

gestures of land art. An outdoor installation project that concerns itself with actual exhibition experimentation is *Intérieur/Extérieur (Interior/Exterior)* (1970) by French artist collective Supports-Surfaces. This group sought to create aleatory arrangements and sites considered “neutral”, that is, spaces beyond the control of cultural institutions and critical mediation.<sup>1</sup> The installation *Intérieur/Extérieur*, staged on the French Mediterranean coast, comprised tests of how art can “interact with natural or social sites, and how these environments condition the works and the viewer’s experience.” This series of exhibitions was initiated as a way to transgress painting and create new sets of relations outside of the institution. While contextually more concerned with social sites, the collective did aim to produce sites of artistic and social exchange that would engage deeply with temporality and history. Similarly, Fuller’s effort—while not a return to nature per se—achieves the mutability of the Supports-Surfaces works from the 1970s, and also manages to open up a broad space—both physically and ephemerally—of interpretation around these images. The provisional nature of both these projects and their transient mise-en-scènes eventuated in plein-air exhibitions that allowed a space of autonomy for each work.

Furthermore, *The Homecoming* engages with history in a flexible way, highlighting the domestic within the cultural detritus of a city whose only story is that of the gold rush. Fuller’s experiment in photographic installation through an alternative instance of site-specificity is separate from anything resembling the white cube. What is successful is her showmanship and nuanced attempt to make an exhibition exist, in all actuality, for a very short and considered time span when the limits of your vision become highly apparent. Nowadays, the artifice of exhibition-making—lights, graphics, temperature, or moreover the extreme control of environment—often leaves little room for happenstance of natural elements. While there are ways many curators and artists circumvent this highly prescribed lineage of working, the outdoors is much more unforgiving to exhibiting anything, even less so for photographs. There are no tricks here: the flat-image plane at sundown quickly transforms into a study in depth, physicality and awareness of one’s own corporeal limits concerning vision.

The site-particularity of *The Homecoming*, the laborious nature of creating these images, as well as the remote location and thus limited audiences for viewing it, is an unavoidable obstacle. As an exhibition, its remarkable negotiation of history, environment and place is highly affecting and theatrical, and certainly an important cursor in exhibiting work *en plein-air*. ×

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1 Rosemary O’Neill, “Été 70: The Plein-Air Exhibitions of Supports-Surfaces,” in *Journal of Curatorial Studies*, 1:(3) [2012], 349–368.

## Bernice Vincent: *Time and Travels* Museum London, London, Ontario Jul. 6–Sept. 29, 2013 by Bill Clarke

If you were an artist living in Canada in the late-1960s, London, ON was the place to be—at least according to *Art in America*. Published in that magazine’s September/October 1969 issue, art historian Barry Lord’s article, “What London, Ontario Has that Everywhere Else Needs,” describes the city as “younger” and “livelier” than Montreal and Toronto, respectively, and on a par with Vancouver in the range, quality and quantity of work produced by its novelists and poets, filmmakers, visual artists and musicians. Throughout the mid-’60s and early-’70s, the movement known as London Regionalism was defined by artists’ commitment to using their own lives and locales as raw material for artworks, and their belief that culture could thrive outside of major urban centres. Greg Curnoe is the artist most identified with London Regionalism although the movement had several other adherents, including Jack Chambers and Murray Favro in the ’60s and, in the ’70s, Robert Fones, Jamelie Hassan, and painter and sculptor Bernice Vincent.

The retrospective *Time and Travels* brought together works by the Woodstock, ON-born Vincent from the early ’70s to the present. Vincent, who moved to London in the early ’50s for art school, became a key figure in the city’s cultural life in the ’60s; for example, along with Curnoe and Chambers, Vincent helped establish the short-lived Region Gallery, one of the city’s earliest artist-run centres, in 1962. Her first significant solo exhibitions occurred at the Forest City Gallery between 1975 and 1979. A large work from this period, *In July the Sun Sets Thirty-One Times* (1978), encompasses several of the themes, formal arrangements and motifs that appear throughout her *oeuvre* over the next 35 years. Laid out in the format of a monthly calendar are 31 circular renditions of the sky at dusk, in acrylic washes of deep blues and fiery oranges, accompanied by handwritten notes in graphite about the temperature and other atmospheric conditions. In this painting, Vincent picks up on the tropes of international Conceptual Art, such as the use of grid-like organizing structures, serial imagery and the incorporation of text.



