



Transformation

A RETROSPECTIVE

DUNCAN REGEHR



University
of Victoria
Art Collections

All rights for reproduction and the commercial copyright to any and all images
created by the artist, Duncan Regehr, that are represented in this book
are retained by the artist.

copyright Duncan Regehr 2012
Duncan Regehr Art Works, DRAW STUDIO
www.duncanregehr.com



Front cover image:
Duncan Regehr, *Untitled V, Omniscience*, oil on canvas, 2011

© 2012 University of Victoria Art Collections

LEGACY ART GALLERY
630 Yates Street
Victoria BC, Canada, V8W 1K9
Contact: Caroline Riedel
Email: criedel@uvic.ca
Website: uvac.uvic.ca
Telephone: (250) 721-6562
Facsimile: (250) 721-6607

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means,
without the prior written permission of the publishers, or in case of photocopying or other reproductive copying, a li-
cense from CANCOPY (Canadian Copyright Licensing Agency)
6 Adelaide Street East, Suite 900, Toronto, Canada, M5C 1H6

Library Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication Data

Transformation: A Retrospective of Works and Writings by Duncan Regehr

ISBN 978-1-55058-477-6

Author: University of Victoria Art Collections

Foreward	1
Dr. Joy Davis, Interim Director and Caroline Riedel, Curator	
Dialogue with a Dragon	3
Nicholas Tuele, Guest Curator	
Locating the Seat of the Soul	13
Dr. Elena Pnevmonidou	
Writing and Works	19
Dr. Duncan Regehr	
Citation	49
Prof. John Krich	
Exhibition List	51
Acknowledgements	56

We are delighted to showcase both art and poetry reflecting Duncan Regehr's insights on the theme of transformation. Even as these works bring the Legacy Art Gallery to life with their compelling imagery and vivid palettes, they also challenge us to experience what is invisible to the eye.

Through a wide-ranging presentation of media, this exhibition illustrates the artist's working method: to develop a series of paintings, sculptures, drawings and writings that project and explore a common theme or philosophy. By delving into the collective subconscious and the psyche, Regehr produces images of an intensely personal nature, and invites reciprocal identification by the viewer. Included in the exhibition are the recent series *Omniscience*, *Revenant* and *Doppelganger*, which reveal a new intensity and scale of Regehr's reflection on the human experience and bring together the recurring leitmotifs of his work.

Over the past 35 years, Regehr has evolved as a prolific and versatile artist of international prominence in the visual, literary and performing arts. Numerous art exhibitions in Canada, the USA, and Europe have attracted the attention of museums, critics and the public. His paintings, sculpture and written works are found in important collections worldwide including the Smithsonian Institute (USA), The Jilin Collection (China), The Kunsthallen (Copenhagen), Focus on the Masters Archives for the Getty Museum (USA) and the Syllavethy Collection of Scotland (UK). He was recognized by the Royal Canadian Academy of Art for his outstanding artistic achievements in 2000 and awarded an honorary doctorate of Fine Arts by the University of Victoria in 2008.

This exhibition is a collaboration drawing on the skills of many people. Both Caroline Riedel and Cindy Vance worked with Duncan Regehr to select artworks and poetry that illuminate the theme, Nicholas Tuele has prepared an essay and interview which combines his insights with Regehr's reflections. And Dr. Elena Pnevmonidou (Assistant Professor, Germanic and Slavic Studies) provides us with a thoughtful response on parallel themes in Romantic art and literature that also underlie Regehr's images and poetic expression. Thanks are also due to Elyse Portal for her skill in designing this catalogue and her contributions to the exhibition design and installation, as well as to fellow students Meg Sugrue and Alex King. We also appreciate the contributions of the University Centre Farquhar Auditorium's technical staff in the installation and lighting process.



Nocturne

Corvus Rex - Scarecrow Oils

Oil on canvas on board

45" x 35"

2000

In the prologue to his 1994 book *The Dragon's Eye: An Artist's View*, Duncan Regehr recounts how he came to have a chop made with which to "stamp" his paintings and drawings. A venerable Chinese artist in a Toronto Chinatown art supply shop created the chop that incorporated Regehr's initials and an ancient dragon image from Chinese mythology into a "Dragon's Eye" – appropriate for the artist born during the Year of the Dragon.

