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AKIMBLOG

Montreal

posted by Isa Tousignant - January 18, 2007.

The blanket of snow that has finally returned Montreal to its usual status of winter wonderland seems to have had the side effect of lulling half the city's galleries into slumber. That's the only explanation I can think of for the quiet winter arts season. Nevertheless, there are goods to be found, like in the heart of the town's poshest hood, Outremont, where a beautiful, airy, and light exhibition space is attached to its municipal library. The current draw to the **Galerie d'art d'Outremont** is the new solo show by François Morelli, a Montreal artist who's exhibition at Joyce Yahouda last summer was among the most joyful art experiences of the year. Morelli's practice is rooted in performance (the Yahouda show included biweekly happenings during which the artist animated masks he'd concocted out of interwoven multicoloured vintage belts), but here the show is composed of sculptures and works on paper. And it isn't as new as I'd assumed: the works in this exhibition, called *Parades*, date back to 1999. Exemplifying an aspect of his practice he's known for yet I'd never seen, Morelli's stamps are made in various shapes — a tongue, a syringe, human body parts, frogs — then dipped in coloured paint and used to create scroll-shaped narratives with repeated patterns. The images in *Parades* are candy coloured and beautiful, dizzying in their multitudes — if not particularly probing.
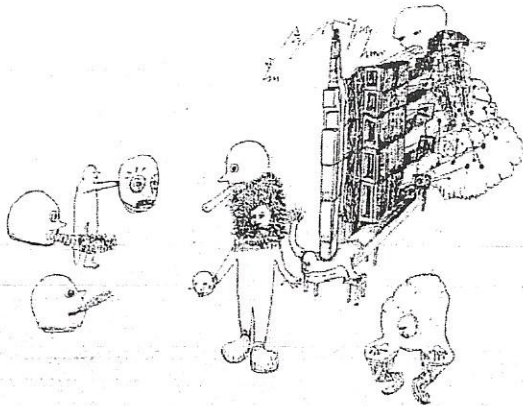
Michel Herreria, from the series *Les Tristes*

Halfway across town in Westmount, another haute neighbourhood, a small exhibition by the Toronto-born painter David Gillanders hides within the diminutive **McClure Gallery**. *Blind Spot* groups a dozen small to medium-sized oil paintings that pay homage to memories of landscapes. The theme requires some interesting mental trickery; each work is a patchwork of vague shapes in blues, beiges, grays and teals, not painted from memory, but rather, *as* memories. Gillanders paints from photographs, so the paintings' undefined quality (both