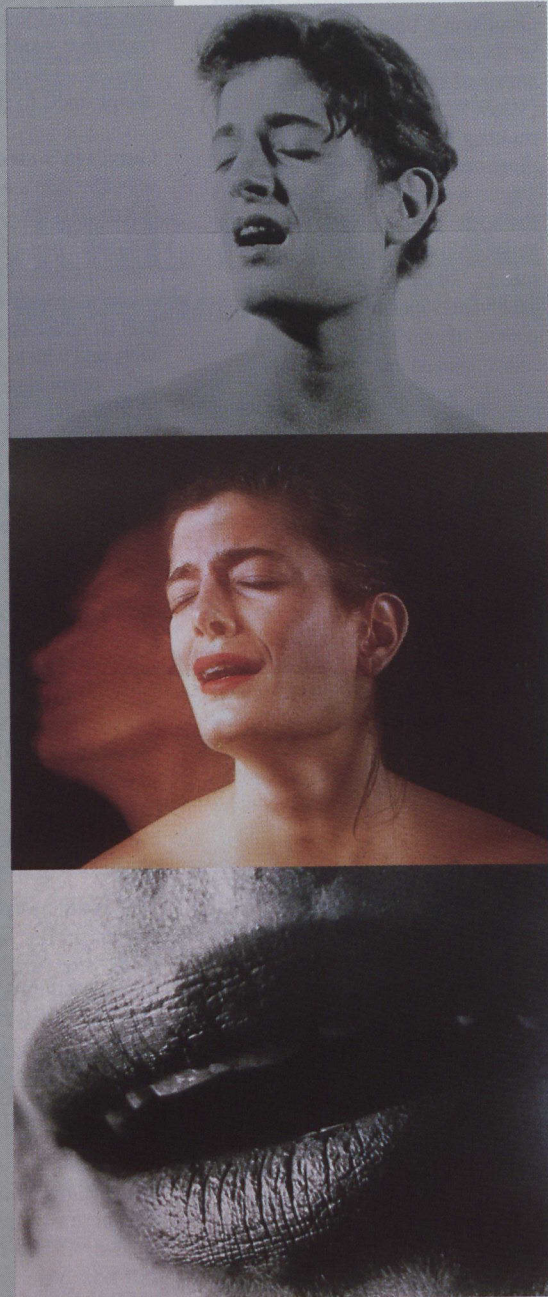


The Fascinating Art of Geneviève Cadieux



Hear Me with Your Eyes (1989): work that is the bearer of multiple meanings.

Whether in Montreal, Berlin, Sydney, Venice or New York, art lovers the world over have been mesmerized by the work of Geneviève Cadieux.

Both photographic and sculptural in conception, Cadieux's work questions how we look at what we see. Her art deals not only with the image but with the mechanisms and structures of representation — with framing and the frame, with light and darkness, with projection and reflection, with the translucence and opacity of the surface.

In Cadieux's work, the photographic image is the bearer of multiple meanings. Since 1980, at the rate of a few pieces a year, she has created a body of work that has brought her to the forefront of recent art practice. Although she works mainly in photography, the scale of her pieces evokes the cinematic screen and gives them a sculptural dimension — in fact, the work she devises resembles "installation." But in all her pieces it is the viewer's physical proximity that is actively sought and plays a determining role in how the work is perceived.

From her earliest works, the human body appears to be the main subject — it reoccurs like a *leitmotif* in all her pieces right up to the most recent. In Cadieux's work, what we see is a body — usually female —

whose material aspect contrasts with her image's lack of "substance," giving it a quality of vagueness, distortion and disappearance. For Cadieux, there is no context for the body in representation other than that of being looked at. "The body," she says, "exists in and through the gaze [of the spectator]."

Cadieux's "body" theme was first introduced around 1980 with series such as *Séquence* and *Illusions* and has continued in all her major works, including *Voices of Reason, Voices of Madness* (1983), *Ravissement (Ravishment)* (1985), *The Shoe at the Right Seems Much Too Large* (1986), *À fleur de peau (On Edge)* (1987), *L'Inconstance du désir (The Inconstancy of Desire)* (1988), *Trou de mémoire, La beauté inattendue (Memory Gap, The Unexpected Beauty)* (1988), *Hear Me with Your Eyes* (1989) and *Eclipse* (1990).

The uniqueness and timeliness of her work have earned Cadieux lavish international praise. She represented Canada at the 1988 Sydney Biennial in Australia, and at the XIXth São Paulo Biennial in Brazil in 1987. Cadieux also participated in the Canadian Biennial of Contemporary Art at the National Gallery of Canada in 1987. This year, she was Canada's sole representative at the XLIVth Venice Biennial (held from May 27 to September 30, 1990). Cadieux was also included in major exhibitions at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris and in Newcastle, England. ♦