

PRESS RELEASE

Lynne Cohen at the McCord Museum

Montreal, March 13, 2012 – The McCord Museum is proud to present a selection of 12 works by world-renowned photographer Lynne Cohen. On display from March 20 to May 6, 2012, the exhibition will provide an overview of her work from 1970 to 2011, which features unusual interiors that are nonetheless real.

“We are pleased to present Lynne Cohen’s photographs. In doing so, we want to pay tribute to this great artist and introduce her work to Montrealers,” says Suzanne Sauvage, President and Chief Executive Officer of the McCord Museum. “Ms. Cohen’s approach is closely tied to the Museum’s mission, which is to present unique works imbued with social reflection. Her art is a perfect example of this.”

Interiors

Lynne Cohen is interested in the esthetics of interiors. Her works might suggest that the place is the result of some kind of staging, an installation prepared by the artist before being photographed; surprisingly, she photographs the spaces as she finds them. The strength of Ms. Cohen’s work lies in the strangely artificial feeling of these interiors. Distancing herself from documentary photography, which strives to preserve a record of a place or event, she seeks instead to present scenes as she discovers them, without putting them into socio-historical context. *“My aim is to let the materials and objects speak for themselves,”* she says. *“Things are weird enough as they are.”* In the choice of various interiors to be photographed, visitors can identify artistic, social and political references.

Human and material presence

Although there are no people in Lynne Cohen’s photos, human presence is felt through a unique iconography: for example, shooting targets, mannequins, skeletons and silhouettes. Viewers often feel like someone has just left the scene or is about to enter the room. Ms. Cohen takes an interest in the traces left by human presence in vacant places. The variety of materials in the interiors she photographs contributes to the visual richness of her work. Formica frames, made by the artist herself, are an integral part of the work and reinforce the idea that these photographs are sculptural objects rather than documentary shots of the places that surround us.

OUR PEOPLE OUR STORIES
690 SHERBROOKE STREET WEST
MONTREAL (QUEBEC) H3A 1E9
T: 514 398 7100 F: 514 398 5045
WWW.MCCORD-MUSEUM.QC.CA



Untitled (red door), 2007
Chromogenic print
Giverny Capital Collection



Spa, 2003
Chromogenic dye coupler print
Giverny Capital Collection

About the artist

Lynne Cohen was born in 1944 in Racine, Wisconsin. She has lived in Canada since 1973 and currently makes her home in Montreal. She began her career in the 1970s, after studying sculpture and printmaking at the University of Wisconsin. Her first photographs of interiors were in black and white and featured subjects like offices, private clubs, meeting rooms and beauty salons. In the 1980s, Ms. Cohen reoriented her approach slightly and began focusing on photographing laboratories, training centres, classrooms and shooting galleries. In the 1990s, she turned to factories and generating stations and adopted colour photography, which brought a new dimension to her work. Her internationally acclaimed photographs have been honoured with numerous awards, including a Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts (2005) and more recently, the Scotiabank Photography Award, the highest honour in Canada for a Canadian photographer.

About the McCord Museum

The McCord Museum is dedicated to the preservation, study and appreciation of Montreal's history, as recounted by its people, artists and communities living in the city's past and present. The McCord Museum is home to one of the largest historical collections in North America, consisting of First Peoples objects, costumes and textiles, photographs, decorative and visual artworks, and textual archives, totalling more than 1.4 million artefacts. The McCord Museum produces exciting exhibitions that engage visitors from Montreal, Canada, and beyond by offering them a contemporary look at the world. The McCord Museum also offers educational and cultural activities, as well as innovative projects on the Internet. **McCord Museum: Our People, Our Stories.**

-30-

Photographs available upon request. Possibility of interviews with Suzanne Sauvage, President and Chief Executive Officer of the McCord Museum, and Photographer Lynne Cohen

Source and information:

Nadia Martineau
Marketing-Communications Officer, Public Relations, McCord Museum
514 398-7100 ext. 239
nadia.martineau@mccord.mcgill.ca

The McCord Museum thanks the Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine du Québec, the Conseil des arts de Montréal, and its partners Astral and The Gazette, for their support.



Untitled, 2011
Chromogenic print
Giverny Capital Collection