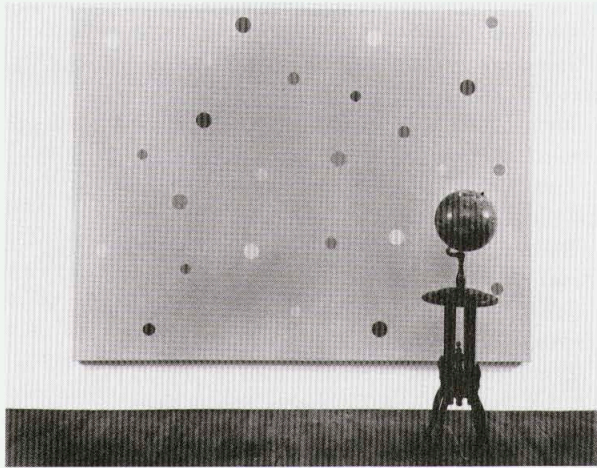


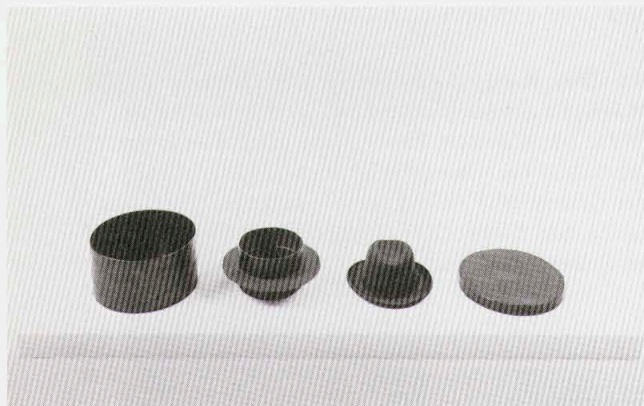
Wadsworth Atheneum
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

Annette Lemieux
MATRIX 100
April 24 - June 19, 1988



It's a Wonderful Life, 1986

MATRIX is supported by funds from
Aetna Life and Casualty, the Lannan Foundation,
and by a grant from the National Endowment
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Formal Wear, 1987

Annette Lemieux/MATRIX 100

Annette Lemieux is an artist with ideas. Many of these ideas seek to fathom "life situations" using relics of our material culture. Her works are always hybrids, born of heterogeneous parts. She uses paint, words, found objects and found photographs in a wholly non-hierarchical way. Each constituent part is usually presented intact, evidence of Lemieux's respect for the integrity of its original meaning.

She is sensitive to the crosscurrents of meaning embedded in the cultural symbols of our own time. For Lemieux these symbols might include, for instance, an old Royal typewriter, a 1928 world globe set into a Queen Anne plant stand, a German World War II helmet or even a duck blind from L. L. Bean. She also uses multivalent signs such as stars, circles, flags and crosses. Each Lemieux title is essential to the meanings of a piece. In fact, often a title will precede the making of a work. Language is very important to Lemieux, and she selects words for her work with the same high degree of care with which she selects colors, shapes and found objects. Ultimately, her choices seem to illuminate the complexity of our national psyche. They also reflect, indirectly, Lemieux's own New England roots along with her more recent observations of life in a harsh urban center.

Lemieux is aware that as she conjoins the meticulously selected elements into her own work of art she engenders a range of additional meanings from the obvious to the cryptic. She speaks with admiration of Irish playwright Samuel Beckett. The reference is apt. As in Beckett's work, things in Lemieux's art are at the same time simple and not so simple, obvious and yet elusive.

Lemieux is fully alert to the practices of both modernism and post-modernism. Her works show a liberated, vernacular use of today's canon which embraces both modernist work methods, especially minimalist and conceptual, and theories of language and meaning which have informed post-modernist strategies. Lemieux's juxtapositions initiate a dialogue among the parts in which each is unexpectedly revealed to be more than meets the eye. This is a dialogue in which the willing visitor is invited to participate. She is a constructivist in order to deconstruct. Her pieces hold a lot of ideas together simultaneously, and yet no one idea becomes slave to another.

