



The Drawers - Headbones Gallery

Contemporary Drawing, Sculpture and Works on Paper

Gord Smith, "Amen"

Independent Curator's Selection

November 16 - December 9, 2006



Commentary by Julie Oakes

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Artist Catalog, 'Gord Smith, "Amen" - Headbones Gallery, The Drawers '
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Gord Smith, "Amen" by Julie Oakes

Inde-Picks (Independent Curator's Selection)

The cross is probably the most loaded symbol in the Western world. It is the simple intersection of the horizontal and the vertical, the horizontal (horizon) associated with earthly existence and the vertical being the connection between earth and heaven.

Geometrically, two lines crossing turn the first dimension into the second dimension. Gord Smith's sculptural treatment of this dimensional change ranges from traditional to modern and yet never entirely sheds the religious signification. Even when textured and crusty or luminously polished, they can't be just shapes for they are crosses. Although each one is entirely new, in this nascent creation there resides age-old meaning.

The structure that the fifteen crosses are housed in is an altar: it cannot be read otherwise, but it is a very different altar from the traditional. The triangular mirror at the top reveals that the sequence, with one cross at the front apex of the triangular platform and five in the back row, also forms a perfect triangle. The mirror allows the viewer to look directly down upon the crosses - this is a godlike perspective. It shrinks the significance of the classic proportion of the Roman cross where the horizontal cross bar is placed closer to the top than to the bottom, thus creating the illusion of greater height for in Gord Smith's *Amen*, from the bird's eye mirrored reflection, there is the opposite illusion - that this symbol can be dwarfed if granted an omnipotent perspective.

Historically, especially within the Christian tradition, the cross embodies spiritual and philosophical ideologies. It is the icon of icons. Under this symbol, wars have been fought, lives have been lost and buried, couples have been wed, new-borns blessed and crimes confessed. There are war crosses and peace crosses in Gord Smith's *Amen*. These are not 'good' and 'bad' signifiers but a far more profound naming that reflects the dynamic interplay of opposites within each man.

Amen is a piece that exemplifies the grand creation of an artist who needed to make a masterpiece and was gutsy enough to tackle the Cross - not just once but fifteen times! Then he cast the crosses in bronze so that they are able to endure the passage of time and placed them within a framework that enables common man to access multiple divine concepts.



Amen, edition 3
wood, steel, fifteen bronze crosses
length 89 x depth 26 x height 41 in
1995



Xmas Cross, edition 12
bronze
11 x 5 x 3 in
circa 1995



Bleeding Cross, edition 12
bronze
14 x 5 x 2 in
circa 1995



Nuclear Cross II, edition 12
bronze
14 x 5 x 4 in
circa 1995



Crusader's Cross, edition 12
bronze
14 x 3.5 x 3 in
circa 1995



Black Cross, edition 12
bronze
11 x 1.5 x 1.5 in
circa 1995



Maltese Cross, edition 12
bronze
11.5 x 5 x 2 in
circa 1995



Point Cross II, edition 12
bronze
13.5 x 4 x 1.5 in
circa 1995



Burning Cross, edition 12
bronze
12.25 x 3.75 x 3.25 in
circa 1995



Dagger Cross, edition 12
bronze
12 x 2.75 x 1.5 in
circa 1995



Byzantine Cross, edition 12
bronze
100 x 3.5 x 1.5 in
circa 1995



Broken Cross, edition 12
bronze
12 x 4 x 2.5 in
circa 1995



Nuclear Cross I, edition 12
bronze
10.5 x 3.25 x 1.75 in
circa 1995



Point Cross I, edition 12
bronze
9 x 3.25 x 2 in
circa 1995



Soldier's Cross, edition 12
bronze
10.5 x 3.75 x 1.75 in
circa 1995



Christ's Cross, edition 12
bronze
10.25 x 3.75 x 3 in
circa 1995

GORD SMITH R. C. A.

Born in Montreal, Quebec, October 8, 1937

Studied Architecture and Engineering at Sir George Williams University

Worked with architectural firm of Lawson, Betts and Cash, Montreal, Quebec 1956-1958.

