

Move over, Madonna

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Wendy Peart of the Dunlop Art Gallery speaks about the an upcoming exhibit, Material Girls.

Photograph by: Bryan Schlosser, Leader-Post, The Leader-Post

Regina's art scene is welcoming an all-female, in-your-face art exhibit.

Material Girls, now open to the public at the Dunlop Art Gallery, is a fierce and loud expression of female artists.

Wendy Peart, curator of education and community outreach at the gallery, thinks it's an important addition to the art world.

"What we're trying to do with this exhibition is provide a much-needed opportunity for female artists to take up space," she said.

Mission accomplished. The gallery isn't a particularly large space - it's significantly smaller than Regina's behemoth MacKenzie Art Gallery - but Peart and the other two curators are displaying the work of 24 artists.

Excess is theme of the exhibit: "Really show the bounty that exists among us," said Peart.

It was a challenge for the gallery to find artists who would fit into the theme while still maintaining diversity among the artists and works.

The artists come from diverse cultural backgrounds, are from different parts of North America and work in several different mediums. There are paintings, installations, sculptures and more on display.

"It is very hard to do that. Working on a team with two other curators, there's a lot of discussion that goes on. A lot of meetings, a lot of back and forth," said Peart, who added the experience was very rewarding.

Once artists were selected, there was the challenge of finding out what works were available and how they would get here.

Dominique Rey is one of the featured artists.

"This is a really well-reputed gallery and the curators were putting together a really provocative project and of course I was interested in participating," she said.

The work she is showing is a series of collages based on photographs she shot of herself performing in desolate landscapes.

"There's a kind of excess of material that is happening in these forms that is out of control and

unrepressed and not to be diminished," she said.

Rey saw Material Girls for the first time on Friday, shortly after it had been completed.

"I was picturing even more dense and more tight," she said.

Rey said it's exciting to see the work of female artists she is familiar with, but the exhibit demonstrates the art world isn't ahead of the curve when it comes to equal rights for women.

"We're not getting the equal props we deserve in this country," she said.

The exhibit is in a way already successful for the gallery, because it's creating a discourse and a platform for a conversation about the role of women in art.

In Regina, Peart said the art scene is lucky because there are several successful female artists and curators. Now it's a matter of giving them the support they need.

"There are a lot of women on the cultural scene and it's high time we start supporting that demographic and providing a place for them in the art world," she said.

The exhibit can be seen any day of the week until early April.

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