Lemieux's creative process is strongly reliant on intuition. This intuitive approach, quite evidently mediated by her intelligence and sensibility, has enabled her to reach beyond the obvious. She has wittingly made a break with art of the recent past in her unabashed avowal of art that is evocative. Hers is an art of considerable poetry and emotional resonance.

In her prodigious output of the past five years, Lemieux has focused repeatedly on such sociopolitical subjects as the consequences of war (*Homecoming, Mon Amour, Cemetery Polka*), recreational hunting (*A Cold Day in Hell, Ancestral Hall*), patriarchy and relations between the sexes (*Keeper, Walking on Water, Jane Doe*) and, most recently, homelessness and hunger (*Illusion*). Yet, she disdains dogma and polemics. Though her images are frequently drawn from the 'forties and 'fifties, they intend to raise generalized responses rather than specific recollections. They seem to be as much about the present and the future as they are about the past, bringing to mind the famous quote, "Those who cannot remember the past, are condemned to repeat it." (George Santayana)

There is also in Lemieux's work the persistence of an ominous and paradoxical undertow which obliges us, again and again, to acknowledge the fragility of memory and the enduring pain of loss. In this context, each found object and each reconstituted photographic image becomes, along with whatever other individualized readings might be ascribed to it, emblematic of the passage of time.

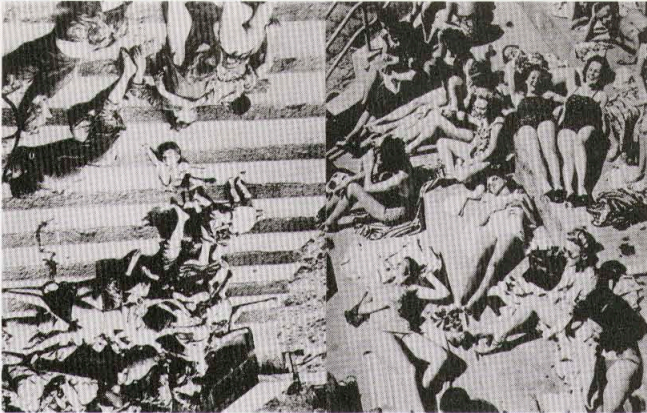
Despite her use of dated material, Lemieux seeks to avoid the nostalgic and the sentimental. For this reason she builds into her pieces elements of abstraction that consciously distance a work from the specific. Even in the early *Raoul* (1984), made up in part of two paintings by Lemieux's deceased father, John Edgar Raoul Lemieux, she chose to add a circle rather than a memorial wreath. Similarly, for the title she used the most obscure part of his name. In works



Raoul, 1984

such as *Homecoming*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, *A Cold Day in Hell* and *Keeper*, much of the total surface is given over to large fields of abstract painting. In each instance this effectively tempers the nostalgia factor of the dated images, as does the very eccentricity of Lemieux's combinations. In *Portable World*, the scroll features black and white photostats of color aerial photographs taken over North America. The original images are still further abstracted when wryly placed within the circles of individual keys which supposedly generated this "world view."

Lemieux turns to paint to convey abstract ideas and feelings, relying on both the emotional impact and established symbolism of certain colors. While the sophisticated viewer will be quick to read in references to other contemporary artists, (e.g., Jasper Johns, Larry Poons, Brice Marden) Lemieux would prefer that the viewer understand her work as primarily concerned with what she has called "life situations," not art world issues. Often enlisting essentially American sources, from our movies to our wars, Lemieux's body of work, as it grows, begins to assume the look of a vital and discerning national portrait.



Mon Amour, 1987

Annette Lemieux was born in Norfolk, Virginia in 1957 and grew up in Torrington, Connecticut. She attended both Northwestern Community College in Winsted and the Hartford Art School, University of Hartford, where she received a B. F. A. in 1980. During her time at the Hartford Art School, she studied with, among others, David Salle and Jack Goldstein. She also worked at the Atheneum one summer as an intern with the MATRIX program. She has received Individual Artists' Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts in the categories of both drawing (1983) and painting (1987) and a grant from the Pollock-Krassner Foundation (1986). Lemieux lives and works in New York City where she is represented by the Josh Baer Gallery.

