

'Impermanence' exhibit compelling, disturbing

TWO WOMEN in their 30s focus on death and decay in a painting and sculpture show.

Remembering Impermanence, at the Mount Art Gallery to May 31. Both artists are direct; both sets of work are creepy.

Barbara Berry creates lush and icy images of grave stones and funerary flowers. She uses panels, thick paint humped and incised, and wood relief for a 3-D look and a fractured, distorted stretched-out space. The painting technique and large flowers are lush; the headstones, carved grey stone figurines and dead earth are icy.

Two viewers comment in the guest book on the beauty and serenity of the cemetery, and on Berry's expression of the culmination of life. To me these flowers have a sickly, overblown, florid edge like the flowers at funerals or the plastic posies at gravesites. The idea of lurid life and stone-cold death, and a non-reality, are conveyed. There is something eerie, off-kilter, recognizable and compelling here.

Berry, born in Denver in 1955, has her MFA from the University of Colorado, worked as an artist in Boston and moved in 1989 to Hubbards. She started painting the cemetery in 1988 when she was pregnant with her first child. She writes: "There are many changes brought on with motherhood and the birth of a child. The cemetery has been a potent image for me to express death, life, time, attachment, sentimentality, separation and continuance."

Ann Reichlin's sculptures include burnt bird forms, a charred table top with glass fragments and large pasty-grey labyrinths of compartments, like sickening gameboards with no



The Couple, by Barbara Berry, is on exhibit in the show Remembering Impermanence at the Mount Art Gallery to May 31.

twisted around, so that the hinged door opens up and you look down into a charred well lined with black cardboard and sticky bits of cloth.

"The energy of destruction is an underlying theme of my sculpture," states Reichlin, who

ing everything or using decaying, found materials.

The Games look like giant architectural models, and Reichlin, who teaches sculpture at Brandeis University in Waltham, Mass., is interested in structure



AT THE GALLERIES

Elissa Barnard

territory and control, private space, the motion of labyrinths, fences and walls, and change.

UPSTAIRS at the Mount is the exhibit Permanence, of new works in the permanent collection reflecting the gallery's focus on emerging new work by women, on crafts and by artists of native and Inuit ancestry.

Included are: Kellypalik Mangitak's marble falcon, a stencil and stonecut by Malaya Akulukjuk, a drawing by Agnes Nanogak; Lupo Platter by Jan Anthony, Kindred Spirit No. 7, a tall sea-grass figure, by Dawn MacNutt, and paintings by Marilyn McAvoy, Darlene Shiels, Melissa Nichols-McConnell, Alisa Snyder and

Sheila Provazzo. These pieces and others in the permanent collection can now hang in the new E. Margaret Fulton Communications Centre.

The art really enlivens the library, and in the stairwell off the library is the big Swannie/Terris sculpture, a marriage of metal and fibre inspired by Alexander Graham Bell's tetrahedral kites, also akin to cybernetic models from the communications field.

CCHECK OUT Dunk City Artists Co-op, in Scotia Square for some unusual art and original imagery, like Frank Lively's Dali take-off Time Runs Out in which clocks drip right over the frame and city images including Halifax painter Bernice Purdy's gritty and fanciful ones (she paints the man who wears high heels) and Robert Evans' dark, inner city themes in black ink and washes. There are twists on Peggy's Cove — The Photographer at Peggy's

Cove by Brenda Hoddinott-Thomson, in which a photographer sits on a rock at sunset, and Susan Vitale's Peggy's Light, of cars parked by the lighthouse.

ART EDUCATOR and artist Patti Higgins is having her second solo exhibit, Canyons, Coastlines and Other Creations, at the Dartmouth Heritage Museum, 100 Wyse Road, to June 1. Higgins, an art consultant with the Dartmouth District School Board since 1983, captures landscapes like the massive South-western United States rocks and rocky Oregon coast in water-colors. In her most successful pieces she creates, from a distance, a vivid impression in light and saturated colours of rust rock and blue sky.

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