Duncan Regehr is a highly accomplished artist with a solid and consistent exhibition record dating back to the early 1970s. As a youngster, his artist father provided access to paper, pencils and paints. Both parents encouraged their precocious son's talents as artist and writer. He has engaged in these two creative pursuits his entire life. Regehr is also a classically trained actor with an impressive list of credits in stage, film, radio and television. (See www.duncanregehr.com)

Over the past four decades, Regehr has received critical acclaim for his paintings, poetry and acting. He is a member of the Royal Canadian Academy, recipient of the American Vision Award of Distinction in the Arts and holds a Doctorate of Fine Arts, *honoris causa* from the University of Victoria. He has published extensively and has been the subject of numerous articles and reviews.

Analysis of the artist's output reveals continuing investigations that have evolved over the years in distinctive "series." These series include *Scarecrow*, *Corvus Rex*, *Henge*, *Doppelganger*, *Chrysalid* and *Cypher* among others. As may be inferred by the titles, the works comprising each series are related and sustained investigations into transformation, metamorphosis, primal form, and aspects of the human condition. His paintings and drawings have been described as icons and fables filled with a highly charged symbolism. Others have noted that his work explores aspects of both our external and inner realities. All who engage in Regehr's work agree that it is profound and challenging.



Painting VI
Doppelgänger
Oil and acrylic on canvas
48" x 36"
2010

In response to a number of online questions for this curatorial essay, the artist took the opportunity to articulate in-depth reflections about his art, his insights and his philosophy. The following are condensed responses from the dialogue.

Nicholas Tuele (NT): Henri Bergson, in one of his essays, asks "what is the purpose of art?" In answering he comments that "for most of us we find in the authentic art experience an entering into an immediate communion with things and ourselves." Do you agree?

Duncan Regehr (DR): We are not standing outside of Nature, we are fully included, and fully engaged in the orchestration of our unfolding reality. The communion that occurs through the experience of art is really a recognition of ourselves as one with all things. Art, Nature, Reality are one, and the whole of what we are -- creation -- the singer and the song.

Truth, when brought to light through the metaphors of authentic art, leaves us in a state of rapture. Perhaps Hinduism captures the essence of this total sense of unity when it says, simply, "Thou art that." Advanced mystics, those who have attained something of this bliss, who have experienced the "thou art that" state, have enormous difficulty putting into words (codes) what is beyond the power of language to convey. Yet it is some form of art that led them there. I think most of us are confused by the barrage of codes and symbols that clutter up the intellect and our everyday lives -- so many exist merely as representations of each other. Art can lead us directly to something greater. It provides "the wakeup call," the conveyance through which the profound metaphor can exist to reveal profound truth of our reality.

What is the purpose of art? Art is the most powerful alchemy we know, the magic agent of transcendence that lifts consciousness into a more perfect state. When we lose ourselves in art, we become more real. As an artist, I seek to reveal Truth beyond the commonplace, beyond the reality that sits directly in front of me, to reconnect to the eternal through the experience of creating art. I quest, I invent, I discover, I explore. These are the ways that offer a chance of knowing it and sharing it.

NT: You have written that humans have a “design code” that “defines character, physical presence and individual destiny.” How does this manifest itself in your paintings and drawings?

DR: The idea of a design code for each of us is more of a “what if,” or a philosophy, than it is a belief. Plato held the notion that “everything has a form from which it is derived.” My work in this area began in the mid-1980s with a series of ink drawings called ‘Lifelines’— subjects presented as a matrix of complex linear patterns. Biography was suggested through the inclusion of hallmarks and objects, significant to the life of an individual. The later *Cypher* works carried many of the same aspects, but were more about how we arrive and transform along a path of destiny — subjects were semi-abstracted, never fully manifested from their design code state.



presently on her current of genesis II

Cypher Oils

Oil on canvas on board

30" x 24"

2010

Courtesy of Ms. Trudi L. Brown, QC.

It was a challenging philosophy to embrace as an artist, and I don't think I was ever truly able to convey it with the images I created. At best, my explorations may have raised some questions. My sense is that if there is a design code for each of us (one that exists beyond genes, atoms, environment etc.), then it may very well be ever-changing. It would not be a static blueprint for the conveyance of presence.

