

PATRICK MIKHAIL GALLERY

2401 BANK STREET OTTAWA CANADA K1V 8R9
T.613.746.0690 1.800.388.3298 F.613.746.4996
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**PATRICK MIKHAIL GALLERY presents EPHEMERA, a
new multi-media exhibition by photo artist CHERYL
PAGUREK**

Exhibition:
EPHEMERA

Artist:
CHERYL PAGUREK

Dates:
January 9, 2008, to February 3, 2008

Artist Reception:
Friday, January 11, 2008
5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Artist Talk
Sunday, January 20, 2008
3 p.m.

PATRICK MIKHAIL GALLERY is pleased to present **EPHEMERA**, a new multi-media exhibition by Ottawa photo artist **CHERYL PAGUREK**. The solo exhibition—which features new photographs, video, and video stills—presents images of contemporary domestic life, often set against footage of pre-Holocaust Jewish communities.

In EPHEMERA, Cheryl Pagurek investigates the interrelated concepts of time, memory, and history. The exhibition unfolds in two parts: the photographic series entitled REFLECTION, and the video entitled PASSAGE and its accompanying video stills. The elusive “Reflection” photo-works offer glimpses of time and place and present layers of simultaneous narratives. In the play between surface and depth, the images evoke a contemplative sense of looking into a different

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time and space, the present and past coexisting. Oscillating between representation and painterly abstraction, the works propose a space of introspection and reflection on our individual place within a temporal and spatial continuum. The ephemeral quality of the video "Passage" and related video stills interweaves multiple, coexistent narratives, contemplating present-day experiences in relation to the past. Referencing the artist's familial history through archival footage, separate yet connected narratives unfold. Contemporary domestic footage is set against black and white archival footage of pre-Holocaust Jewish life in Eastern Europe, and the immigration of some to ghettoized urban life in North America.

Cheryl Pagurek is a photo-based and video artist living and working in Ottawa. She received an M.F.A. from the University of Victoria. Her work has been shown extensively across Canada, including exhibits at Carleton University Art Gallery, the Ottawa Art Gallery, Gallery 44, Vu Centre de diffusion et de production de la photographie, Eastern Edge, Floating Gallery and the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, as well as in a 2004 project for Prefix Photo magazine. "Friday Morning," a video from 2006, was recently screened at Centre de production Daimon in Gatineau, QC, and the video "Passage," will also be screened at the Ottawa Art Gallery in 2008. In addition to the current exhibition at Patrick Mikhail Gallery, Ms. Pagurek will be presenting a solo exhibition at the Ottawa City Hall Art Gallery in June 2008. Her work can be found in numerous collections including the Canada Council Art Bank, the Library of the National Gallery of Canada, the Ottawa Art Gallery, and the City of Ottawa. Ms. Pagurek was a finalist for the 2005 Karsh Award for photo-based work, and has received grants from the City of Ottawa, the Ontario Arts Council, and the Canada Council for the Arts.

IN OTHER GALLERY NEWS...

■ **WIL MURRAY** appears in "Brawl of the Beast" a solo exhibition at the Bilton Center for Contemporary Art in Red Deer, Alberta, from January 5 to February 2, 2008. Mr. Murray's boldly textured and vibrantly coloured canvases challenge the traditions and perceptions associated with painting as we know it. The paint oozes, bubbles and drips off the surface, spilling onto the line between painting and sculpture.

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■ **FRANK RODICK**'s photographic work entitled LOVE, has been purchased by the Brooklyn Museum of Art for their permanent collection. Mr. Rodick appears in ICY: Clear Views 02, a group exhibition at the Minnesota Center for Photography from February 16 to April 27, 2008.

■ Opening next at Patrick Mikhail Gallery...an exhibition featuring new paintings and a site-specific installation by artist **PAUL FORTIN**. From February 6 to March 2, 2008.

For more information:

PATRICK MIKHAIL GALLERY
2401 Bank Street
Ottawa Canada K1V 8R9
Tel. 613.746.0690 TF: 1.800.388.3298

E-mail: gallery@patrickmikhailgallery.com

Web: www.patrickmikhailgallery.com

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The artist gratefully acknowledges the support of the City of Ottawa, the Ontario Arts Council, and the Canada Council for the Arts in the production and presentation of this body of work.



