

MALASPINA  
PRINTMAKERS  
SOCIETY

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EXHIBITION  
CATALOGUE

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Malaspina Printmakers Society is a registered non-profit society dedicated to facilitating greater communication among artist-printmakers, to providing them with a fully equipped studio, and to increasing public awareness of and interest in fine art printmaking. Located on Granville Island in Vancouver, the studio and gallery are ideally situated to serve a broad community of artists and members of the general public. Along with its continuous roster of gallery exhibitions, Malaspina offers workshops and demonstrations of printmaking techniques, lectures and symposia on issues critical to the production of contemporary art, studio tours and a broad spectrum of printed materials of interest to both the arts community and the public.

Now in our 19th year of operation, we at Malaspina are proud of the dedication and enthusiasm offered by members and associates in all of the various tasks that have gone into the planning and presentation of this year's gallery exhibitions. The exhibitions themselves stand as a testament to the standard of excellence demanded by artists in their presentation of these records of contemporary Canadian printmaking.

Malaspina Printmakers Society gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance of the Canada Council, the Cultural Services Branch of the B.C. Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry Responsible for Culture, and the City of Vancouver in making this exhibition programming possible.

# Lisa MacLean

IMAGINED MEANINGS

April 19 - May 9, 1993



## Lisa MacLean - Artist's Statement

These prints attempt to capture and gather together ideas, emotions and energy that are in the process of disappearing, being transformed or simply drifting away. They represent an inquiry into history, history as origin and history as a process of transformation. By "history" I mean both my individual story and the much larger historical field of which my story is only a very tiny part. Mostly they are about passages from one state to another, from one world to another, from one mind to another.

In making these works, I have reused old etching plates already possessed of a history. Some of these were found plates, bearing evidence of the images, ideas and marks of others which I then reworked, added to or changed in some way. Others were my own previous images transformed. Each reworked plate retains a memory of its past and is a palimpsest of the incarnations it has undergone; each of the resulting images contains traces of its predecessors. I like the idea that in this way no image entirely disappears; each adds to the next just as this present moment makes possible the future.

## Review of IMAGINED MEANINGS by Valerie Metz

This exhibition of recent work displays the physical energy required for viscosity printing. Each plate meticulously wiped for intaglio - sometimes *à la poupée* - and then inked in relief with the large, heavy rollers. However, it was the emotional and intellectual energy that shaped the work and gave it texture. These images map the artist's struggle to come to terms with the sudden premature death of her mother in 1987.

The title offers clues to this struggle. *Right Before Her Very Eyes* is a triptych beginning with a black panel, then a centre panel of text that is mostly obliterated by a large black swirl and ending with the largest panel showing an iris in MacLean's trademark palette of peach, purples and reds. *The Way to Eternity* again uses the iris as a symbol of female sexuality. Again the text is difficult to read and is in fact cut off by a vertical black bar. The metaphor for the female figure is repeated in *Her Prayers Were Answered* and again the lettering disappears into a black void. These bits of text have personal significance for the artist. They may be a segment of a novel, a childhood fairy tale or a page from a turn-of-the-century medical journal. The tense of the text is conditional and passive. Women's lives are lived more often in the conditional. The artist sees this as a contrast between the active making of the work and the passive text. At the same time she uses these passages as a visual element rather than to inform. The black panels become a metaphor for death and indeed the idea of disappearing into the void permeates many of the pieces. The subject of death is reinforced by the other elements: the warm to cool colours, the positive to negative pull, the information pointing to another world.

A more subtle ingredient here is the relationship between two women: a daughter and her mother. We are reminded of the complex intellectual and emotional energies that pass between people whose lives are intertwined.