We live in a world of ever increasing design codes, bar codes, projected images, symbols, metaphors, etc. We have codes within codes. Symbols representing metaphors. The code of "texting" is a code for the code of ordinary language. It is debatable whether codes or metaphors lead us closer or further away from Truth (and is there truly stillness in Truth?). Any code presents meaning for the meaning represented by another code, symbol or metaphor. As a chain of components they mark change, transformation, movement. Do the components themselves change? They are infinite and they make up our reality. If I think about one symbol leading to another, I am reminded of the old Sanskrit word, *maya*, which means the mistaken belief that a symbol is the same as the reality it represents.

NT: You mix aspects of Western Science and Eastern Mysticism in your response and I recall you once wrote that you "hoped to convey similitude between science and spirituality" in your *Henge* paintings of the late 1970s, early 1980s.

DR: The *Henge* experience re-affirmed my sense that spirituality and science offer similar paths to greater "understanding" or "knowing." It has been a natural undertaking to express their similitude, to convey them as validations of each other. The different series of the *Transformation* body of works, include scientific themes of metamorphosis, genesis, gestation, adaptation, extinction and evolution. They are inter-woven with those of spiritual transformation -- awakenings, epiphanies, emergence, re-birth, enlightenment and transcendence.

According to quantum field theorists, the essential raw material of reality is actually non-material. The atom is made up of particles -- protons, electrons, quarks, et al, that are not material at all. They are impulses of energy and information. An amazing transformation occurs beyond the atom -- everything solid disappears. This breaks with the prevailing view that everything reduces to matter and takes science one step closer to a paradigm shift -- the whole of the universe is a quantum mirage. When we go beyond the quantum level, beyond all energy, there is nothing. Physics refers to this pre-quantum level as virtual. I think the real meeting ground or the real testing ground for science and spirituality is the non-ground of the virtual. The place beyond time and space, the Infinite, the place where the power of creation resides, omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent -- the void of potential, from which "all" emerges, all at once.

NT: Your “painting as exploration” has continued to evolve through a number of “series” among which was the *Doppelganger* series.

DR: Jung described “self” as the centre and circumference of the total psyche, the conscious and unconscious personality of human beings. According to the great contemplative traditions, every person has at least two selves: the finite, temporal, egoic self-sense, and the infinite, transcendental self, or I-AMness. The *Doppelganger* paintings offer subjects that relate to the ego-persona as alternate or “secret selves.” A doppelganger is traditionally thought of as the perfect physical double of an individual, also described as a wraith or apparition of a living person, as distinguished from a ghost. The concept of a spirit double is an ancient and widespread belief. The *Doppelganger* works may allude to that concept, but I have tried to examine the secret self in a broader sense and to explore my own dark “hauntings” -- mused out from states, wakeful and subconscious. Writing (poetry in particular) helps to draw forth and give profile to an entity, which seems only a hair’s breadth away from having actual physical presence. Obscure, un-materialized, hovering before the penumbral edge is my “other,” my monster, my scarecrow -- the bastard image of myself, cobbled and patched together with vagrant bits of psyche.

Establishing the *Doppelganger* as the manifestation of different and specific aspects of the psyche, permits it to appear as the witness self, the personification of confidence, shame or hidden desire; the daimon, the usurper, the spiteful mimic, the imaginary childhood friend, the animus, the trans-gendered being, the guardian angel, the conscience, and so on. Setting aside the definition of exact physical replication allows exploration of the alternate self as a transforming entity. When I paint, I skew the figures to resemble, rather than duplicate each other. They appear very different in character. Their separate actions and postures reveal contrasting objectives. The impetus of will, thought, manipulation, control, empathy, compassion and possession, can ultimately transform an individual -- the influence of one self over another.

NT: How do you know when a particular series of exploration is completed and it is time to go forward?

DR: I never do seem to complete them. Rather, I start to grow away from them when inspired by a new direction of exploration. A new series arrives after a new theme has made itself apparent, sometimes completely unrelated to its predecessor, but not always. I think the passage of *Corvus Rex* into *Chrysalid* is a good example of how one theme can appear to transit smoothly into the next, however, there is often no imagery made to mark how one series (theme) might lead into another. Also, ideas and notions that don’t have an initial spark are left in the dark to gestate and will perhaps ignite at a later time. The themes are never clear in the beginning, but Mystery calls. A glimmer of thought, a sense of magic, an

unbidden visitation will trigger a mental and physical frisson, invoking the urge to forge onward. Writer's pen and painter's brush start to work like dowsing rods. It is natural for me to become immersed (obsessed) in artmaking, but it is only when I've let go and started following instead of leading that something remarkable happens and a theme arrives -- a series is born, lives and grows with exploration and is perhaps completed when the "what ifs" run out.

