

Carole Freeman, Something About Winnipeg

Cailyn Harrison · October 29, 2016

CAROLE FREEMAN
SOMETHING ABOUT WINNIPEG



(Detail) Women of WAG: Muriel Richardson and The Women's Committee, 2012

NOVEMBER 4 - 25, 2016

OPENING RECEPTION: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 7 - 10 P.M.

Artist in Attendance

And each part of the whole falls off
And cannot know it knew, except
Here and there, in cold pockets
Of remembrance, whispers out of time.

John Ashberry - Self Portrait in a Convex Mirror

SOMETHING ABOUT WINNIPEG

CAROLE FREEMAN is a painter of people and narrative pictures. Her imagery combines clinical study, empathy, humour, and ironic juxtaposition. Occasionally referencing Old and Modern Masters, she whimsically subverts history – art, cultural, personal – with the "zeal of a transgressive visual polyglot".⁽¹⁾ Stylistically lying between classical representation and contemporary figuration, Freeman's paintings manipulate time and space through fine detail and gestural brushwork, monochromatic and luminous colour, lightness of spirit and soulful depth.

While considering her solo exhibition for Gurevich Fine Art, Freeman, a Winnipeg émigré, felt compelled to make it be 'something about Winnipeg' – memories of growing up, family and friends – inspired by friendly people, bleak winters, brief summers, big skies, Winnipeg culture, history, and geography. In her Toronto studio, *Something About Winnipeg* evolved into over 80 pictures depicting Freeman's investigation, acknowledgement, and surrender to "Peg's" enduring influence and significance, and the mark it left on her psyche.

Her subjects, from the everyday (a cinnamon bun, nose warmers) to the unexpected (a pirate, a thief, a Mountie, a princess) enchant, and populate Freeman's imaginative, capricious, and poignant retelling of historical and personal stories of her hometown. From the monumental to scaled down moments, Winnipeg people, still life, and landscape, Freeman's paintings express both singular allegories and one continuous metaphorical narrative that raise questions of time, place, and personage, with some answers in cryptic, playful, or emotive titles. In the long run, *Something About Winnipeg* became Freeman's "self portrait in a convex mirror".

As source material, Freeman employed personal and found photographs for access to subjects and the creation of this body of work, as well as the distillation of works by Piero Della Francesca, Manet, Sargent, Richter, and Margaux Williamson. In the words of former art critic for the *Globe and Mail*, Gary Michael Dault, *Something About Winnipeg*, is Freeman's "epic undertaking...the Summa of a city... the jewel in the crown".⁽²⁾

1. "Carole Freeman's Selections 2012 -2016", David Saric, Artoronto.ca, August, 2016.

2. "Surprise Appearances", Gary Michael Dault, Arabella, Summer, 2016.

