



GWEN MACGREGOR IS AN ARTIST WHO IS PREOCCUPIED WITH SEEKING alternative ways to chart and experience events, exploring the realities of time, space and memory. As she says, “I’m moving forward while thinking backward, or is it moving backward while thinking forward? Either way my work has a push-me / pull-you relationship with time.” MacGregor’s seemingly equivocal question arises from one of the crucial paradoxes of globalization: the greater the technological capacity for connection, for speed, for exchange and circulation of information, the more fragmented and compartmentalized the world becomes.

oakville galleries

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AT CENTENNIAL SQUARE

120 Navy Street
HOURS

12–9 pm Tuesday to Thursday
12–5 pm Friday
10–5 pm Saturday
1–5 pm Sunday

IN GAIRLOCH GARDENS

1306 Lakeshore Road East
HOURS

1–5 pm Tuesday to Sunday

Admission to both galleries is free

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Image: **Gwen MacGregor**

2000, 2001

detail from installation



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we are able to read on the walls lists of things MacGregor has forgotten—a movie star in a film, the name of a shop, or something she didn't remember at the grocery store. But herein lies the rub. As the texts are written in glow-in-the-dark vinyl that quickly disappear after the lights go out, it is left up to us to remember what it was that we just read. The collaborative work engages us in the process and outcome of memory and the effects of time on remembering and forgetting.

In the third room a split screen video projection entitled *60 seconds* underscores the minute-by-minute march of time through the manipulation of speed in various commonplace actions. While some actions (on the left) have been speeded up, others (on the right) have been slowed down in order to contain time within a framework. For example, the artist's father is shown canoeing around a lake in the same amount of time that it takes for her mother to knit a stitch in the adjacent screen. Simple moments of daily life are recast and re-shaped into a new order of experience.

MacGregor is able to create new meta-narratives that short-circuit time, or, as she says “mess with time.” These installations beguilingly enlist us as accomplices in the aesthetic functioning of the work of art on heightened intellectual, somatic, and poetic grounds. They take us to a juncture where real time and virtual time, art and life, fiction and reality, past and present intersect: a place where daydreams can also flourish.

— Marnie Fleming

We live in a technologically driven era which coexists with multiple, disjunctive and even antagonistic categories of space and time. MacGregor's work emerges from, and is shaped by, this coexistence of different and constantly evolving orders of experience. Such concerns are the subject of three installations that occupy each of the spaces of Oakville Galleries' former estate home.

The 'living room' installation is titled *2000* and contains a newspaper from every day of that year. Rather than merely placing the papers within the gallery space, MacGregor has rolled them into granny knots (as in knotted newspapers for starting fires), thus linking and intertwining the days and events that each contains. The 'knots' are heaped into a pile before the fireplace while, in a video projection above the mantel, we see the artist's hands rolling each day's front pages into knots. The headlines literally roll by as the camera records the major events of the new millennium. Altogether it takes her approximately a minute to create a knot, while the video lasts slightly over 365 minutes. MacGregor extends and personalizes duration by physically showing the repetitive process, which is made literal by the enormous physical presence of the accumulated pile of knotted newspapers. Time, in effect, becomes three-dimensional space, thereby gaining dense and concrete volume.

The installation in the next room is treated as a site of transit or an in-between space, entitled *The things I forgot*. It is also a collaborative work with MacGregor's partner, Lewis Nicholson. Lights here are programmed to go off and on. When they are on we see bare walls and when they are off

Gwen MacGregor

CD-ROM

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System Requirements: QuickTime 4 (or higher)
Download at www.apple.com/quicktime/download
Plays on both PC & Macintosh