Andrea Miller-Keller
Curator of Contemporary Art

PLEASE NOTE:

Ms. Lemieux will give an informal MATRIX afternoon lecture on Sunday, April 24 at 2:00 p.m. (following introductory remarks in celebration of the MATRIX century). The talk will be followed by a reception in honor of the artist in Avery Court.

Works in MATRIX:

Raoul, 1984, two found paintings, oil on wall and plexiglass, c. 72" x 48". Private Collection, New York City.

The Seat of the Intellect, 1984, oil on German helmet, 11" x 9 3/8" x c. 6". Private Collection, New York City.

Homecoming, 1985, oil on canvas and black and white photograph and bookjacket, 84" x 60" (three pieces). Private Collection, New York City.

Contra, 1986, black and white photograph, 36" x 59". Mr. and Mrs. David N. Pincus, Wynnewood, Pennsylvania.

It's a Wonderful Life, 1986, oil on canvas and press-type on globe with wood stand, 78" x 102" (canvas), 52" x 15" x 15" (globe/stand). Collection of Brooke and Carolyn Alexander, New York City.

The Past Tense, 1986, sepia photograph, 42 1/2" x 32" (framed), edition of three, number 3. Collection of Brooke and Carolyn Alexander, New York City.

Portable World, 1986, typewriter and case with black and white photo scroll, 192" (up to) x 13" x 12". Private Collection, New York City.

Ancestral Hall, 1987, nylon duck blind with press-type on masonite bench, 60" x 53" x 57". Collection of Lois Plehn, courtesy of Josh Baer Gallery, New York City.

Cemetery Polka, 1987, sepia photograph, 57 1/2" x 28 1/2" (framed). Collection of Andrew Ong, New York City.

A Cold Day in Hell, 1987, oil on canvas with color photo panel, 96" x 114". Collection of B. Z. and Michael Schwartz, New York City.

Formal Wear, 1987, bronze cast in four parts labeled A, B, C, and D (A: Lid, 1 5/16" x 13" x 15"; B: Hat, 5" x 11" x 12 5/8"; C: Hat Rack, 5 3/8" x 12" x 14 3/4"; D: Box, 6 1/2" x 12 1/2" x 14 3/4"), base: 3" x 69" x 24"; overall: 9 1/2" x 69" x 24", edition of nine, number 3. Courtesy of Brooke Alexander, New York City.

Keeper, 1987, oil and latex on canvas, 102" x 78".

The Museum of Modern Art, New York, The Millstream Fund, 1987.

Mon Amour, 1987, black and white photograph, 39" x 56". Collection of B. Z. and Michael Schwartz, New York City.

Unruly Child, 1987, oil on canvas and black and white photograph, 78" x 78" (canvas) and 16" x 16" (photograph). Collection of B. Z. and Michael Schwartz, New York City.

Selected One-Person Exhibitions:

Joseloff Gallery, Hartford Art School, West Hartford, CT '80; *3 Artists Select 3 Artists* (selected by David Salle), Artists Space, NYC '84; *Currents*, The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA '86; Cash/Newhouse, NYC '84, '86, '87; Josh Baer Gallery, NYC '87; Daniel Weinberg Gallery, Los Angeles, CA '87; Lisson Gallery, London '88; Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, IL '88.

Selected Group Exhibitions:

Hartford Arts Festival, Juried Exhibition '79; Beth El Temple, West Hartford, CT *Beth El Temple Annual Exhibition* '80; Gallery des Refuse, NYC *Contemporary Shields Show* '82; Wadsworth Atheneum Connecticut *Painters 7+7+7* '83; 521 W. 23rd Street, NYC (space donated by Sandro Chia) *Turn It Over*, sponsored by White Columns, '83; Metro Pictures, NYC *Artists Call* '84; Holly Solomon Gallery, NYC *57th Between A & D* '85; Hallwalls, Buffalo, NY *Past and Future Perfect* '85; Castelli Uptown, NYC *A Summer Selection* '85; 303 Gallery, NYC *Thought Objects* '85; Charlottsborg Exhibition Hall, Copenhagen, Denmark and Lundmuseum, Lund, Sweden *A Brave New World, A New Generation* '85; Cash/Newhouse, NYC '86; Metro Pictures, NYC '86; Diane Brown Gallery, NYC *Time After Time* '86; Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY *Altered States* '86; CEPA, Buffalo, NY *Spiritual America* '86; Luhring, Augustine & Hodes Gallery, NYC '86; Brooke Alexander, NYC '86; S. L. Simpson Gallery, Toronto, Canada *Ultrasurd* '86; American Fine Arts, Co., Colin De Land Fine Art, NYC *Modern Sleep* '86; Wolff Gallery, NYC *"Real Pictures"* (An exhibition for the benefit of the American Foundation for Aids Research) '87; Whitney Museum of American Art, NYC *1987 Biennial Exhibition*; Lia Rumma Gallery, Naples, Italy *Extreme Order* '87; Kent Fine Art, NYC *Subtext* '87; Massimo Audiello Gallery, NYC *The Antique Future* '87; Pat Hearn Gallery, NYC '87; Stux Gallery, NYC (*of Ever-Ever Land i Speak* '87; The New Museum of Contemporary Art, NYC *Fake* '87; Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, WI *Currents 12: Simulations, New American Conceptualism* '87; Josh Baer Gallery, NYC *The Beauty of Circumstance* '87; DEKA Foundation, House of Cyprus, Athens, Greece *Cultural Geometry* '88; Scott Hansen Gallery, NYC *Media Post Media* '88; Burden Gallery,

Aperture Foundation, NYC *The Return of the Hero* '88;
 Patrick and Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette
 University, Milwaukee, WI *Photography on the Edge* '88;
 Kent Fine Art, NYC *Altered States* '88.

Selected Bibliography about Lemieux:

- Parsons, Patricia. "Torrington artist is included in multiple show in Hartford," *The Register* (Torrington, CT), January 20, '83, p. 15.
- Iovine, Julie V. "Connecticut Painters at the Wadsworth," *Connecticut Magazine* vol. 46 no. 2 (February '83), p. 35+.
- Linker, Kate. "Eluding Definition," *Artforum* vol. 23 no. 4 (December '84), p. 61+.
- Indiana, Gary, "Annette Lemieux at Cash/Newhouse," *Art in America* vol. 74 no. 7 (July '86), p. 119+.
- Jones, Ronald. "Group Show at Brooke Alexander," *Artscribe* no. 60 (November/December '86), p. 77.
- Brooks, Rosetta. "Remembrance of Objects Past," *Artforum* vol. 25 no. 4 (December '86), p. 68+.
- Joselit, David. "Annette Lemieux," *Currents* (The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston) December '86.
- Siegel, Jeanne. "Annette Lemieux: It's A Wonderful Life, Or Is It?," (interview) *Arts Magazine* vol. 61 no. 5 (January '87), p. 78+.
- Heartney, Eleanor. "The Hot New Cool Art: Simulationism," *Art News* vol. 86 no. 1 (January '87), p. 130+.
- Cameron, Dan. "Post-Feminism," *Flash Art* no. 132 (February/March '87), p. 80+.
- Indiana, Gary. "Future Perfect," *The Village Voice*, March 10 '87, p. 85.
- Smith, Roberta. "Annette Lemieux in 2 Mixed-Media Shows," *The New York Times*, April 17, '87, p. C26.
- Salvioni, Daniela. "Spotlight," *Flash Art* no. 135 (Summer '87), p. 99.
- Collings, Matthew. "Posthumous Meaning," *Artscribe* no. 65 (September/October '87), p. 44+.
- Jones, Ronald. "Annette Lemieux," *Artscribe* no. 65 (September/October '87), p. 84+.
- Smith, Roberta. "Sculpture, The Works of Five Women," *The New York Times*, October 2, '87, p. C26.
- Smith, Roberta. "Media Post Media, A Show of 19 Women," *The New York Times*, January 15, '88 p. C24.