

The Art of Poetry: A Lee Dugas Exhibit

by Randall Haslett

The colour orange is a favourite for Fredericton artist Lee Dugas. Her posters, her business card, her flyers, her art,—the colour orange is a dominant force. The word "orange" is defined as a colour between red and yellow in the spectrum. It can also mean an extreme Protestant from Ireland. While Ms Dugas is neither Protestant (in the capital sense) or Irish (she is Roman Catholic in upbringing and Anglo-Franco in heredity), she is extreme in her passion for the Arts. At the opening of her first solo exhibition which was staged at the Gallery Bistro, she demonstrated why she devotes her life to the colour orange.

Her approach to art is interdisciplinary, multidimensional, spiritual, and philosophical; her art is a marriage of mind(poetry), body(visual art) and soul(music). So it was not surprising that she explored her passion for the Arts with those attending the opening of her show. She read, she sang, she played, and most importantly, she shared. She shared the secrets behind the creation of her art works.

The body (visual arts) of her works range from simple sketches to multimedia masterpieces. Ms Dugas is not content to paint landscapes or portraits. She wants her visual art to say something, to be something, to move someone. The world's problems are reflected in her craft. Her work is neither garish or brutal; it is unique. For example "Sylvia's Doll House" contains a "Marilyn Munroe" Barbie Doll, hovering over a chess board with only the black chess pieces and one white slipper. One of my favourites has chicken wire, doll parts, barbed wire, balloons, and oh yes, the colour orange!!! It is titled **Requiem for all the Mozarts murdered**. Extreme? Thought provoking? You bet!!! However, the 'piece de resistance' is Ms Dugas first major work, a bizarre Salvador Dali-esque creation featuring games and puzzles. See it for yourself and you will understand why it is titled **The Adventures of Tab A and Slot B: Genesis 3:1&2**.

Poetry is the mind. Each of Ms Dugas' readings was preceded by an amusing anecdote. Such as the time she thought she left her latest musings in a Fredericton cab never to be seen again, and therefore was unable to recite them for a Unitarian meeting. Her fears were for not as she subsequently discovered the virgin transcripts at home!! Her poems provoke. They are sensitive and deal with real people and real issues, like the village idiot in her Grade 1 class. Or the innocence of children, which was a recurring theme throughout her works. She informed the large turn-out of friends and family that her poetic inspirations can occur at any time. One of her better works was written one New Year's Eve (nothing better to do?) and received thunderous applause.

The soul of the evening concluded with three of Ms Dugas favoured songs; an original composition, 'Land of the Giants'; Sinead O'Connor's 'Black Boys On Mopeds'; and an Acadian lullaby which she dedicated to her mother, 'Balon Volant'. Each was sung with tenderness and self-accompanied on the guitar. To say that she sang like an angel is a hackneyed phrase, but I was truly spellbound by the rich quality and freshness of her voice. It made me think of Joan Baez, Tracy Chapman, and Sinead O'Connor rolled into one; Lee Dugas. I hope we haven't heard the last of her.

The evening was a pleasant experience; three shows for the price of none. Ms Dugas is to be commended for her convictions, and her passion for our world. In her opening remarks, Ms Dugas hoped that upon hearing and seeing this show, we would be aware that each and every one of us is a part of the "crew" on planet Earth and not merely a "passenger" as astronaut Buzz Aldren once commented. To be concerned and moved by the beauty that surrounds us all, is only made possible to us by the works of artists such as Lee Dugas. You may have missed the party, but her visual art works can be seen at the Gallery Bistro, Main Place until October 10th. If you care for this world and the future of our children, go and be moved.

Marty Putz* lives up to his name

(Yiddish: penis)

by Lillith

It was a standing room only crowd (of course, given that the venue was the SUB cafeteria at lunch hour, this indicates only that it was business as usual). Although I caught only fifteen minutes of comedian Marty Putz's stand up set on Monday (from about the Elvis impersonation in the balloon suit), it was almost more than I could stomach.

I found the act offensive and inappropriate. The overall tone of Putz's act was that of an adolescent still obsessed with bathroom and body part humour. Putz is still in the phase where farts and "getting a woody" are hysterical (most men get over this after the junior high period of heavy testosterone poisoning).

Much of Putz's material was marred by gratuitous swearing. While I am not usually offended by language (and admit to using some pretty "blue" phrases), Putz's bothered me primarily because it seemed "canned" or an attempt to appropriate the student voice, needless to say, it fell flat a good part of the time.

As well, Putz is another example of people who fail to appropriately deal with sexuality on a campus. In under fifteen minutes, Putz managed to make half a dozen "fag" comments - cashing in on stereotypes of gay men as limp-wristed poofs with false toes. In a community as diverse as a university campus, there is no place to make disparaging comments about any identifiable group.

I don't care if people laughed at Putz's act or weren't offended and had a good time. However, given that he was performing in one of the few areas available for students to buy and eat their lunches, many people had little choice but to listen to him. I don't care if people would pay \$5.00 to see him again at a Yuk-yuks cabaret or the Social Club. I care that my student fees were used to pay for this "free" event.

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