Named Academician to the Royal Canadian Academy of Art 1967

Assistant Professor, Department of Visual Arts, University of Victoria 1972-75

Visiting Professor, Department of Art and History, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario 1993-94.

COMMISSIONS

- 1984 Private Commission, "Time-Space" 3 ½' x 6' Cast Bronze
- 1982-83 Weston's Ltd., Toronto, Ontario 16' Stainless Steel, "Sails"
- 1982 Daytona Beach Community College, Daytona Beach, Florida 14' x 32' Cor-Ten Steel
"Shrine to the Coming Age" and 5' x 4' Cor-Ten Steel, Virgin Walk"
- 1981-82 A. E. Lepage, Toronto, Ontario 12 ½' Bronze Casting, "Tryptich"
- 1979-80 Bell Canada, Toronto, Ontario 14' Bronze Casting "Icarus"
- 1977-78 Donwood Institute, Toronto, Ontario 9 ½' Bronze Casting, Ontario Cancer Institute,
Toronto, Ontario 8' x 10' Cor-Ten Steel, "Cell"
- 1974 Tarrn-Toronto, Ottawa, Ontario Stainless Steel "Weave" 1' x 1'
- 1973 Mrs. B. Copeland, Victoria, British Columbia 4' x 6' Bronze Relief
- 1972-73 Confederation Centre, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island 10' Stainless Steel Sculpture,
"Split Circle"
- 1971 Dr. and Mrs. E. Charrette, Kingston, Ontario 3 ½' "Heart" Sculpture of Surgical
Instruments.
- 1970 Dr. and Mrs. H Lapointe, Montreal, Quebec 5' Bronze Sculpture National Design Council
of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario "Chairman's Award" Sculpture
- 1968 Canadian Embassy, Bonn, Germany, 12' Bronze Sculpture
- Dalhousie University, Law Building, Halifax 12' x 9' x 1' Cor-Ten Steel Sculpture.
- 1967 Canadian Government Pavilion, Expo '67, Montreal, Quebec,
110' x 12', Cor-Ten Steel, "Canada Screen"
Department of Transport, "Argentia Ferry", Nova Scotia 10' Bronze Relief
International Nickel Company of Canada, Toronto, Ontario 8' x 9', Stainless Steel Relief
and Free Standing stainless steel sculpture Mrs. C. Nicholls, Halifax 6' Bronze Crucifix
- 1966 Carlingwood Public Library, Ottawa, Ontario 12' Hanging Bronze
- 1965 Sault Ste. Marie Airport, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario 12' Hanging Bronze Sculpture
Westmount Life Building, Toronto, Ontario two 4' Bronze Sculptures
- 1963 Waterloo Trust Company, Kitchener, Ontario 14' x 32' Bronze Sculpture
- 1962 Planned Estates Ltd., Toronto, Ontario 5' Bronze and 3' Steel Sculptures
Mrs. J. A. Houston, Toronto, Ontario 5' Bronze Sculpture
- 1961 Imperial West Apartments, Montreal, Quebec 2 ½' Steel Sculpture
McMaster University, Arts and Sciences Building, Hamilton, Ontario 12' Steel Relief
Sculpture
- 1960 "Les Habitations Jeanne Mance", Montreal, Quebec 43' Sculpture
Pall Corporation, New York, New York 5 ½', Steel Sculpture
- 1959 Frazer-Hickson Library, Montreal, Quebec 8' Bronze Sculpture
Governor Metcalf Apartments, Ottawa, Ontario 2 Bronze Sculptures