NT: Is this the place you explore in your most recent series entitled *Omniscience*?

DR: The *Omniscience* works explore a deeper self. The self that exists within and beyond the finite realm -- the eternal self. The impetus for *Omniscience* felt like it came from outside of myself, a "visitation," but willful desire contributed to its manifestation as well. For many years I had longed to secure a way of expressing awareness as a higher level of "knowing," but it evaded me because I couldn't visualize it happening through figurative means. During a challenging episode with *Doppelgangers*, the *Omniscience* works took me by surprise. The facial images were suddenly there, burgeoning amidst the motifs I was developing for dual personalities. I realized that I had always wanted to portray a "presence" that would incline us to know that we are more than ourselves -- knowing ourselves as part of the essence of all things -- knowing ourselves to be the "knowing." A tall order, but I feel these images are close to conveying that.

For me, they are more than just an expression of all-knowing awareness, because the actual painting of them elevated my own unfolding awareness. In other words, the process was the epiphany -- the artmaking was "the awakening" happening. The imagery holds the essence of the experience, which flows ineffably straight into the viewer -- the apex of transformation -- Divinity, the sublime -- a "presence" of heart/mind/spirit, all-knowing, all-loving, eternal and infinite.

Omniscience marks a seminal change in my art, my life and my being. It can be viewed as the final stage of the *Transformation* body of work, but it is really the beginning of a new frontier. The journey that led up to it started 14 years ago with the inception of the *Corvus Rex* series. Those years carried highly influential events, among them, the death of my parents and my art manager, the gradual decline of my marriage and my withdrawal from Hollywood to a more isolated existence. It was a time of emotional and psychological challenges, but also of great revelations. My state of being is woven into the themes of the different series of *Transformation*, which has culminated with the enlightenment of *Omniscience*.

Regehr's most recent work, the *Omniscience* series, has unfolded over the past two years. There are now six very large canvases measuring as much as 72 x 96 inches. These paintings are arresting images of visages which are variously feminine, masculine or androgynous. Allusion to the Shroud of Turin may be inferred with the visage embedded on a coarse-looking "linen" background. However, there is much more infused in these compelling works and the artist is successful in his desire to create something that "flows ineffably straight into the viewer."

Meditation on some of these paintings, particularly *Untitled I* and *Untitled VII*, provides for a powerful experience. The squares of "linen" at once appear to float above the surface and then to pierce the canvas. The gestalt changes or "flips" back and forth the longer one views the work. Initially, as the viewer gazes into the eyes on the "linen" there is only the act of looking. Slowly, however, a feeling emerges that something is looking back. Continued engagement with the canvas produces ever more complex responses, including seeing oneself looking at oneself, seeing a long dead parent, seeing back through time through generation after generation, seeing to the beginning of it all. And the crackling energy firing across the canvas is the spark of creation!

Regehr's sustained and deeply considered visual art has produced an impressive oeuvre that is meaningful and important at this juncture in Western society's development. Even as we embrace the superficial, isolate ourselves through email, and live for "reality" TV, we sense that there is so much more to the human condition. Regehr shares his insights and through his art he gives us the opportunity to reconnect with the eternal wellspring of life and experience the ultimate nature of reality.



Untitled VII

Omniscience

Oil and mixed media on canvas

72" x 96"

2011



Similitude
Chrysalid Oils
Oil on canvas on panel
48" x 36"
2004



Mummy: "Frae"
Chrysalid Drawings
Ink and PrismaColor on paper
35" x 15.5"

What struck me immediately about Duncan Regehr is the ease with which he uses grand metaphysical concepts to describe his art. According to Regehr, the purpose of his art, indeed of any authentic art, is nothing less than to expose Truth, to enable the experience of a sense of unity and connectedness with one's true self, Nature, the transcendental and the eternal, to invoke a spiritual presence, and to generate an awareness of Truth beyond language. Being a literary critic, my initial reaction was one of scepticism, as I tend to view absolutes like truth or authenticity as constructs and identity as a mask and a performance rather than a substance.

