

AMEL CHAMANDY

Scene Scape

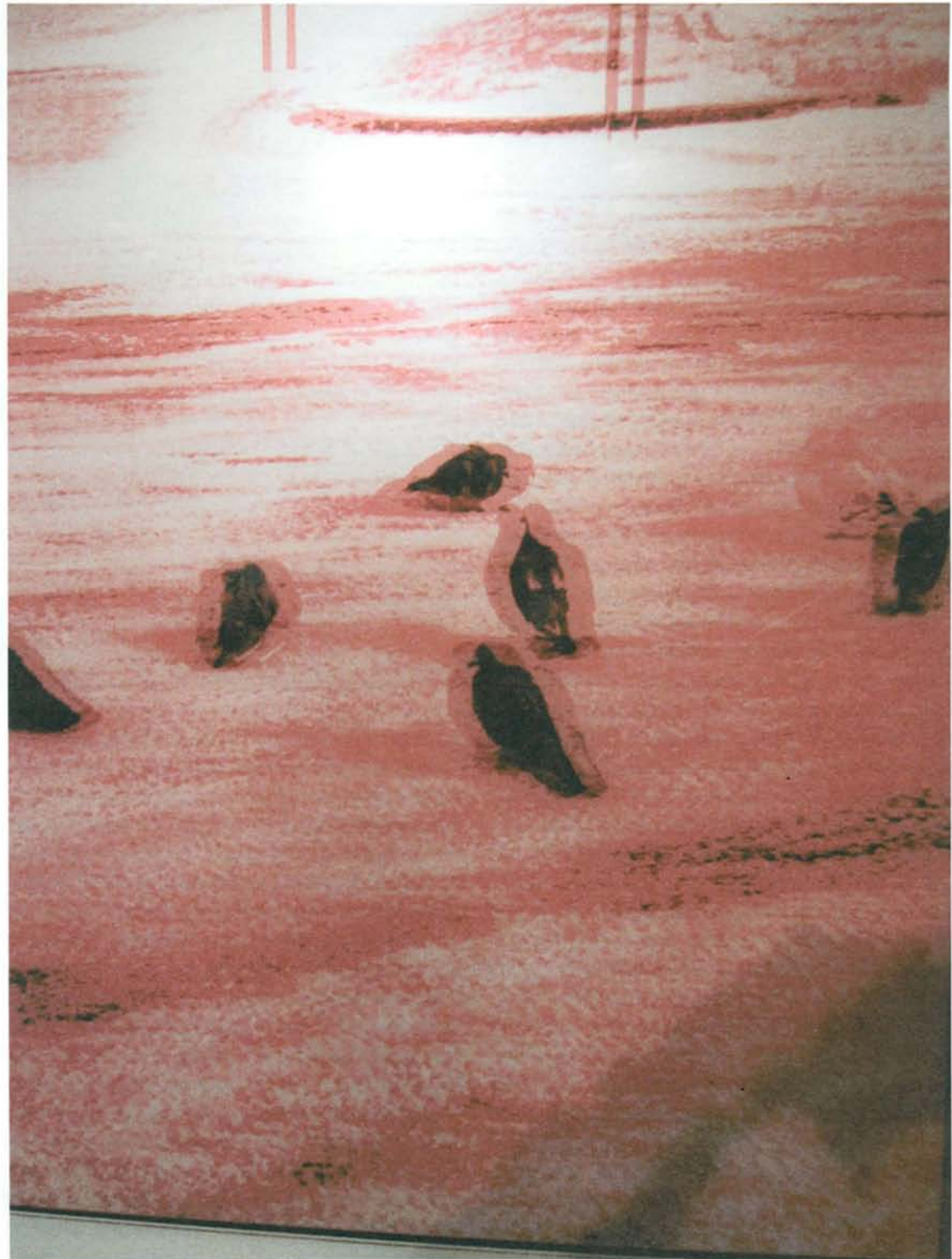
By Veronica Redgrave

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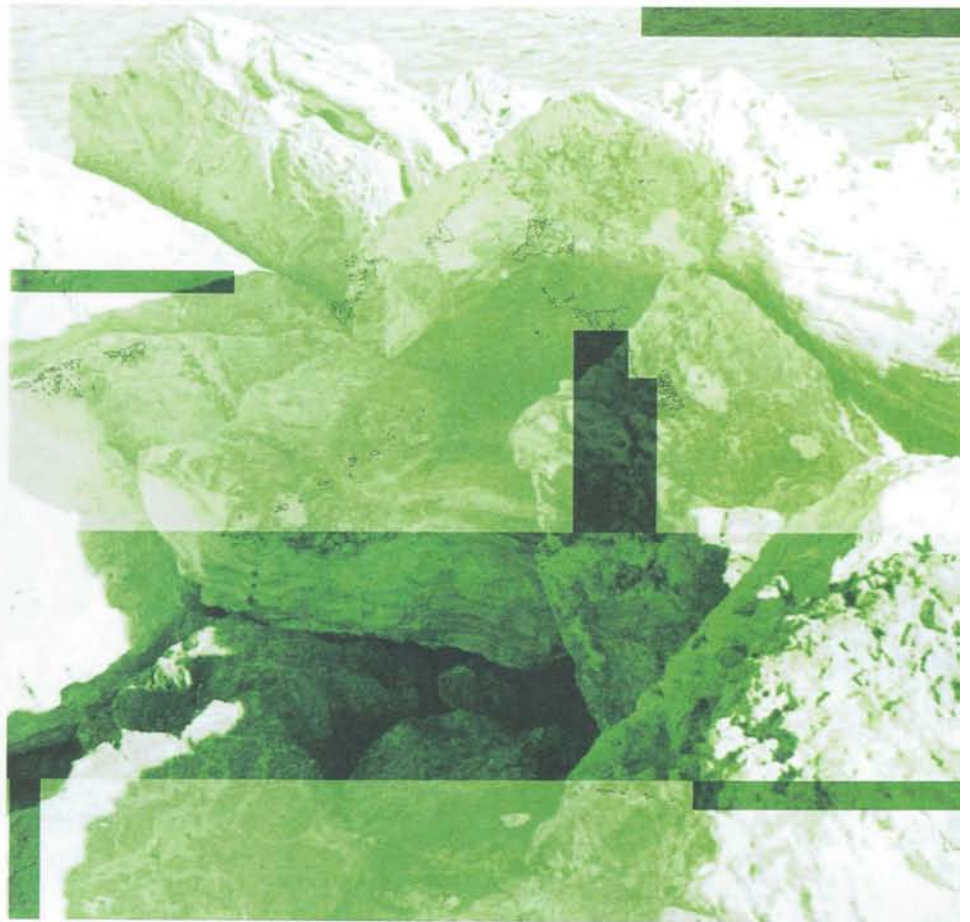
Galerie NuEdge Fine Arts
International
1480 Sherbrooke Street West
Montreal, QC
Tel.: 514-934-3343
www.galerienuedge.com

Until September 18, 2010.



Pigeons, 2010
Photograph courtesy
Amel Chamandy

Amel Chamandy's solo show, *Scene Scape Through the Artist's Eyes*, at the Galerie NuEdge Fine Arts International, is an original document of urban space – simple scenes in the city. Their optical originality comes from the artist's vision as she offers new ways of seeing the day-to-day: the banal becomes beautiful. Amel's large images (69" x 50") were first captured in black and white film (!), photos taken in 1998 when she was at Concordia University. Then, over 10 years later, she digitally altered the originals, using today's technological tools. The result? Splendid blurry, coloured works: some more abstract than others. Each is unique: There is no edition. The conceptual crux – the thesis of the work – is the simplicity of the everyday, be it an average street scene, the anonymous wall of an office building or pigeons. These common, grey bobbing birds are tinted with a wash of pale red thanks to the magic of Photoshop. Each has a ghostly shadow, as Amel has repeated the image and superimposed it onto the original. But this second image, a transparent hue, has been shifted slightly. Each bird has a blurred outline, suggesting the non-stop motion of these ubiquitous urban urchins. In another photo, Notre Dame Street is recognizable – and yet not. The street's elements – cars, steps, architecture – have been decoded and deconstructed. A beaux-arts façade is seen in triplicate – standing high in silhouette. The slightly out-of-focus photos invite the viewer to look closer