



# SHELLEY MANSEL

## URBAN CATHEDRALS

Sept 12 - Oct 3, 2008



Shelley Mansel acknowledges the support of the Province of Nova Scotia through the Department of Tourism, Culture & Heritage

GALLERY PAGE AND STRANGE is a contemporary gallery located in the historic Granville Square of downtown Halifax, Nova Scotia. In close proximity to NSCAD University and other fine art shops and restaurants, the gallery is situated within the heart of the cultural district of the city.

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STRANGE**

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## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

SHELLEY MANSEL attended the University College of the Fraser Valley for 2 years in the Art Diploma Program, and completed 3 years in the Bachelor of Fine Art Program at NSCAD University from 1995 to 1998. Mansel has shown in solo, two-person, and group exhibitions in Halifax, Toronto and Vancouver. Mansel's works have been reviewed and featured in Halifax and Toronto newspapers, and have been published in Canadian House & Home magazine and on Home and Garden Television.

Mansel's works are held in numerous private collections in Halifax, Toronto, Vancouver, Germany and in corporate and permanent collections including St. Mary's University, Halifax, University of British Columbia Faculty of Dentistry, Vancouver and Lock & Associates, Halifax.

In 2006, she was part of the selection committee for the Nova Scotia Culture Division/ Grants to Individuals Program. Mansel has been awarded both a Creation Grant and Presentation Grant for the current exhibition, Urban Cathedrals, 2008.

BACK COVER: Building Up, acrylic on canvas, 60" x 40"

FOLDING PANEL: Orange Elevator, acrylic on canvas, 60" x 40"



TOP LEFT:  
Red Office  
acrylic on canvas  
48" X 60"

MIDDLE TOP:  
Long Warehouse  
acrylic on canvas  
36" X 72"

MIDDLE BOTTOM:  
Night Warehouse  
acrylic on canvas  
48" X 60"

TOP RIGHT:  
Red Tarps  
acrylic on canvas  
48" X 72"



## URBAN CATHEDRALS

Concrete and steel structures have a relatively short life span. Their inevitable demise is at odds with the seemingly impermeable materials from which they are constructed. Within the cycle of expansion, few structures withstand generations, and many are abandoned in the quest for larger, more modern facilities. Warehouses are modern indicators of consumption and "progress". A large structural expanse such as a warehouse simulates that of a cathedral, but functions without a spiritual objective. The contemporary warehouse can be characterized as the secular incarnate to the traditional church; it has become the "urban cathedral".

These paintings feature urban spaces which are occupied only by the presence of natural and artificial light which suggests an atmosphere of vacancy or abandonment. The distinction of structural patterns is dominated by the invasive element of light. Formal elements with respect to colour, composition, and luminosity restrain the urban landscape to its most elemental forms. The depiction of space, light, and reflection is akin to the aesthetic considerations of American painter Edward Hopper. He portrayed the polarity of Nature and Civilization, and ultimately, Nature's reclamation of the urban domain. Within the Urban Cathedrals series, the designs of geometric order and natural light generate a reciprocal tension where these two spheres collide.

These works demonstrate a seductive view of modernity while simultaneously alluding to the ill-fated stability of development. The urban cathedrals reveal the symbiotic yet equally parasitic human element which exists in our manufactured environments.

Shelley Mansel, Halifax, NS, 2008