Yet as a scholar of Romanticism, I also could not dismiss Duncan Regehr's conception of art. Having delved more into his works, I would now even go as far as to suggest that there is a subtle but undeniable Romantic affinity, both in Regehr's method and in specific works, especially the more recent *Omniscience*, *Revenant* and *Gateway* series.

The Romantics considered our physical reality to be but one of many equally legitimate, interconnected and interacting realities. The purpose of art, according to the Romantics, was to connect our finite self to these other transcendental, spiritual and psychic spheres that lie both beneath and beyond our immediate reality and sense of self. Crucially, however, the Romantics did not believe that the awareness or truth revealed through art could be represented in a static, mimetic form. They called for an art that is ruptured, allegorical, fluid, and that manifests itself as what the German Romantic poet Friedrich Schlegel calls *ewiges Werden*, eternal becoming (*Athenaeum* Fragment 116). The Romantics rejected any notion of art as a finite, completed object and conceptualized art instead as a continual unfolding and dynamic interaction, because



Gateway IV
Doppelganger
Oil and acrylic on canvas
48" x 36"
2011



Untitled II
Omniscience
Oil and mixed media on canvas
48" x 72"
2010

the truth of art is ultimately the very creative process itself that generates the individual finite works of art.

Romantic art is therefore truly at home in liminal spaces, in boundaries or thresholds, what the German Romantic poet Novalis calls a *Zwischenreich*, an intermediate realm (*Heinrich von Ofterdingen*), for it is only from an in-between position that art can place the visible and the invisible dimensions of reality in a dialogue with each other. This dialogue between the spheres in turn is the very incarnation of life. As Novalis writes, "The seat of the soul is where inner world and outer world touch. Where they interact, it is at every point of that interaction" (*Pollen Fragment 19*). The purpose of art thus would ultimately be to seek out and to make manifest as many such points of interaction as possible.

This is the precise sense in which I would characterize Duncan Regehr's paintings as Romantic. His more recent paintings can all be described as threshold-pieces. Especially in the *Omniscience* paintings, the metaphor of the threshold is so prominent and complex that the entire series can be considered a meditation on this concept. What also contributes to the sense of liminality is the inherently paradoxical nature of these paintings. I intuitively associate the idea of omniscience with a sense of vastness, and all *Omniscience* paintings are suggestive of a vast, undefined background space. Yet the "linen" shape in the foreground, though somewhat transparent, imposes itself as a separator that obstructs the view of that vast space, thus placing the viewer clearly outside the painting. At the same time, this foregrounded 'linen' shape establishes eye contact with the viewer. Paradoxically, the separator invites us in. Moreover, the very distinct, lightning-like lines that cut through the canvas establish continuity between background

and foreground and support the feeling of being pulled into the painting. As viewers, we are thus placed on a threshold as we are made to experience both a gulf and an intense sense of connectedness.

But these lightning-like lines are also yet another manifestation of the threshold as they literally cut through and thus rupture the "linen" shape. The separator is itself divided, resulting in an intensification of the sense of hovering and liminality as there are multiple locations of "here" and "there". However, these lines are not only metaphors of division. The idea of omniscience invariably also evokes some sense of a presence of the divine, and in some of the *Omniscience* pieces, especially *Untitled IV, VIII* and *IX*, which are shaped with very dynamic, fluid, curved strokes, those lines almost have the character of divine breath that calls the canvas to life. To me, these dividing lines therefore resonate with Novalis' idea of soul as the points of interaction between the spheres. As a consequence, the eye contact with the painting almost achieves a genuine sense of communication, and the threshold finally transforms into dynamic motion into and within the vast space of the canvas.



Untitled IV
Omniscience
Oil and mixed media on canvas
60" x 48"
2011



Ring
Revenant
Oil on canvas
48" x 60"
2008



Merlin's Gate
Henge
Oil on canvas
37.5" x 30.5"
1986



Sol
Lifeline
Pen & Ink
24" x 18"



Corbie Twins

Corvus Rex - Scarecrow Oils

Oil on canvas on board

40" x 50"

2002

Courtesy of Judge Robert Metzger and Dr. Susan Metzger

Sunrise

Dawn is the smallest bird
From the sill of a distant sea
Opalescent wings fledge
Lift the molten stone of day

I am anchored to an earthen sea
Pockets bagged with dross
My chest, a sunken ballast
Harbours primary sin

The smallest bird draws near
Soaring, growing as he sings
Huge feathers brush the stone afloat
An easy grace, flash of heaven

The great span sails over, ignores me
Passing shadow, load of night
No heaven here, no song of levitation
This begging stance, a mimicry of flight

Crucified with patience
My leaden arms reach out
Gravity's roost of welcome
Only waiting for wings.

