

Althea Thauberger

not afraid to die, 2001

Single channel projection 16 mm to
DVD, Edition 1 of 3
7 minutes, 20 seconds

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Image source: <http://www.richmond-news.com/issues03/041103/photos/ent1.jpg>

Artist's Biography

Nationality: Canadian
Born: 1970, Saskatoon

Althea Thauberger was born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan in 1970. She obtained her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Photography at Concordia University in 2000 and went on to complete her Master in Fine Arts at the University of Victoria in 2002. In 2003, Thauberger was awarded a Vancouver Arts Development Award and was a regional finalist for the Sobey Award.

Thauberger often selects nonprofessional actors to participate in her work and allows them to express themselves freely in terms of their actions, gestures and dress while she determines the locations, participants and script. In this respect, Thauberger's practice finds parallel in the work of New York based artist Katy Grannan who does photographic portraiture of people who answer ads she places for "Art Models," the community based performance works of Jeremy Deller and Christian Jankowsky and the social documentary photographs and videos of Rineke Dijkstra. Thematically, Thauberger's practice frequently focuses on adolescence and is concerned with notions of self-expression and individualism in contemporary culture. Thauberger often sets her central characters in Arcadian locations, thereby also addressing the romantic vision of the West Coast as a place of spiritual enlightenment through one's strong connection to the natural world. Music figures prominently in some of Thauberger's video work featuring young women, a blend of hippie-folk and angry girl ballads, as a means of expressing deeply personal and sometimes angst-ridden emotions. The heartfelt musical performances in Thauberger's work, operatic in nature, create a tension in between honesty and theatricality.

Source: Acquisitions Justification

Artistic Context

Nationality: Canadian

Training: Concordia University; University of Victoria

Peers: Robert Arndt; Karin Bubas; Scott McFarland; Alex Morrison; Brandon Thiessen

Group: video

Provenance: purchased from the Tracey Lawrence Gallery; the artist

Subject: a dolescence; identity; gender; theatricality

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Further Reading

Baja to Vancouver: the West Coast and Contemporary Art. San Francisco: CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art, 2003.

Dick, Terence. "Girl Trouble: Teenage Girls in Contemporary Art," *Border Crossings*. 93 (2004): 76-81

Gallery 44 Centre for Contemporary Photography. Toronto: Gallery 44, 2002.

Sobey Art Award. Nova Scotia: Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, 2004.

Video Heroes. Montreal: Centre des arts Saidye Bronfman, 2004.

Exhibition History

Exhibitions at the Vancouver Art Gallery

75 Years of Collecting: Portrait of a Citizen. September 23, 2006 - January 1, 2007.

Selected Exhibitions Outside of the Vancouver Art Gallery

Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver. *Satan, Oscillate My Metallic Sonatas.* November 14, 2002 - January 5, 2003.

Archival History

Acquisitions Justification

Acquisition Record
2005

[transcription]

Althea Thauberger b. 1970, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan Lives and works in Vancouver, BC

not afraid to die
2001

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7 minutes, 20 seconds

Vendor: Tracey Lawrence Gallery

Provenance: From the Artist to Tracey Lawrence Gallery

Exhibited: Exhibited in *Satan, oscillate my metallic sonatas* at the Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (2002)

Artist Biography

Althea Thauberger was born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan in 1970. She obtained her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Photography at Concordia University in 2000 and



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went on to complete her Master in Fine Arts at the University of Victoria in 2002. In 2003, Thauberger was awarded a Vancouver Arts Development Award and was a regional finalist for the Sobey Award. Thauberger's work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Helen Pitt Gallery, Vancouver (2001), Open Space Gallery, Victoria (2002), Artspeak Gallery, Vancouver (2002), Art Gallery of Greater Victoria (2002), Truck Gallery, Calgary (2003), La Centrale, Montréal (2003), White Columns, New York (2004), Presentation House Gallery, North Vancouver (2005) and Berkeley Art Museum (2005). Thauberger has also participated in numerous group exhibitions nationally and internationally including those at Art Gallery of Greater Victoria (2001), YYZ Artists' Outlet, Toronto (2001), Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (2002), Richmond Art Gallery (2001), Belkin Satellite, Vancouver (2003), Edmonton Art Gallery (2003), Blackwood Gallery, Mississauga (2003), Vancouver Art Gallery (2003), Seattle Art Museum (2003), San Diego Museum of Contemporary Art (2003), CCA Wattis Institute, San Francisco (2003), Loop-raum für aktuelle kunst, Berlin (2004), Galler MUU, Helsinki (2004), Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp (2005), Saidye Bronfman Centre, Montréal (2005) and Walter Phillips Gallery at the Banff Centre for the Arts (2005).

