



The Horticultural Society of New York

148 West 37th Street, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018

Tel: (212) 757-0915 • Fax: (212) 246-1207

www.hsnny.org

For Immediate Release:

CAROL BOVE
with Janine Lariviere

Plants & Mammals

April 15 – September 10, 2009

Opening reception: Wednesday, April 15 from 6:30 to 9:00pm

Curated by Jodie Vicenta Jacobson

The Horticultural Society of New York is pleased to present an exhibition of works by **Carol Bove** as part of its continuing Exhibitions program featuring plant-based art. *Plants & Mammals* will feature several sculptures and a collage by Carol Bove accompanied by *Twentieth Century Narcissus*, a book project by Janine Lariviere. In addition, daffodils from the artist's garden will be periodically on view this spring in the gallery.

A fold-out, accordion-style picture book, *Twentieth Century Narcissus* chronicles the introduction of narcissus cultivars (commonly known as daffodils) throughout the twentieth century. The book is organized as a pictographic time-line, with each page representing one year. The flowers included in the book are varieties that are currently available, with images clipped from bulb catalogs that arrived at Lariviere's door.

Most daffodil cultivars do not exist in the wild, any more than poodles and pugs do. They take many forms because people hybridize them. Lariviere explains:

"The process of creating a new flower is a long one. A transfer of pollen from the anthers of one flower to the stigma of another produces seeds that will take 5-6 years to produce their first blooms. If an exciting flower is produced from this pairing there is, at this point, only one of it. Flower people I talked to always compared a bulb's uniqueness to the uniqueness of a child. To produce more of the same type, you have to wait for the bulb to produce offsets, which are clones. After nearly 10 years from the first bloom, a hybridizer will have enough to sell and register their creation. This is when they are named. Of course, many flowers are created and never named."

Bove elaborates:

"Flowers are shaped by many forces. They reflect commerce, taste, intellectual labor, fashion, customs, human emotional life. They are indexical with a culture in a given moment. They are the living expression of social forces and social experience. But all of this content remains part of a hidden dimension. Flowers are so lovely and gratuitous, even dismissible. When they are read at all it tends to be for the content of an interpersonal gesture. Like romantic intentions. Or solidarity with the bereaved.

Forces bearing on flowers are: nature and intellectual property; capitalism and sentimentality; historiography and "period eye." Period eye is an idea I think about a lot – it's how a moment's mentality is outwardly manifested, or what looks good at a particular time."

Alongside the book, Bove will show a sculptural arrangement. As abstract forms, there is no attempt at a particular reference but the grouping of objects is easily anthropomorphized, suggesting people gathered at a party. The beach-combed figures have a sad or ridiculous aspect, although they can also be very elegant. The “conversation group” has qualities of a thoughtfully composed garden containing unexpected plant pairings.

The sole two-dimensional work in the exhibition is a collage for Marilyn Monroe, which features a poem by Michael McClure from his collection, *Ghost Tantras* (first published in 1964). All of the poems from this collection contain phonetic spellings of pre-verbal and semi-verbal vocalizations. Bove thinks of the poem as erasing the distinction between symbolizing activity and bodily experience – an example of the survival of Surrealism via McClure’s own “period-eye”. Within the context of this exhibition, the inclusion of the collage suggests the hubris inherent in putting form to our desires, underlining the hidden dimension beneath the face-value humans assign to objects of beauty.

Carol Bove was born in Geneva, Switzerland in 1971 and lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. She received her BA from New York University in 1999. Her work has been exhibited internationally with solo exhibitions at the Blanton Museum, Austin (2006), Kunsthalle Zürich (2004), and ICA Boston (2004). This summer, Bove will have a solo exhibition at the Tate St. Ives. Bove was featured in the 2008 Whitney Biennial, *Unmonumental: The Object in the 21st Century*, New Museum of Contemporary Art (2007) and Greater New York, PS1 Contemporary Art Center (2005). Her work is in the permanent collection at the MoMA, and her exhibitions have been reviewed in The New York Times, ARTFORUM, the Guardian, ArtReview and the New Yorker amongst many others. Carol Bove is represented by Maccarone Inc., New York, HOTEL, London, Georg Kargl, Vienna and Galerie Dennis Kimmerich, Düsseldorf.

Twentieth Century Narcissus will be available for purchase at The Horticultural Society of New York during the exhibition. There will also be a poster, available for free for gallery visitors.

As part of the public programming for this exhibition, HSNY will host a reception and screening on April 30th from 7 – 9pm, featuring 16mm films by **Bruce Conner** (*Looking for Mushrooms*, 1967), **Jonas Mekas** (*Award Presentation to Andy Warhol*, 1964), **Harry E. Smith** (*Early Abstractions #1-5, 7, 10*, 1939) and **Jud Yalkut** (*John Cage Mushroom Hunting in Stony Point*, 1973).

The mission of The Horticultural Society of New York is to enhance our City’s environmental and cultural life by providing unique educational, vocational, and therapeutic outreach programs, library resources and art exhibitions.

The Gallery at The Horticultural Society of New York is free and open to the public Monday - Friday from 10am - 6 pm and by appointment.

For further information, please visit www.hsnyc.org or contact Chris Murtha at 212.757.0915 x121 or cmurtha@hsnyc.org.