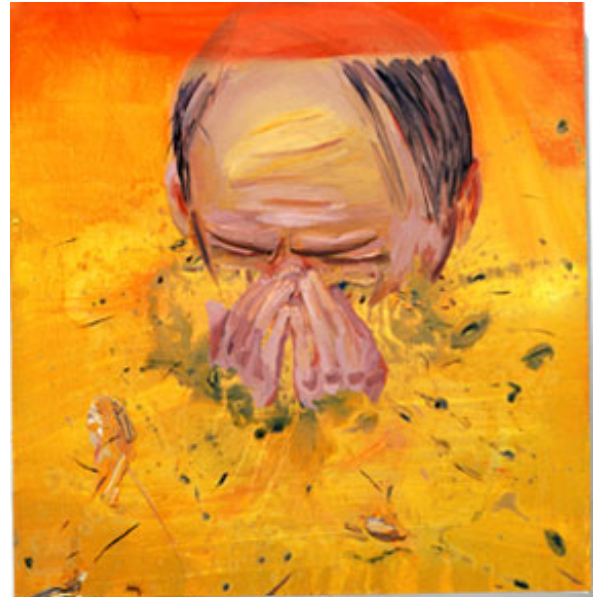


Winnipeg Art Gallery Exhibition Features Humour in Art

 artknowledge news.com /200607031850/Winnipeg_Art_Gallery-Art_Humour.html

Winnipeg, MB - Art galleries are sometimes seen as serious places. We may think laughter is not encouraged, but ***Situation Comedy: Humour in Recent Art***, at The Winnipeg Art Gallery , takes the opposite view. Laughing helps all of us deal with the absurdities of daily life. Laughing helps all of us deal with the absurdities of daily life.

The exhibition presents more than sixty works—video, paintings, sculptures, drawings, and photographs—by both younger and more established North American and European artists. What these thirty artists have in common is the use of parody and satire, slapstick, and practical jokes to establish an immediate rapport with their viewers, to encourage laughter in museum environments that are too often considered sacrosanct and austere. In a time of widespread political upheaval, artists are injecting a healthy dose of humour, both light-hearted and dark, into their work. They are examining how humour can engender a sense of immediacy and familiarity, while working as a means of critical engagement. With themes as varied as embarrassment, cruelty, and pranks, the works in this exhibition utilize the leveling power of comedy to break down barriers of taste and to question authority at every turn.



Dana Schutz, *Sneeze 2*, 2001, Oil on canvas, Private collection

The works in ***Situation Comedy*** prove that humour in contemporary art is prevalent for reasons having little to do with entertainment, that humour enables artists and audiences to approach and assess the unsettling conditions of everyday life rather than to escape them through diversions.

Situation Comedy is a traveling exhibition organized and circulated by Independent Curators International (ICI), New York. The exhibition was curated by Dominic Molon and Michael Rooks. The exhibition, tour, and catalogue are made possible, in part, by grants from the Elizabeth Firestone Graham Foundation and The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, with additional support from the ICI International Associates and the ICI independents. Exhibition on until 3 September.

Winnipeg Art Gallery acknowledges the support of the Canada Council for the Arts.