

SANCTUARY SHOW

Blind Contour Homage exhibit celebrates female artists

Abstract expressionist artist Marlene Lowden will be doing a talk in conjunction with her latest show, *Blind Contour Homage*, 2 p.m. on Nov. 28 at the North Shore Unitarians Sanctuary Gallery.

The show developed through Lowden's desire to celebrate Canadian women artists who have been given so little attention over the years. The show grew out of her studies in art history and drawing. While researching for a project, Lowden said she was struck by how often female artists were marginalized in art history textbooks.

"It was a revelation to me," Lowden said in her artist statement for *Blind Contour Homage*. "From that point on, I have studied the work of women artists, using the blind contour technique as a starting point of access. Gradually, my blind contour drawings developed into a series of paintings."

The work revealed blind spots in her own knowledge of art history, said Lowden.

"A few months into my research, I realized that I knew very little about female artists in my own country," she said. "I'm a

Canadian woman, but could I name five women artists from Canada? I decided to do something about my lack of awareness of the very field I belong to."

The series is titled *Blind Contour Homage* because this style of drawing provides the base for each piece. It allows Lowden to study each of the works closely, giving her the freedom to recreate them with her own marks.

Lowden then imbues her own stylized process, balancing the original features of the painting with her own in an almost collaborative process.

The show includes paintings and biographies of more than 30 Canadian women artists.

"Each of my blind contour drawings of their work is accompanied by a biography of the artist," she said. "What was originally a side project has become a lifelong pursuit."

Lowden's talk will be held at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 28, at 370 Mathers Ave., West Vancouver. *Blind Contour Homage* will hang in the North Shore Unitarian Sanctuary Gallery for the months of November and December.

- Andy Prest



Artist Marlene Lowden hangs her works at the North Shore Unitarian Sanctuary Gallery in West Vancouver. Her show, *Blind Contour Homage*, features her take on Canadian female artists. PAUL MCGRATH/NSN



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