Backpacker* (London Biennial, London, 2002), *Beyond Feminism* (Parisian Laundry, Montréal, 2006); *Dé-constructions*, National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa, 2007), and *The Québec Triennial*, here at the Musée in 2008. Her solo exhibitions include *Ether Frolics* at the Centre d'art et de diffusion Clark and *The Woods/Dans la forêt* at the Centre des arts actuels Skol, both in 2005. This presentation is her first solo exhibition at a museum. Tricia Middleton has lived and worked in Montréal since 2002.

Curator

The exhibition was curated by Sandra Grant Marchand. The artist thanks the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec and the Canada Council for the Arts for the grants they provided for the preparation of the show.

Catalogue

A bilingual catalogue will be published a few weeks after the exhibition opens, in order to include reproductions of the work *in situ*. In addition to extensive visual documentation, it will contain an essay by the curator, Sandra Grant Marchand, and a biobibliography. The publication will be available at the museum's Olivieri Bookstore or from your local bookseller.

Meet the artist

Tricia Middleton will meet the public just before the opening, on Friday, October 9, at 5:30 p.m. in the exhibition galleries. The event will take place in English.

The Musée d'art contemporain is a provincially owned corporation funded by the Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine du Québec. It receives additional funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Canada Council for the Arts.

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Source and information

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