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CHERYL PAGUREK

EXHIBITION STATEMENT

Cheryl Pagurek's recent photo-based and video works investigate the interrelated concepts of time, memory and history. They are elusive in that they offer glimpses of time and place, but because of missing visual information, they frustrate our desire for a complete, captured moment. Relationships of presence/absence, already intrinsic to photography in the framing of the subject (what is included and what is left out) and in photography's indexical nature (the subject matter was previously—but is no longer—present in front of the camera) are highlighted in these works. The ephemeral quality of Ms. Pagurek's recent work in video evokes the "present-ness" of the disappearing past. Referencing her familial history through archival footage, the video works contemplate present experience in relation to that of the past.

Three duratrans transparencies in light boxes from the **Light** series (2005) explore our varied perceptions of time by digitally interweaving photographs of light and shadow patterns observed around a house through the day, with old black and white photographs from an earlier generation. These works contrast our daily, even hourly, awareness of time elapsing, with a sense of the passing of eras. Two suspended moments, separated by many decades, are brought together. A natural progression for these investigations was to introduce the elements of durational time, motion, and the additional sensory experience of sound, by moving into the realm of video. When creating the still photos for the **Light** series, the artist was intrigued by the abstracted quality of the subtly flickering movements of shadow patterns created by light passing through foliage ruffled by the wind. She began to shoot digital video footage of moving patterns of light and shadow as they appeared on house floors and walls as well as outdoors on pavement and roadways. This type of pattern of moving light and shadow was the basis for **Passage**, a new work in digitally manipulated video.

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Passage (2007) evokes several layers of time and place through video imagery and sound. Separate yet connected narratives unfold: Present-day footage follows richly coloured light and shadow patterns appearing inside and outside the artist's house throughout the course of the day, from the cool blue-purple of morning light to the warm oranges of early evening. Meanwhile, black and white archival footage provides fleeting glimpses of Jewish life during the early part of the last century—everyday life in pre-World War 2 Eastern Europe, and the immigration of some to ghettoized urban life in North America. Amongst these fragments of an earlier era, we recognize women at market, hands sewing, immigrants disembarking from a ship, street scenes. At the same time, the accompanying soundscape situates us simultaneously in the past and present, in domestic and public spaces. The rhythm of her family's daily activities and interactions unfolds through sound, while the passage of time through the day is tracked from the song of birds at dawn to the late-night chirping of crickets. A past era is made more immediate through the sounds of horse-drawn wagons, marching troops, spoken Yiddish and traditional melodies. The fleeting immateriality of the video finds material embodiment in the nine sequential stills printed from **Passage**, each an intersection of coexistent narratives.

The eight ink jet prints from the **Reflection** series (2006-7) layer simultaneous narratives of different times and places. Attracted to the "world within a world" quality of reflections in pooled water, Pagurek photographed reflected houses, trees and streets, appearing upside-down as they emerge from the flat plane of snow or pavement surrounding the puddle. Like the patterns of shadows in previous works that are abstracted from the physical objects that cast them, the upside-down reflections of the neighborhood similarly transform a familiar reality, this time with a sense of dislocation. To echo this feeling of disorientation, and to further accentuate the passage of time captured through the changing seasons in the images, she has digitally inserted into each image one or more snapshots from several decades ago, also placed upside-down. This last gesture nudges the work further into abstraction as colours and textures function apart from the reality they represent. The old photographs are not seen in their entirety but, like fragments of memory, are glimpsed through the contemporary street images.

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The photographs of the water are focused on the depths of the reflections, while the shallow depth of field blurs the peripheral foreground, blending it into the soft grain of the old snapshots. Several sets of dualities intermingle in the work: The play between surface and depth in the images evokes a contemplative sense of looking into a different time and space, the present and past coexisting. The images oscillate between representation and painterly abstraction, while the intimate, private context of the family snapshot merges with the more public realm of landscape and street photography. Further, there is a dynamic tension between the photograph's traditional role as documentation of the "real" and the constructed nature of these images. In counterpoint to the minute-by-minute frantic pace of contemporary life, the work proposes a space of introspection and reflection on our individual place within a temporal and spatial continuum.