

Reaching out to women artists.

"Matriart, a Canadian feminist art journal affirms that women's art can be both personal and powerful."

by **Moira MacDonald**

It's no secret that the Western art canon has been a male bastion since time immemorial. This is not to say that there have been no woman artists; of course there have. However, women artists have never received the same attention as their male counterparts. Women's work is often criticized as too personal, too grounded in uniquely female experiences and considered banal.

In print for a year now, *Matriart*, a Canadian feminist art journal affirms that female art can be both personal and powerful.

"*Matriart* was started because there was no other feminist journal like it in Canada," says Daria Essop, a *Matriart* Committee member and programmer for the Women's Art

Resource Centre (WARC) in Toronto, of which *Matriart* is a project.

With galleries and feminist art shows as spread out as they are in Canada, *Matriart* is a link between women artists and those interested in their work.

Essop says her aim is "to reach a wider audience, to make them aware (and) to hear from people who normally wouldn't have a voice."

To this end, *Matriart* accepts submissions from all women, regardless of artistic background or even previous artistic experience. The only stipulation, says Essop, is that the articles "have to be from a feminist perspective and deal with current issues."

Matriart is proof-positive that there are as many different experiences of women as there are women.

In the Art, Motherhood and Re-



"Mother and Child" by Ruth Koski Harris

productive Technology issue (Summer 1991), there's a photo essay on lesbian mothers, Joyce Kline's commentary on her thoughtful work *Going Before the Hospital Abortion*

Committee based on ancient Egyptian painting styles; Allison Hyde's sometimes comical/sometimes tearful sketches of her daughter; *Emily's Birth*, Debbie O'Rourke's account of

a traumatic Caesarian section accompanied by her artistic depiction of the experience; painting reproductions, book reviews, poetry and essays all focusing on some aspect of motherhood and/or reproduction. There are also gallery reviews and listings for upcoming feminist artistic projects.

Native Women Artists is the focus of *Matriart's* current issue. Generally the magazine is produced by a publications committee staffed by volunteers. But, according to Essop, the fall issue was completely put together by a guest native women's collective. "We just gave them the money and let them put it together the way they wanted it."

Lack of money was the main obstacle to getting *Matriart* started. The magazine is primarily funded by various government arts councils, supplemented by advertising dollars and subscription sales. However, *Matriart* is still living hand-to-mouth because it has to make a separate grant application for every issue.

Matriart still bears the vestiges of its newsletter roots with stark print and reproductions in black and white only; this is where the magazine could stand some improvement. What is important though, is that women have a link, and a vehicle for artistic expression.

Matriart is available at Toronto Women's Bookstore, Pages, Book City and several galleries across Canada.

My God sells stamps.

by **Jim Munroe**

There are three types of responses I get when I drop into the conversation, oh so casually, that I write and publish a small press magazine called *Celtic Pamplemousse*.

The first is a neutral comment, followed by a change of conversation. "Really? Hmm. Well, how 'bout them [insert name of Toronto sports team here], eh?" I get that one a lot.

The second most likely response is feigned interest, usually due to a lack of conversational topics. "Really? Umm, ah, well...how much money does it make?"

The third is total, unabashed enthusiasm. "REALLY! That's so fucking cool! Can I be your gopher one day?" This happens a lot, but only in my fevered dreams. In fact, the only time praise of this intensity happens is through the mail.

The mail. The glorious, wonderful bastion of modern civilization. The mail strike hit me harder than the public transit strike, and I take the transit daily

If it wasn't for mail, my zine would probably have a readership of ten. I sell very little through the book stores kind enough to display it. But, through the mail, I distribute a hundred copies of *Celtic Pamplemousse* each issue.

Basically, I write about what interests or intrigues me. That's the only rule I follow. Obviously, not that many people are interested in buying something by some young punk they've never heard of. Besides, it doesn't even have glossy photos. But, what interests me interests many other people as well. Well, maybe not many. Actually, about a fraction of one per cent of the population of North America.

So, how do I get the word out on, say, how to build a pipe bomb with simple items found in the home? Joe Anarchist in South Dakota would perhaps be very interested. Since what I write about, or how I write about it, is on the fringe of mainstream culture, I must advertise in something that is similarly weird.

Factsheet 5 is the place. It prints reviews, thousands of 'em, every two

months. It's published in New York, and has a huge press run — for Christ's sake, I saw it in HMV. I send my zine to editor Mike Gunderloy, and eventually receive a copy of *Factsheet 5* with a review of *Celtic Pamplemousse*. Now Joe Anarchist finds out about the pipe bomb article, and sends me a buck for the issue.

I read about a zine in *Factsheet 5* that discusses Wiccan philosophy and send a trade issue of *Celtic Pamplemousse* for it. Simple, and fun!

I get many cool things through the mail. A band called Ripped from Ohio sent me their press kit, including pictures with their ugly faces and a tape with their ugly music, even though I don't review albums. I guess some people have money to burn.

I also got a beautifully printed booklet from Greece entitled *De Bello Civili* with a note explaining that it was a situationist text. Very interesting, but I couldn't read a fucking word of it! As they say, it was all Greek to me...

I got a pair of tickets from the States to see a band called

Woodenhorse; they were playing a club I couldn't get into because I was 18 at the time. Again, none of the reviews in my zine ever mention music, but...

I got an excellent critique of my fiction from a 60 year-old man in Covina, California. He cut it to pieces like I always wished my English teachers would, and it really helped and encouraged me.

I regularly correspond with people from England, Scotland, Australia, America and, of course, Canada. I get bizarre fiction zines, comic zines, music zines, art zines, opinion zines and even a zine called *Walking Stick Notes*. I get subversive microfiche, and I'm distributed by a comic store in Berkeley, California and by mail order in San Francisco.

I worship at the shrine of the ruby mailbox. My writing travels to new and exotic lands. I reach the core of information and philosophy and feast on its heart. I am a Zine Publisher — hear me ROAR! I...

Uh, well...I mean, it's a fun hobby.

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7:00 p.m. Public Reading & Reception at the M.H.S.O.
- 9 Nov: 9:00 a.m. Defining Ethnicity
9:00 a.m. Archivists' Forum
2:00 p.m. Archival Workshop - Technology
2:00 p.m. Gender & Ethnicity: Women and Oral History
7:00 p.m. Banquet
- 10 Nov: 9:00 a.m. First Nations' Voices: Record Sources
2:00 p.m. Archival Workshop - Public Service
2:00 p.m. Ethnic Media: Newsprint vs Broadcast

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