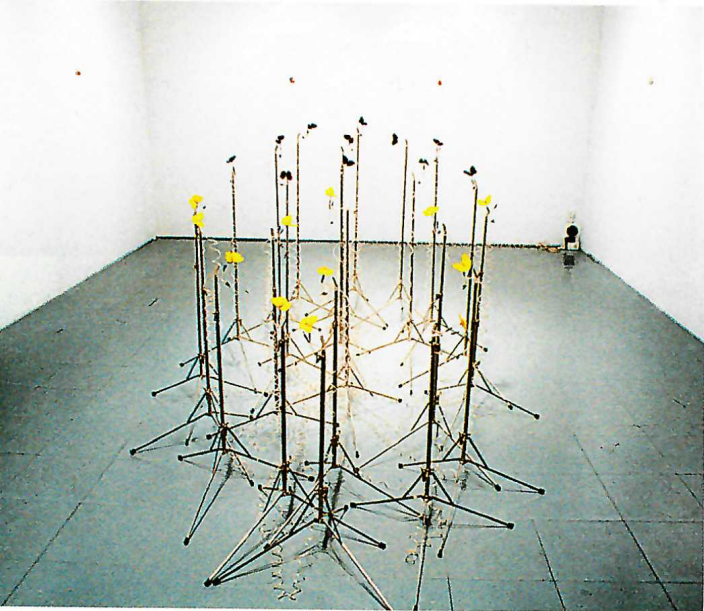


cross-like shape points to their original purpose as patterns for gravestones.

Enveloped by the curve of *Ellipse* as if within a womb, viewers are confronted with thoughts of the passage of time, mortality and the impermanence of their own flesh. Accompanying the structure is an electro-acoustic soundtrack of ambient noise captured from the quarry. The sounds of wind, water, birds and the chipping of granite evoke the creative process that Whittome defines as “conversing with the site” and “listening to the heartbeat of the earth.” RHONDA MEIER



CLINT WILSON Installation view of "Chromaplay" 2004 Music stands, butterfly specimens, motors 2.43 x 2.43 x 1.22 m PHOTO CHRISTINE BURCHNALL

Clint Wilson

◀◀ ARTCITE INC., WINDSOR

Chromaplay," the rubric under which Edmonton's Clint Wilson presented his most recent body of work, utilized lepidoptera, national symbols, abstract painting, gardens and technology to comment on the world in which we live. Combining dramatic structures with a sense of playfulness, the work drew a broad range of viewers into Artcite Inc.'s storefront space.

Composed of three interrelated sections, the exhibition consisted of kinetic sculptures, small, wall-mounted assemblages and a pamphlet. Wilson's use of dead and dried butterflies formed one of two unifying elements. Portrayed through photographic reproduction, in the guise of scientific specimens or as inept mimics of living butterflies, these insects either added colour to the sculptures or acted as a base over which coloured patterns were laid. Paralleling the deployment of butterflies, designs derived from the flags of many nations also permeated the installation, producing an intriguing mixture of geometric shapes, natural forms and animation.

Each visitor entering the gallery activated motion detectors that caused the frenetic gyration of numerous butterflies around an aluminum antenna-like structure. The burst of collective movement was mesmerizing, but when it ceased, one noticed that the insects, grouped in monochromatic bands of red, yellow and white, replicated the traditional tricolour format of some of the flags. This seemed to reference issues of identity and trade in rare species, as did excerpts from the *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species*, which were printed over images of insects.

While the exhibition alludes to the consumption of natural resources, it also mirrors other aspects of the human world. The wall-mounted specimens possess an intimacy and jewel-like character reminiscent of portrait miniatures. The presence of trade law and flags brings issues such as immigration policy and economic inequality to mind. Furthermore, man and insect remain connected in psyche; in Greek mythology, Psyche was the personification of the soul as a butterfly. But Wilson's tattooed and wired butterflies repudiate any notion of free spirit, adding a pessimistic undercurrent to an eye-catching show. JOHN GAYER

Rita McKeough

◀◀ OWENS ART GALLERY, SACKVILLE

Outskirts" immersed viewers in a clamorous environment animated by motors, recorded sound, a rolling vehicle, constructed houses and immense digital prints. The overall effect was of controlled chaos, a psychic space of excess and disorientation. At its core was a performance work—enacted all day long, for 17 days straight. In it, a white-haired woman was dragged across the floor, groping and grasping a driverless, mechanized vehicle. She sprawled behind the life-size car chassis, body askew, hanging on to the bumper as the vehicle continuously, even rhythmically, collided with the walls of the gallery.

The woman was artist Rita McKeough, clad in black motorcycle gear, straining with exertion. Now in her early 50s, she has created audio installations and sculptural performances since the 1970s and is a veteran of early experimental sound work, collaborative punk operas and multimedia installations. Currently living in Halifax, McKeough teaches at NSCAD and has a steady history of producing a major project every year or two. She is