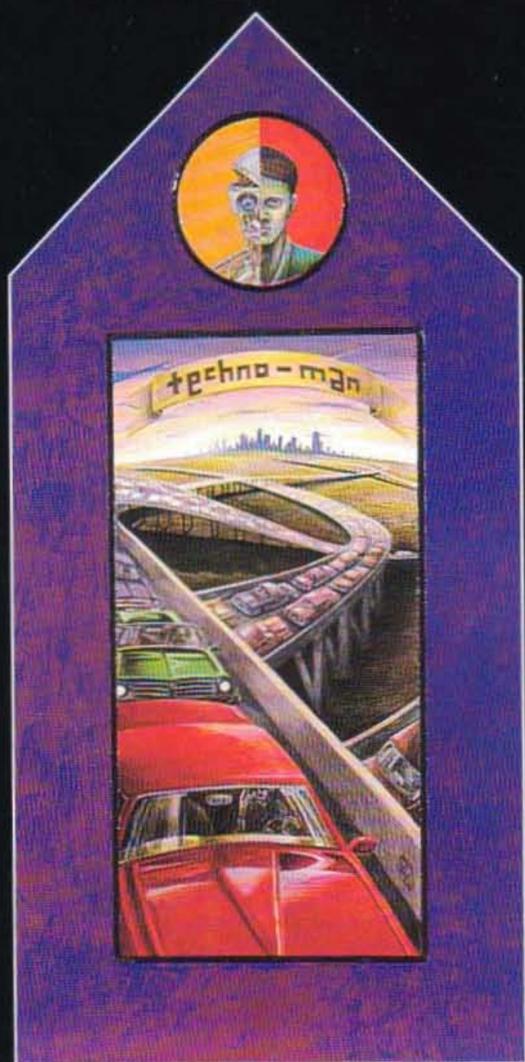


Linda Kardoff
and
Kreg Yingst



Kreg Yingst, *Techno-Man*, acrylic on panel

November 8 – December 15, 2002
Robert T. Wright Community Gallery of Art
College of Lake County

Linda Kardoff

A work of art is very seldom limited to one exclusive meaning and not necessarily tending to a conclusion.— Joseph Conrad

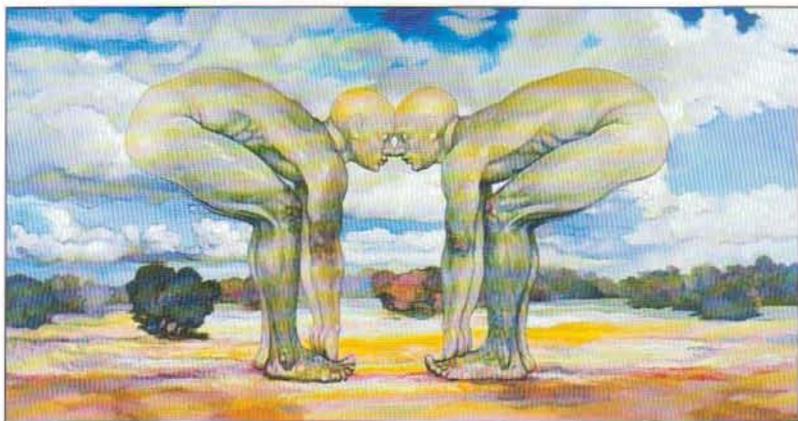
As with the quote above, the paintings of Linda Kardoff offer up multiple associations, but are never definitive. Her figures are caught in bizarre and inexplicable situations that belie the artist's wry sense of humor regarding the human condition. When someone tells a joke, the punch line often involves the multiple meanings of words to surprise the listener. In much the same manner, Kardoff creates situations that can be interpreted in a number of ways. The viewer is left in a quandary, vacillating between the improbable and the absurd.

One of Kardoff's paintings, *The End*, seems to delight in ambiguity and absurdity. It presents two men crouching in the same position with their foreheads pressed together. The image is even more preposterous because the men are identical, nude, hairless and situated outdoors. Staring eyeball-to-eyeball, they seemed locked into some sort of conflict. Yet, their ears have no opening, which precludes any kind of dialog. Are these men identical twins or is it a metaphysical mirror image of one man grappling with an inner struggle? The painting's title, *The End*, suggests a finality to the situation, or it may allude to the figures' "bookend" like arrangement. The painting's companion piece in the exhibition, *The Beginning*, turns the men around so that they stand "cheek to cheek". Both paintings keep the viewer engaged in a lively guessing game that does not tend toward a conclusion.

Kardoff has said, "I prefer painting from life because it gives me an excuse to stare at people." Her fascination with people is translated into lively brushwork on canvas. Her depictions of human flesh range in color from sickly greens and ochers to blushing bright reds. Kardoff's intense palette is perfectly in keeping with observations of the human condition. She playfully casts her live models into roles that are simultaneously comedic and tragic. The artist says that painting provides a sense of empowerment that allows her to counter the seriousness of life with a bit of the ridiculous. She feels that the act of painting is a method of drawing upon the universal consciousness and is a source of true joy.