Artist in Context

Thauberger often selects nonprofessional actors to participate in her work and allows them to express themselves freely in terms of their actions, gestures and dress while she determines the locations, participants and script. In this respect, Thauberger's practice finds parallel in the work of New York based artist Katy Grannan who does photographic portraiture of people who answer ads she places for "Art Models," the community based performance works of Jeremy Deller and Christian Jankowsky and the social documentary photographs and videos of Rineke Dijkstra. Thematically, Thauberger's practice frequently focuses on adolescence and is concerned with notions of selfexpression and individualism in contemporary culture. Thauberger often sets her central characters in Arcadian locations thereby also addressing the romantic vision of the West Coast as a place of spiritual enlightenment through one's strong connection to the natural world. Music figures prominently in some of Thauberger's video work featuring young women, a blend of hippie-folk and angry girl ballads, as a means of expressing deeply personal and sometimes angst-ridden emotions. The heartfelt musical performances in Thauberger's work, operatic in nature, create a tension between honesty and theatricality.

Work Under Consideration

The work under consideration is a video, shot in 16mm film and transferred to DVD. The video focuses on an adolescent female who sits alone in the woods. The sounds of the forest are interrupted by the voice of the artist herself, who sings a mix of original music and lyrics and traditional North American folk songs.

This work is concerned with the interplay and tension between nature and culture in this young woman's experience of the woods. Although she is in a natural setting, her experience of her environment is filled with cultural trappings: she wears a polyester hiking jacket, carries a backpack, what she consumes comes pre-packaged a shiny wrapper and a juice box and the sounds of nature are drowned out by the sound of music.

The young woman does very little in the outdoors — she does not explore or hike, rather she sits quietly and appears to be waiting, perhaps for the idealized feeling of freedom or enlightenment associated with proximity to nature. This work brings together many of the concerns that are found in Thauberger's practice: the Romantic vision of the West Coast, the consumption of nature, the tension between culture and nature, and the experience of the world in adolescence.

Justification

The Vancouver Art Gallery does not have any work by Althea Thauberger in its

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collection. Thauberger is a significant emerging Vancouver-based artist and acquiring her work would broaden the scope of the Gallery's collection of young Vancouver-based artists. Her Vancouver-based peers include Robert Arndt, Karin Bubãs, Scott McFarland, Alex Morrison and Brandon Thiessen, already in the Gallery's collection. Her work addresses notions of gender and theatricality and has thematic connections to the work already in the Gallery's collection by Allyson Clay, Lucy Hogg, Kate Craig, Eric Metcalfe and Joanne Tod. Thauberger has participated in an exhibition at the Gallery; her work *Songstress*, 2001-2, was part of an exhibition at the Gallery entitled *Baja to Vancouver: The West Coast and Contemporary Art*. Acquiring this work would be in line with the Gallery's acquisition goals that place emphasis on including works by emerging Vancouver-based artists. The work is in good condition.

Recommend acceptance.

Bruce Grenville
Senior Curator

Research: Emmy Lee
Assistant Curator

Description	Acquisition Comments	Committee Disposition	Board Approval
Althea Thauberger, <i>not afraid to die</i> , 2001 single channel projection 16mm to DVD edition 1 of 3 7 minutes, 20 seconds		APPROVED	OCT -5 2005

Board Minutes
Acquisition Record
2005-10-05

[transcription of excerpt]

SCHEDULE "A"
Works Recommended for Acquisition

Acquisition Meeting: October 5, 2005
Board Meeting: October 5, 2005

Submission

PURCHASE

2. *not afraid to die*, 2001
single channel projection
16mm to DVD
edition 1 of 3
7 minutes, 20 seconds

Artist: Althea Thauberger
Vendor: Tracey Lawrence Gallery

Curatorial comments: Recommend Purchase

Committee Disposition: Approved unanimously

Board Approval: [APPROVED OCT -5 2005]

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