

Reclaiming

Intervention: 33 Women Painters

Exhibition Guest Curated by Harold Klunder, McClure Gallery Feb 1 – 24, 2018

“Art is not just for oneself, not just a marker of one’s own understanding.
It is also a map for those who follow after us.”
Clarissa Pinkola Estes, *Women Who Run With the Wolves*

Reclaiming is about taking back what is rightfully mine. Stubbornly reprioritizing and tenaciously repossessing enough life force energy to make art - to paint to my heart’s content. Only after living with *Reclaiming* for some time, do I begin to see the female figures gathered around a central space. Even my own paintings (if not especially my own paintings), reveal a map - of what has come before me and, what is emerging now.

There is chaos on the canvas too of course but there is a welcome calm cohesiveness. Life continues to be full-to-the-brim and then some.

There is the familiar sense of coming undone so often present in my work but there is also an underlying trust in resilience and loose but capable navigation.

There is an exhilarating, whirlwind energy of sailing through turbulent waters that reflects my lived experience. After many interventions of initiation, I am reclaiming my place in the long line of map makers.

Background Story

Invited to curate an exhibition for McClure Gallery in Montreal, well-known Canadian artist Harold Klunder took the opportunity to invite 33 women artists he saw as notably engaged in the process of painting.

We were invited to use the exhibition and space to “*intervene with our own works*”. It was an opportunity to “*lend our voices to the continued reinvention of painting as a discipline relevant to our times*”. This aligned well with the Centre’s mandate of accessibility and inclusivity in the teaching and exhibiting of art.

As one of the least celebrated woman artists and perhaps, most in need of a robust intervention of my own, I was both honoured and humbled by the invitation to participate. As a late bloomer who earned a Fine Art Degree from the University of Guelph in my forties, a mother and grandmother with a full-time day job and demanding family life, I was more than a little daunted. I was also energized and ignited. Critics may be convinced that painting is dead. I for one, am not quite ready to believe that.