

VIEW FROM HERE:  
WANDA KOOP  
MAY 1 – 23, 2009  
MICHAEL GIBSON GALLERY

THIS COLLECTION, RANGING FROM SMALL TO LARGE-SCALE PAINTINGS IS COMPRISED OF WORKS CONTAINING MINISCULE HUMAN FIGURES AMID ABSTRACT LANDSCAPES, SIGNAGE AND THE EMPLOYMENT OF COLOUR AND TONE TO CREATE STARK CONTRASTS. THESE REPRESENTATIONS DEAL WITH THE EXISTENTIAL QUERIES OF MANKIND WITHIN AUSTERE SETTINGS THAT ARE AMALGAMATIONS OF LIFE AND STERILITY.

*Untitled (Landscape with Red Bar)* IS EXEMPLARY OF THE HYBRID QUALITY OF KOOP'S COLLECTION. ALTHOUGH THIS PARTICULAR EXAMPLE DOES NOT INCLUDE ONE OF HER SIGNATURE SILHOUETTED HUMAN FIGURES, IT IS A REPRESENTATION OF THE ARTIST'S INTUITIVE PLAY WITH TONE AND COLOUR AND ITS VARIED EFFECTS. THE BARREN DEPICTION OF THE LANDSCAPE IS ACCENTED WITH AN UNEXPECTED VERTICAL BAR SATURATED IN A VIBRANT SALMON-ROSE HUE, A DEVIANT SUNSET OF SORTS. ALTHOUGH APPLIED FLATLY, IT APPEARS TO VIBRATE AND SURFACE THREE-DimensionALLY FROM THE CANVAS. IN OTHERS, SUCH AS *Untitled (Note for the hybrid human)*, 2009, NATURE IS TRANSPOSED ONTO A LARGE BILLBOARD AS THOUGH THE OBTRUSIVENESS OF ITS DEPICTION IS THE ONLY MANNER IN WHICH IT CAN REACH THE HUMANS THAT GAZE FROM BELOW.

KOOP EMPHASIZES THE EXISTENTIAL HUMAN CONDITION IN AN INCREASINGLY URBANIZED WORLD, ONE THAT THRIVES OFF OF THE EPHEMERAL AS OPPOSED TO THE ETERNAL. SHE DOES THIS BY PORTRAYING HUMANS ALONE AND ALIENATED WITHIN INCOMPREHENSIBLY VAST AND STERILE ENVIRONMENTS. ALTHOUGH AESTHETICALLY SIMPLISTIC, HER OEUVRE IS BOTH INFORMED AND RELEVANT, WITH WORKS CREATING A PROFOUND SENSE OF IDENTIFICATION IN THE VIEWER. *Untitled (Miracle)*, FOR INSTANCE, APPEARS TO REFERENCE THE HUDSON BAY PLANE CRASH OF JANUARY 2009. UNTITLED (FLOODWAY) IS PERHAPS QUIETLY ATTEMPTING AN EXISTENTIAL RESPONSE IN THE VIEWER, SEEKING A LINK WITH THE LONE SUBJECT.

OVERALL, AN EXHIBITION THAT IS CONTEMPORARY IN ITS SUBJECT MATTER AND CHOICE OF COLOUR, KOOP IS EQUALLY INVENTIVE IN HER PORTRAYAL OF HUMANKIND AND OUR SURROUNDINGS, MAKING THESE WORKS HIGHLY INTERPRETIVE. IN THE VIEW FROM HERE, KOOP HAS ATTEMPTED TO UNRAVEL THE MODERN FORCES THAT DRIVE US IN A POIGNANT AND HAUNTING COLLECTION.