

M E D I A R E L E A S E



Hans Moonen, *Burnouts*, 1998, colour photograph,
Collection Saint Mary's University Art Gallery

Burning Rubber

Exhibition: 2 June – 29 July 2007
Saint Mary's University Art Gallery

Burning Rubber Hits the Road

Performance at Exhibition Park,
Saturday, 2 June, 6:30-7:30 pm (Rain date: Sunday, 3 June)

Opening reception: Saturday, 2 June, 8:00 pm

Panel discussion with visiting artists: Sunday, 3 June, 2:00 pm

Launch: sound performance, video and catalogue launch:
Friday, 20 July, 8:00 pm

Rural car culture makes its mark on contemporary art this summer at Saint Mary's University Art Gallery. The exhibition, *Burning Rubber*, considers a marginal form of mark-making and its relationship with contemporary art. Artists from Australia, Canada, Switzerland and the United States will exhibit alongside local car enthusiasts who share the common human drive to leave a visible trace.

Filmmaker Ariella Pahlke conceived of the exhibition while developing a documentary on the subject. She wanted to shed light on rural car culture by re-framing the practice of burning rubber within the context of art. Pahlke, who lives in Terence Bay, says "I often encounter black marks made by rubber tires, weaving their way through my community and into the city. In the past few years my appreciation of these shapes has increased, as has my curiosity about how and why they are made."

The exhibition combines documentation of rural car culture with video, painting, performance, sculpture, computer games, text, installation and web-based art by international contemporary artists. Lori Hersberger, based in Zurich, creates enormous paintings incorporating actual tire burns or related painterly gestures. Toronto's Steven Laurie fabricates sculptural machines that emulate automotive marks, smoke and noise. Visitors can play a computer game designed by Australian Ben Morieson, whose tire-mark drawing (documented in the exhibition) is listed in the *Guinness Book of World Records*. Guy Overfelt, from San Francisco, contributes a colour burn-out drawing made with red-treaded "Scorcher" tires. Hans Moonen (formerly Halifax, now London, Ontario), local artist Jacqueline Riemer and local car enthusiasts are represented by photographs of Nova Scotia burn-outs.

A customised car, created by Brad Wadden, will be displayed outside the gallery during the opening reception. Three Halifax galleries are providing works from their permanent collections, including several of Moonen's photographs (Saint Mary's University Art Gallery), a sculpture by David Diviney (Art Gallery of Nova Scotia) and a 1968 lithograph by noted American artist Richards Jarden (Dalhousie Art Gallery). Videos and Internet links explore the subject through contemporary media.

Burning Rubber appears at Saint Mary's University Art Gallery from 2 June through 29 July 2007. Visiting artists Hersberger and Laurie will collaborate with local drivers in a performance event, *Burning Rubber Hits the Road*, at Exhibition Park on the Prospect Road, Saturday evening, 2 June at 6:30-7:30 pm. (Rain

date for the performance: Sunday, 3 June.) A bus will leave from Saint Mary's University Art Gallery at 6:00 pm and return after the performance. (Please call 420-5445 to reserve a free seat.) A public reception will take place at the art gallery on Saturday, 2 June at 8:00 pm.

A panel discussion, on Sunday afternoon, 3 June at 2:00 pm in the gallery, will feature guest curator Ariella Pahlke, visiting artists Lori Hersberger and Steven Laurie, a local car enthusiast and Dr Carmel Forde, who teaches philosophy and aesthetics at Saint Mary's and Dalhousie.

A catalogue will accompany the exhibition, featuring texts by Ariella Pahlke and Steven Laurie. Both the publication and a video by Pahlke will be launched in the gallery on Friday, 20 July, at 8:00 pm. A sound performance by Halifax musician Lukas Pearse, based on a graphic score of tire marks, will accompany the launch.

All events are free of charge and open to the public. Except for the performance at Exhibition Park, all will take place at Saint Mary's University Art Gallery in the Loyola Building, 5865 Gorsebrook Avenue. Refreshments will be served at all indoor events. **Please note that the gallery will be closed on Sunday afternoon, 17 June for a special theatrical performance.**

Lori Hersberger's participation has been assisted by a generous grant from Pro Helvetia, the Swiss arts council. The gallery acknowledges technical support from the Centre for Art Tapes. This exhibition and associated activities benefit from generous programme funding from The Canada Council for the Arts.

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