EXHIBITIONS

- 2006 Bronze - *Exotic Erotic Christmas*, Dec. 9 -Jan. 11, Headbones Gallery, The Drawers, Toronto, ON
- 2006 Amen - *Inde-Picks*, Nov. 16 - Dec. 9, Headbones Gallery, The Drawers, Toronto, ON
- 2006 Dowel - *Beauty & Obsession*, Sept. 7 - Oct. 10, Headbones Gallery, The Drawers, Toronto, ON
- 2006 Craig Scott Gallery, *Summer Salon*, Jul. 14 - Sep. 9, Toronto, ON
- 2006 Drawing - *Results Of The Headhunt*, Apr. 22 - May 23, Headbones Gallery, The Drawers, Toronto
- 2001 Gallery Neubacher, Toronto, Ontario
- 1997 Eclectica Gallery, Kingston, Ontario
- 1994 Living-Room, Toronto
Living-Room, Woodstock Gallery, Woodstock, Ontario
- 1993 Living-Room, Carnegie Gallery, Dundas, Ontario
Living-Room, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario
- 1992 Living-Room, Toronto
Dance-Art, Living-Room & Desrosiers Dance Theatre, Toronto
- 1991 Living-Room, Toronto
Living-Room, Bancroft Art Gallery, Bancroft, Ontario
- 1989 Berkeley Gallery, Toronto
- 1988 Berkeley Gallery, Toronto
- 1985 Heritage Gallery, Toronto
- 1985 Moore Gallery, Hamilton, Ontario
Roberts Gallery, Toronto
- 1984 Gallery Jarman, Toronto
Mira Goddard Gallery, Toronto
Roberts Gallery, Toronto
- 1981 Roberts Gallery, Toronto
- 1980 Roberts Gallery, Toronto
- 1979 Roberts Gallery, Toronto
- 1978 Beckett Gallery, Hamilton, Ontario
Harbourfront Art Gallery, "Performance", 10th International Sculpture Conference, Toronto
- 1977 Lillian Marcus Gallery, Toronto
Wallack Gallery, Ottawa, Ontario
First Canadian Place, "Dimension 4", S.S.C., Toronto
- 1975 Wallack Gallery, Ottawa, Ontario
- 1973 Zan Gallery, Victoria, British Columbia
- 1972 Waddington Galleries, "International Exhibition"
Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, Gord Smith
- 1969 Blue Barn Gallery, Ottawa, Ontario
- 1964 National Gallery of Canada, "Canadian Outdoor Sculpture competition",
Ottawa, Ontario
- 1963 Isaacs Gallery, Toronto
- 1962 Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal, Quebec
- 1961 Art Gallery of Ontario Three Canadian Exhibitions, Toronto

AWARDS

- 1980 Ontario Society of Artists Annual Award 14" high cast bronze sculpture
1977 Top Merit Award, "Dimension 4", S.S.C.
1971 First Prize for Sculpture, Winnipeg Hadassah Art Exhibition, Winnipeg, Manitoba
1971 University of Saskatchewan "Fountain Sculpture Competition", Regina, Saskatchewan
1971 Finalist, British Columbia Centennial Air Race Trophy Competition
1968 First Prize, Beth Tzedec Art Exhibition, Toronto
1967 Second Prize Monuments and Fountains for Expo '67
1964 Canada Council Grant
1964 Finalist, Mews Competition, Toronto
1962 First Prize, Salon de la Jeune Peinture & Sculpture
1961 Purchase Award, Mural Competition, Quebec Hydro
1957 First Prize, National Federation of Canadian Universities Art Competition

COLLECTIONS

National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario
Montreal Museum of Fine Art, Montreal, Quebec
McGill University
Sir George Williams University
Concordia Univ., Montreal, Quebec
Donwood Institute, Toronto, Ontario
Dalhousie Univ., Halifax, Nova Scotia
Bell Canada, Toronto, Ontario
Texaco Canada, Toronto, Ontario
Hamilton Art Gallery, Hamilton, Ontario
Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario
Glen Bow Museum, Calgary, Alberta
A. E. Lepage, Toronto, Ontario
Weston's Ltd., Toronto, Ontario
Daytona Beach Community College, Daytona Beach, Florida
Muse D'Art Contemporaine, Montreal, Quebec
Carlton University, Hamilton, Ontario
Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario
University of Victoria, British Columbia

Numerous private collections including:

Sir Henry Moore, Alana Miles, Joe Sealy, Pat Methanie, Sylvester Stallone,
R. York Wilson, R.C.A, Arthur Erickson, R.C.A.

RICH FOG



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