

Lynda Schneider-Granatstein

What Do Women Want?

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«SELF PORTRAIT/RADIATOR», Photo etching and mixed media on St-Armand's hand made paper, (Edition of 20), 55 cm x 75 cm.

It was truly a privilege for me to visit the studio of Lynda Schneider-Granatstein, a fine, creative artist at the peak of her career. The artist-painter received me most graciously into her private working space.

Lynda was born in 1954. Her father, an advertising artist, had studied alongside Borduas, Pellan and Riopelle. Lynda Schneider-Granatstein has painted and drawn since her childhood. After courses at the Montréal Museum of Fine Arts under Arthur Lismer, a member of the famous

Group of Seven, Lynda decided to study psychology at the McGill University. In 1976, she graduated in psychology with a BA, major in psychology and then a master's degree in education. The therapist unites with the artist within. Then, one of her works was bought by a collector. After this event, Lynda threw herself into drawing at Concordia University and etching at Montréal's Saidye Bronfman Centre. Eventually, she bought an old press on which she began printing her famous etchings.

Lynda Schneider-Granatstein

favours universal themes that have become symbols of the great frescoes of human history. The artist borrows cheerfully from the notions of Freudian psychology and records on canvas or paper the characters usually assigned to "the eternal feminine"; i.e., beauty, softness, maternal love, introspection and tranquility. Lynda paints the female body, often nude or half-dressed. There is a pre-raphaelite look to her work precisely because this type of body has become a classic synonym of universality. The artist's technique revolves around the female psyche

throughout the ages. By extension, the artist tells the history of the modern woman, since the typically feminine attributes have been with us since Eve.

Later the incorporation of various archetypes from Greco-Roman architecture or antiques and family relics which give the illusion of viewing scenes from bygone eras. The visual elements reinforce the theatrical effect the artist is seeking. The artist also may paint Cirque du Soleil acrobat Michelle Rawlake or professional dancer Sandra Botnik nude surrounded by contemporary vases, flowers, chairs or sofas. The result: a modernized feminine character and a reflection on today's woman, examples include *Michelle with Pitcher and Red Gladioli*. Lynda covers her tracks to reveal the feminine mystique over time. By the way, the artist admits to being a "soft" feminist who wants to attest to the powerful continuity of femininity in history. "Often people take it as if were self-evident," Lynda says.

Increasingly many different materials enhance the texture of Lynda's canvases. She playfully piles on layers of acrylic, oil pastel, pencil, etc. while

subdividing the space around the main character with planes created by tiles, staircases or squared stones. Japanese, Chinese or Thai textured paper contribute to the visual richness of her work. This artist, a specialist in printing techniques with metal plaques, produces limited editions of 20 copies of her etchings and touches them up one by one with oil pastel, pencil or collages. This final touch makes each work an original.

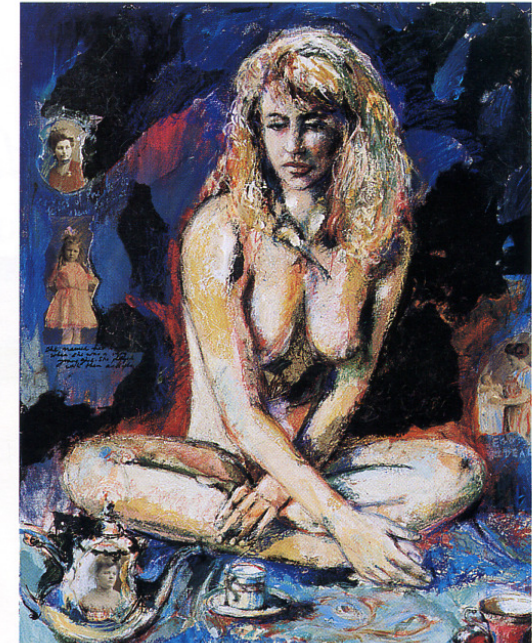
Several richly coloured new pieces find their way into the frames of old paintings or mirrors unearthed at an antique dealer's. These 'finds' become an integral part of her work, as seen in *Soliloquy*.

Although many classic elements may be found in Lynda Schneider-Granatstein's paintings and etchings, she succeeds almost magically in giving a new, original dimensions to something old.

The theme of her work is no accident. Lynda is the daughter of a mother who happened to be a poet and sexology professor. The artist speaks through her painting by adding carefully selected textual fragments.



« JAPANESE GARDEN », Mixed media on canvas, 75 cm x 60 cm.



« TEA AND MEMORIES », Mixed media on canvas, 75 cm x 60 cm.

Future specific career projects? What a question? The artist wants to catch her breath after the exhibition at the West End Gallery and then develop an art therapy program. Lynda has a dual vocation of artist and therapist.

Lynda Schneider-Granatstein sings the praises of the modern woman as seen in Roman atriums or even in the Montréal Botanical Garden. By the way, she swears that she will not get caught empty handed for next year's "Les Femmeuses" exhibition, an art sale which donates proceeds to a local women's shelter. **I**

Marie-France Lamoureux

Lynda Schneider-Granatstein is represented by several galleries, including West End, at Greene Avenue in Westmount, and Galerie Dominie, Sherbrooke St. West, in Montréal, and the Relais des Époques, Saint-Paul Street, in Old Montréal.