Bernice Vincent, *Changing City Series #3, Summer 2007*, sitting on lawn at Museum London near Rhino, London, ON, 2007. Acrylic and graphite on panel, 50.9 x 35.7 cm. IMAGE COURTESY OF MUSEUM LONDON

Leaping ahead 10 years is another large-scale painting, *Over* (1988), which pictures a strip of highway, which, like nature and the weather, became another recurring motif in Vincent's work. A similar painting, Chambers' iconic *401 Towards London No. 1* (1968–69) comes to mind, particularly in the hard-edged realist style of the apartment complex in the distance, the streetlights and the single white car that is about to disappear over the crest of the overpass. However, it should be noted that, in the '60s, Vincent had already produced works in a realist style — well before Chambers developed his theories around "perceptualism." Vincent also renders the natural world through which the vehicle travels in more impressionistic and colourful brush-strokes than Chambers ever did. The roadway motif — a metaphor for both time's passing and life's journeys — also appears in the charming, Pop-inflected sculpture *Ribbon Box* (1991). Here, 10 strips of ribbon, resembling stretches of two-lane blacktop, stream out of the top of a lidded box that is coated in thickly-applied green paint that resembles moss.

Actual materials from the natural world, including dried plants and sand, combined with paint about four vertical bands of colour in *Winter Solstice in the Ravine by the Variety Store* (1995). Vincent expands upon these bands of pigment, which are suggestive of the paintings of Frank Stella and Morris Louis, in works throughout the 2000s, using them to convey the colours of the seasons in non-representational ways. Each painting in the engaging quartet *Travelling into Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter #2* (2007–08) includes a square image of stretches of road cutting through pastoral settings with black, white and grey tones at its centre, while bold stripes of acrylic radiate outwards from it. The rust, orange, red, brown and green of *Autumn* capture the colours of trees during the fall, while *Winter*, the largest of the four paintings, conveys the chill of winter in shades of blue, grey, mauve and pale pink. (In a playful nod to her impressionist past, Vincent dripped small dots of white paint underneath the landscape scene in *Winter #2*'s centre, as if some of the snow lining the roadside is "drifting" across the painting.)

The exhibition's centrepiece was the installation *All Around Me ... All Around You* (1992–93), which resembles a round picket fence, hanging from the ceiling. Here, Vincent produced one painting a week of an everyday scene — laundry on the line or a red car sitting in a driveway — she noticed from her front lawn or through her studio's windows. To experience the piece fully, viewers must circle it twice, once on the inside and then around the outside. On the inward-facing side of each piece of suspended wood, Vincent paints the scene realistically, while on the out-

ward side, the same image is expressed impressionistically. 52 numbered sheets of paper, one corresponding to each painting, are pinned to the gallery's walls and contain Vincent's handwritten notes about the painted scene, the week's weather conditions (London was quite rainy in 1992, it seems) and events that happened during the painting's production. The poignancy of Vincent's documentation peaks with painting # 34, which includes the words GREG CURNOE NOVEMBER 17 1936 NOVEMBER 14 1992 A GOOD FRIEND, immediately sending viewers back to the artist's notes from that week:

...On Saturday the clear sky was reflected once again in the autumn landscape. Greg Curnoe and his friends in the London Centennial Wheelers went for their regular Saturday morning ride. Greg never returned from that ride. He died in the landscape of south western Ontario on that exceptional day.

Vincent may be a diligent recorder of her local surroundings and experiences — a true "regional artist" — but one whose vision allows her to see the whole world from her doorstep. ×

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**Jon Knowles: I'm only  
in it for the Manet**  
G Gallery, Toronto  
Jul. 5 – Aug. 10, 2013  
by Benjamin Bruneau

At Galerie Laroche/Joncas in Montreal last year, Jon Knowles painted a series of untitled canvases he had hung on the walls but then removed them prior to the exhibition's opening, leaving only halos of colour where the platforms had previously been. The interdisciplinary artist's labour has historically unfolded in largely immaterial ways — described on G Gallery's website as long hours of "pulverizing melancholy of computer-based post-studio production." *Blood Oranges*, the Laroche/Joncas show,



Bernice Vincent, *All Around Me ... All Around You*, installation view, 1992–93, acrylic on wood and photocopies on paper. PHOTO: STEVE MARTIN; IMAGE COURTESY OF MUSEUM LONDON