When it's not possible to arrange for live models, Kardoff employs black and white photographs that she has collected from magazines. She cuts these up and combines them to create thumbnail compositions. At other times, though, she may start painting directly upon a blank canvas or a previously painted background. The finished painting is often completely different than her original concept.

Kardoff's love of art and travel intersected on one occasion in a most fortuitous manner. There was a television program on the ABC network that ran a



Linda Kardoff, *The End*, oil on linen

national portrait contest. Her entry won a Windjammer cruise to the West Indies. Since that excursion the artist has traveled to fifteen different countries and paints with watercolors on location. Kardoff also spent fourteen months (1970-72) in the Peace Corps in Mombassa, on the coast of Kenya. There she taught Junior High School art and painted murals at a home for disabled children.

Linda Kardoff has been focused on oil painting over the last few years, but she enjoys other mediums as well. The *Water Lilies* stain glass window in the Robert T. Wright Community Gallery of Art's front window is an example. Kardoff and her husband, David, created it in 1980 when the gallery was built. While her versatility as an artist is quite evident, Kardoff's wry wit seems perfectly matched to her current direction in painting the figure.

Kreg Yingst

Kreg Yingst wants the viewer to find an association through the real and tangible images in his work. However, it's the improbable situations that bring interest and give meaning to a deeper reality that doesn't appear on the surface. Whether this pursues the social, mystical, psychological or emotional realms, an acceptance of mystery is essential in conveying the unseen. In exploring dichotomies and alterations of perceived realities, the absurd and the ordinary coexist. Humor is important to Yingst since it's a large part of his personality, but it's often mixed with the artist's serious side. Regarding his paintings, Yingst has stated that: "Memories fuse together with current events. Observations are dressed up in different attire. These panels then become a wonderful opportunity for me to explore life and beauty, filtering my discoveries through imagination."

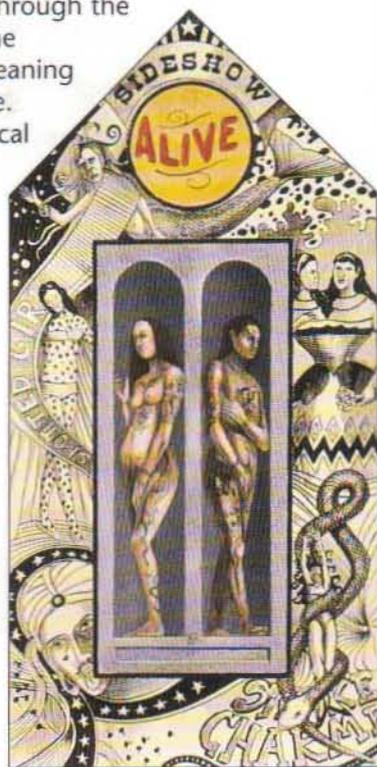
Kreg Yingst has based his latest paintings that are on display in this exhibition on the theme of the sideshow. Decades ago the sideshow was an integral part of every circus, carnival, and county fair. While the sideshow may be a thing of the past, it survives in other forms for new generations. In this light, Yingst has made the following statement:

During my youth I caught the tail end of the circus/sideshow era. I never did enter the dark canvas doorways that existed behind the barker, but I did witness the large fabricated banner icons promising the sensational and exotic. The allurement of the unknown became even greater than the reality and fed my imagination.

The Freak Show is now almost extinct, as we knew it then. But don't let that fool you. It has gradually transformed into different arenas. We're mesmerized by the tragedy and comedy that streams through our television sets or peers at us from the covers of tabloid magazines in our local supermarket. We gawk at those who appear different from us in an attempt to obtain superiority. Normalcy becomes a standard created only through Hollywood classicism.

This body of work merges the strange, humorous and surreal. Within these paintings are observed roles, actions and cultural norms. Like a funhouse mirror, the reality is often as distorted (or disturbing) as the illusion. Ultimately, it's the bizarre and intriguing that beckons one to come in and see the show!

Yingst's small, jewel-like paintings are executed in a method known as "indirect painting". This technique was developed by medieval egg tempera artists and used later by oil painters such as Van Eyck and Rembrandt. The method utilizes an initial



Kreg Yingst, *The Human Canvas*, acrylic on panel

underpainting with numerous transparent and translucent glazes added to the painted surface. Although the technique is labor intensive, Yingst feels that the subtle color/value variations and the luminosity achieved are well worth the effort, especially for smaller, more intimate scale work.

This method of painting also allows Yingst to use techniques from three of his favorite media: acrylic, watercolor, and colored pencil. The painting, which is done in acrylic, allows for quick drying time in which to add repeated glazes. Using the paint transparently employs his understanding of watercolor, and using a small brush for detail lets him layer a linear surface texture with multiple colors. The paintings are done on hardboard mounted to 3/4" plywood. The wood is cut and sanded to specifications and layered/sanded with a neutral colored gesso. The final painting is then usually completed with three or four coats of a water based varnish, depending on the desired effect.

