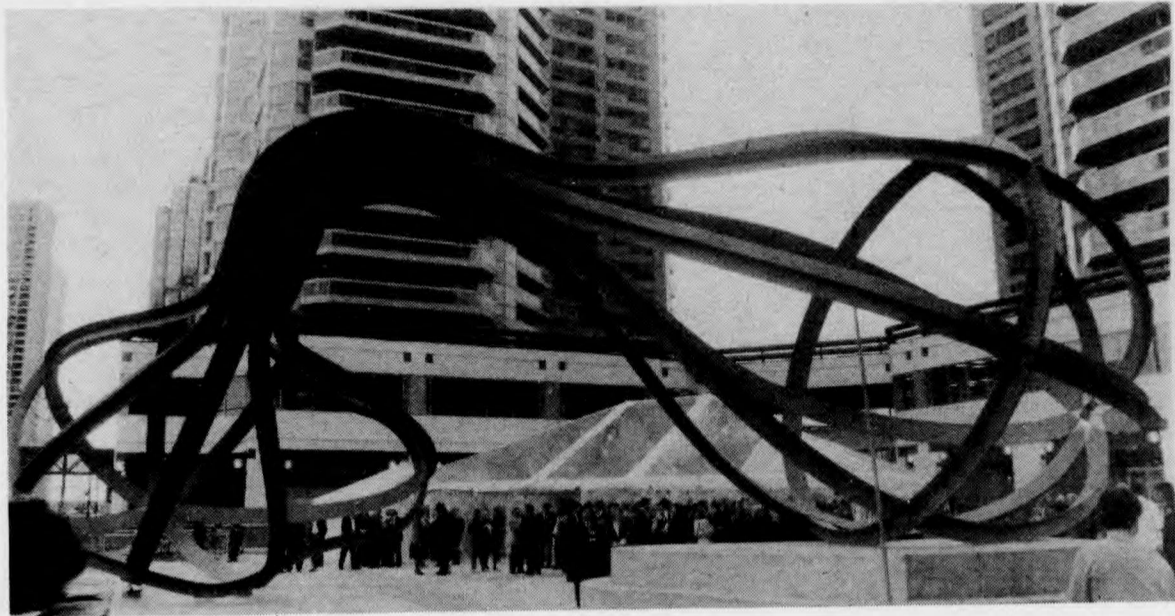


## ARTS

Age

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## Gigantic eye beater at Harbourfront



by Daniel Judd

## Between The Eyes

Recently, an unhealthy scepticism concerning art has developed. It purports to be one thing, yet secretly intimates a far more complex and ultimately diverse inner being. It's a very familiar scenario that has long since baffled many.

The essential conflict appears to stem from the ability of a given artist to successfully translate his or her own imaginative agenda via an abstract vocabulary of form, colour and material. A point in case could be the newest sculptural form to take its place within the city of Toronto, *Between The Eyes*, by Richard Deacon.

This immense structure, which was just recently unveiled, straddles the corner of Yonge St. and Queen's Quay, and is an overwhelming yet delicate form, that balances precariously on two outstretched spherical eyes.

Connected by a gently curving inner cortex, the skeleton of steel and bolts possesses a uniquely foreign character, placed between the cityscape on one side and the expanse of Lake Ontario on the other. This particular juxtaposition was of equal interest to both the artist and the committee who chose this location.

The formal eloquence of the structure is a testament to Dea-

con's own diverse background, based on continuous investigations. The poetic and metaphorical qualities suggested by the piece vis-a-vis the artist, make up

the true duality of its being.

With *Between The Eyes*, Deacon has created a strong sense of purpose and meaning. Although the image of the eye is vaguely

perceptible here, there exists strong allegorical implications which, Deacon claims, are of great importance to him as an artist.

The crude materials used to construct the piece have in the past linked Deacon's works to poetry, where, similar to words, they aren't independently artistic, but together they produce the syntax of the sculpted form.

Joints are laid bare while curving forms draw the eye back and forth across the structure. Interpretation is welcomed and dismissed. No central focus can be found, though points of stress push and pull the viewer, who is at once drawn in, and then again released.

