

EDIFICE

Alison Norlen

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The *Singularly Significant Series* showcases concise projects by high profile artists demonstrating significant historical and contemporary trends.

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My artistic practice is autobiographic; it incorporates storytelling and metaphor, and is sometimes cynical and anecdotal. It derives from observations, recollections and interpretations of life experience, travel and eclectic thematic research. I obsessively collect—visually and mentally document—everything from international opulent spectacle to equally exotic rural and local fanfare. Everyday events whether unique in their mundanity, or spontaneous and bizarre, become rich inspiration and a visual catalyst for my work.

My most recent drawing is based on travelling to Kitchener-Waterloo where I was dazzled by a magnificent road trip, an array of visual and archival imagery, stories, and recollections of the static and evolving identity of the industrial and natural local landscape (thanks to the generous gallery, library, and museum people). Industrial sites such as the Seagram's distillery, the Consolidated (Dominion) Rubber factory, the Schneider's and Amherstburg plants, and the oddly fascinating Berlin Woodenware Ladder factory, offered fertile inspiration.

With *Edifice*, vague hints of past and present, the real and invented, exist monumentally in impressions of Saengerfest garlands, the bridges of Blair and Montrose riverbanks, a Crystal fountain, a dilapidated casino façade, an ancient pioneer tower, and an observation tower reminiscent of the Berlin Train station. Out of an effort to epitomize old-fashioned charm, a wistful landscape and architectural transformation, this work evolved. Inferring displaced nostalgia, *Edifice* reflects an intangible, contemplative and imaginative “place of possibility”. - *Alison Norlen*

Alison Norlen received her BFA from the University of Manitoba (1987), and her MFA from Yale University (1989). Her work has been exhibited in solo, two-person, and group exhibitions nationally and internationally. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Mirage*, Art Gallery of Regina; *Float*, Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon (travelling 2002-2004); and *Plug In* ICA, Winnipeg. Her work is in private and public collections in the United States and Canada. Norlen is currently Associate Professor of Art and Art History at the University of Saskatchewan. She lives and works in Saskatoon.