The works of Yingst and Kardoff are brought together for the first time in this exhibition. Kreg Yingst's approach to painting is very much in the tradition of the Northern Renaissance in its small format, high realism, and luminescent colors. However, his subjects stand opposite the earlier period's sacred imagery. His secular compositions explore the world of the sideshow as a metaphor of contemporary media and do so with a nod and a wink. Linda Kardoff, working on a larger scale, paints images abounding in ambiguity and absurdity. Humor for Kardoff is not a deliberate intention; rather it rises to the surface through her act of painting. The works of Kardoff and Yingst are distinct from each other in approach, form and content. Their paintings are sure to raise a smile as we ponder images that counter the seriousness of life with a bit of the ridiculous. However, upon further reflection, perhaps that is the only balanced way to get through life.

Kreg Yingst

EDUCATION:

Eastern Illinois University 1996, MA in painting
Trinity University (San Antonio) 1983, BA in painting

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS:

2002 Triangle Gallery, Sinclair Community College, Dayton, OH
(2 person exhibit)
2001 Holy Covenant Gallery, Chicago, IL (solo exhibit)
2001/00/99/97/96/92 *Recent Works*, College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL
1998/97/96/95/93 Graham Museum, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL
1996/95/94 Colfax Cultural Center, Southbend, IN
1994 Regent College, Vancouver, BC
1994 The Center for the Arts and Religion, Dadian Gallery, Washington, DC

SELECTED AWARDS AND HONORS:

2001 Award of Merit, Suburban Fine Arts Center, Highland Park, IL
2000 Purchase Award, *Recent Works*, College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL
1999 Award of Excellence, *Recent Works*, College of Lake County,
Grayslake, IL
1994 Fieldstead Fellowship

SELECTED REVIEWS:

Kurt Brian Webb, *The California Printmaker*. January 2002
Caron Smith, *News Sun*, Lake County, IL 10/28/2000
Bruce Ingram, *Pioneer Press*, Cook and Lake County, IL 10/21/1999
Lisa Bornstein, *South Bend Tribune*, 2/5/1995 & 5/19/1994



Linda Kardoff, *Joy Ride*, oil on linen

LINDA KARDOFF

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS:

2002 *25th Annual A & A Baer Art Competition*, Beverly Art Center, Chicago, IL

2002/01/00 *Women Works*, Northwest Arts Council, Woodstock, IL

2001/95/93 *Recent Works*, College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL

2001 12" x 12" *Juried Small Works Show*, SFAC, Highland Park, IL

2000 *International Art Open*, Woman Made Gallery, Chicago, IL

1999 *Portraits*, Figurative Art League, Noyes Cultural Center, Evanston, IL

1994 *Flora 94*, Chicago Botanical Gardens, Glencoe, IL

SELECTED AWARDS AND HONORS:

2001 Purchase Award, Peoples' Choice Award, & Gala Night Award for Women Works, Northwest Arts Council, Woodstock, IL

2000 Award of Merit, *Urban Edges*, Barrington Area Arts Council

1995/93 Award of Excellence, *Recent Works*, College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL

1995 Award of Excellence, Deer Path Fall Festival, Lake Forest, IL

SELECTED COLLECTIONS:

Amoco Oil, Chicago, IL

Beneficial Finance, Chicago, IL

College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL

McHenry County College, Crystal Lake, IL

Shimer College, Waukegan, IL

Standard Oil of Indiana

Exhibition Checklist

Linda Kardoff

- The Beginning*, oil on linen, 36" x 68"
The End, oil on linen, 36" x 68"
Mr. Finn, oil on linen, 24" x 24"
Wallflowers, oil on linen, 42" x 68"
Joy Ride, oil on linen, 50" x 50"
The Wetness of Existence, oil on linen, 48" x 48"
High Tide, oil on linen, 48" x 48"
If Monkeys Had Thumbs, oil on linen, 46" x 48"
Watersports, oil on linen, 48" x 46"
To Have & To Hold, oil on linen, 46" x 46"
Ivy Leagues Under the Sea, oil on linen, 72" x 42"

Kreg Yingst

- 4-Eyed Boy*, acrylic on panel, 24" x 12"
Invisible Man, acrylic on panel, 24" x 12"
Strong Man & Tattooed Lady, acrylic on panel, 24" x 12"
Human Pin Cushion, acrylic on panel, 24" x 12"
Techno-Man, acrylic on panel, 24" x 12"
Harried Housewife, acrylic on panel, 24" x 12"
Two-Headed Clone, acrylic on panel, 24" x 12"
Lyn' Man, acrylic on panel, 24" x 12"
Rubber Skin Girl, acrylic on panel, 24" x 12"
The Starving Artist, acrylic on panel, 24" x 12"
Human Canvas, acrylic on panel, 24" x 12"
Balancing Act, acrylic on panel, 24" x 12"
Target, acrylic on panel, 24" x 12"
House of Mirrors, acrylic on panel, 24" x 12"
The Caged Beast, acrylic on panel, 24" x 12"
Quarter Man, acrylic on panel, 24" x 12"
Bearded Lady, acrylic on panel, 16" x 8"
House of Mirrors, acrylic on panel, 16" x 8"
The Hypnotizing Glass, acrylic on panel, 16" x 8"

This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.
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of the College of Lake County Foundation.



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