The most seemingly simple element on the site is the raised plinth which supports the eastern eye of the piece. It isn't coincidental that it resembles a bench and acts as open invitation for pedestrians to enter into its space. A genuine and important gesture, it

confronts and invites the dilemma.

Interpretation of *Between The Eyes*, will be determined by any number of visual traditions, which are as varying and diverse as the popular opinion that this sculpture will no doubt receive. Its character, however, is unwavering and is vehemently asserted by its clarity and strength.

The question of how Deacon's physical creation relates to its metaphorical qualities, will be an ongoing process. A process that has to begin with confrontation and observation.

*Between The Eyes* is a site specific work, inherent with a number of personal attributes that will ensure continuing admiration.

Richard Deacon has created a monumental piece which is a signature of the its landscape. A landscape which includes not only the buildings around it, but the imagination of those who inhabit them.

## PEDRO'S EGG FETISH

by Mark Dillon

*Los Olvidados*  
Nova Home Video  
Directed by Luis Bunuel

Throughout the month of October, York University is holding a festival of Five Decades of Mexican Cinema. Perhaps the best known of all the films being Luis Bunuel's 1950 classic, *Los Olvidados*, the inclusion of which the late Mr. Bunuel might have found ironic.

Bunuel, a native Spaniard, is without argument, one of the cinema's true masters.

He first made his mark when he teamed up with his surrealist painter buddy Salvador Dali in France to make the famous avant-garde short *Un Chien Andalou* in 1928 and later the feature-length masterpiece *L'Age d'Or* in 1930.

These films were so shocking in their day, for their revolution-

ary sentiments of anti-clericalism and sexual freedom, that *L'Age d'Or* was banned in France soon after its first showing, which provoked right-wing riots in the street. It was even banned here in Ontario until just a few years ago! One film followed in France, and then Bunuel's life took him away from the cinema, but this wasn't to last.

Following the Spanish Civil War, Bunuel went to Mexico, and sought citizenship, as so many other Spanish artists did at that time.

At first he did not like Latin America. He made a couple of low-budget, commercial films that he had little interest in. But these films made a considerable profit and by 1950 he had the opportunity to make the kind of film he wanted to.

He had been very impressed with Vittorio de Sica's film *Shoeshine* and the whole Italian neorealist movement of the 1940's,

and wanted to do a similar kind of film about children in the slums of Mexico City. He spent many hours walking through poor neighbourhoods and observing life there, and apparently all the plot elements in *Los Olvidados* (English title: *The Young and the Damned*) are based on what he saw.

The film might strike viewers as remarkably similar to the kind of social picture that Warner Brothers made in the 1930's, such as William Wyler's *Dead End*, which was also a hard-hitting indictment of slum life, but Bunuel's film is even grimmer.

While the Warner picture shows the street gangs to be purely products of their environment, *Los Olvidados* contains an existential awareness peculiar to Brunuel. The film is more conventional, however, than his early French films, displaying naughtiness that harkens back to his surrealist

days.

Bunuel's erotic fetishism is intact in this film. There is a famous slow-motion dream sequence ripe with symbols. In one scene, the main boy, Pedro, eats a bad egg, and then throws it away — right into the camera! Apparently Brunuel wanted to stage more elaborate pranks, but budget limitations wouldn't allow it.

The result is a great, offbeat work, that created quite a stir when it opened in Mexico in 1950. The downbeat movie was denounced as being a shameful anti-Mexican tract.

The international praise the film would soon receive made the Mexican people look again, and they have since embraced the film for the great work that it is. Therefore its inclusion in the Mexican Film Series forty years later is only right. *Los Olvidados* has earned its reputation as one of the pinnacles of the country's film history.

Designed and illustrated by Rodolfo Ramos

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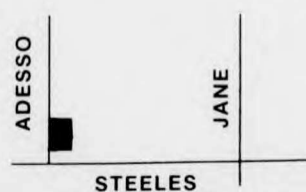
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