to discern the individual elements. Most of the works in the show have a fragmented approach – a shift in the sight line; an image doubled, or tripled and placed just beside the original. Some scenes recall what one might see from a speeding car: the syncopated rhythm of city life. It is these elements of the town that Amel Chamandy sometimes distorts and re-uses to add dimension to her photographs. Several are totally abstract, but most have a city reference. In *54th floor*, she takes a lamppost and poses it in front of, and at the same height as, a downtown skyscraper. Our sense of reality is challenged: We re-evaluate the moment. Some cityscapes show different buildings, cut through and stacked



Within (detail), 2010
Digital photographic print,
single edition
193 x 105.41 cm

precariously. What we identify as iconic bits of a concrete city has been questioned. Amel takes the city fabric and delicately dissects it. Her unerring eye takes the elements and recombines them, making the 'whole' greater than the 'parts'. In some works, still playing with transparencies, the artist's gaze moves from town to country. Beautiful mauve-tinted trees stand doubled. Once again, when Amel applies a second repeated image, she prints it just off the original: The tree trunks tremble. A sense of movement is created, as it is with many of the photos in the exhibition, with Amel's doubled, sometimes tripled, application of the same image. Photography comes from two Greek words: *fos*-light, and *grafa* – to write. Indeed, Amel Chamandy writes with light, as she communicates life's constant disruptions and vibrations in her point counter-point pieces. Thus, she captures a sense of beauty in the light of everyday life.

The show also features a video entitled *Through The Artist's Eyes*. The looped images show the Amel Chamandy's voluntary and involuntary eye movements. ●