

Entertainment

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Prints capture the attention — with fascination and dread

Four Printmakers and One Sculptor, Richmond Art Gallery, to Nov. 11

By ELIZABETH GODLEY

Jan Dierckx's powerful lithographs evoke the mute terror of nightmares, where bodies hurtle helplessly into space or whirlpools suck them down.

In this compelling show of recent works by four local printmakers, the images grab you by the lapels and force you to watch — with the same dread and fascination you'd watch a horror movie.

In one of Dierckx' prints, two figures teeter on skyscraper roof, on the verge of plummeting to the street below. In another, a woman's delicate feet clutch desperately at a crude ladder, as a city burns in the

background. The moments are frozen in time and space, just before the inevitable fall.

If Dierckx' works play with your paranoia, those by Lisa MacLean stir your anxiety. Enclosed figures loiter outside a cloister, a woman recoils in pain as her partner turns away. The prints' comic-book tints of cherry-red, neon blue and egg-yolk yellow clash with MacLean's mediated imagery, deepening the disquiet.

Religious symbols saturate Michael Bjorson's melancholy, brooding prints: In one, the Pope looms over a pregnant woman in what is clearly a comment on the Church's line on abortion.

Bjorson's scepticism imbues another of his works, Man and Woman With Beast of Burden, transforming the gentle Joseph and

long-suffering Mary of Christian mythology into a male figure, his face contorted by rage or pain, who belts a female figure like so much cordwood, while a malnourished donkey stands nearby. Jerry Colman, the only one of these printmakers not to attend Emily Carr College of Art and Design, enlivens his lithograph-collages with cut-outs of headless, armless torsos and other scissors-and-paste images from art history textbooks. Not despite his irreverent wit — in one print, a Greek torso levitates above its plinth — mystery and those reverberate is much of Colman's work.

Martyrdom and Crucifixion is anything but light-hearted in its portrayal of a naked woman spread-eagled on a cross, surrounded by images of the Virgin



WINGED VICTORY:
print by Lisa MacLean

Mary, Christ and a massive Henry Moore sculpture.

The 28 prints in this show are neatly balanced by the classical elegance of Judson Bezumont's sculpture — four plywood scale models for outdoor installations that recall the theatres of ancient Greece.