Raven Eyes

Obsidian orbs glint

Stolen rings

Bottle cap

Rusty nail

Gems of equal measure.



Corvus Rex II

Corvus Rex Birds

Oil and mixed media on canvas

30" x 40"

2008

Courtesy of Judge Robert Metzger and Dr. Susan Metzger

Feathers

Between the corner and the window
Where your wings lie on the floor
There is a gap of sleeping atmosphere
No dust plays, no molecules stir
Naked, it holds absence

I have stroked the wings, lifted them
Turned them over to study shy feathers
Caressed soft protection
Felt strength from quills that bind
Before settling the wings, exactly as before

I am a foreign substance
Disturbing in this place
Awaiting density, reckoning

I will watch the naked place as if it was a nest
Scan from corner to window
Sense faint vibration
Ripple of thought that wakes sleeping air

You will not arrive before your space is born



Quill III
Corvus Rex Quill Drawings
Ink on paper
24" x 18"



Quill VII
Corvus Rex Quill Drawings
Ink on paper
24" x 18"

The Rest

I will take the rest here
Beside the egg that breaks its own shell
Silkworm that foresakes her own sleep

Here, I breathe wind of cause and effect
Unravel sense of what I thought was mine
Here, I dream restless change

And like a serpent that sheds his own skin
I will wait

For what I belong to
Until the whole of the rest
Comes to be.

Abidance (Chrysalis IX)
Chrysalid Oils
Oil on canvas on panel
36" x 24"
2005





Forebearance (detail)
Chrysalid Silks
Ink and wax pigment on raw silk
40" x 20"
2005

Silk Dream

We, like Bombyx Mori
Dream-weave our cocoons
Breathe an ebbing sleep
Heart of the matter

Upon awakening
Forget the dream
Unravel wings of awareness
Float as angels to light

Coloured Rain

For awhile she floats by with everything in place:
Cartoons and Spring are filed under
Volcano and Soaring Hearts,
Flight changes with decaying totems or threat.

Because she is never the same
You ponder the force behind, why
It does not change or sleep.

Now she bids for coloured rain
From golden deserts that were seas once
Where fossils capered before suspension
Before limestone sealed coelacanth,
Carbon Faerie to petrified forest.

Fantasy could never be found
Curated among molecules,
Shaken, withered by stories,
Spirit had to take rest.

All your scattered colours splash down
Hell-bent through mud and sediment of others
Settling,
For comfortable cocoons in bedrock.



Coelacanth: Transition V Endurance

Chrysalid Drawings
Ink and prismaColor on paper
18" x 24"

Ukok

I find you in pastures of heaven
Beneath capricious skies
Below a meadow's bed of aster
Cyclamen, oxeye wild

Alone amongst painted dead
With cord, paste, bone, ash
Hollow chrysalid, gold embraced
Cold stone of an old throne

Fragility in stillness held
I see all parts of me in you
My genes are in your eyes
For a moment I am almost not here

Find me
Find me in some pasture of heaven

You waited beneath mountains I have climbed
I arrive at meadows you have left
I bathe in rivers where you wept
I was blown here by wind that was your breath

This time filled place without us
Not together
Shares only the past of us, without us
Forever

But find me
Find me and this past will share us now
Find me and these pastures of heaven
Will never change beneath the sky.



Mummy: "Ledi"
Chrysalid Drawings
Ink and PrismaColor on paper
35" x 14"



Circe: The Enchantment
Magic
Oil on canvas on panel
24" x 30"

Some Magic

It is difficult to know and be the only one who knows
Angels do not work alone,
For protecting their backs are dragons, the forgotten race,
Ancient reptiles visiting now only in childhood dreams.

It is difficult to know and be the only one who knows
Gargoyles protecting temples of Jesus,
Who is but the latest Sun-king,
Are merely dragons' men at arms:
And don't care an ort about temples.

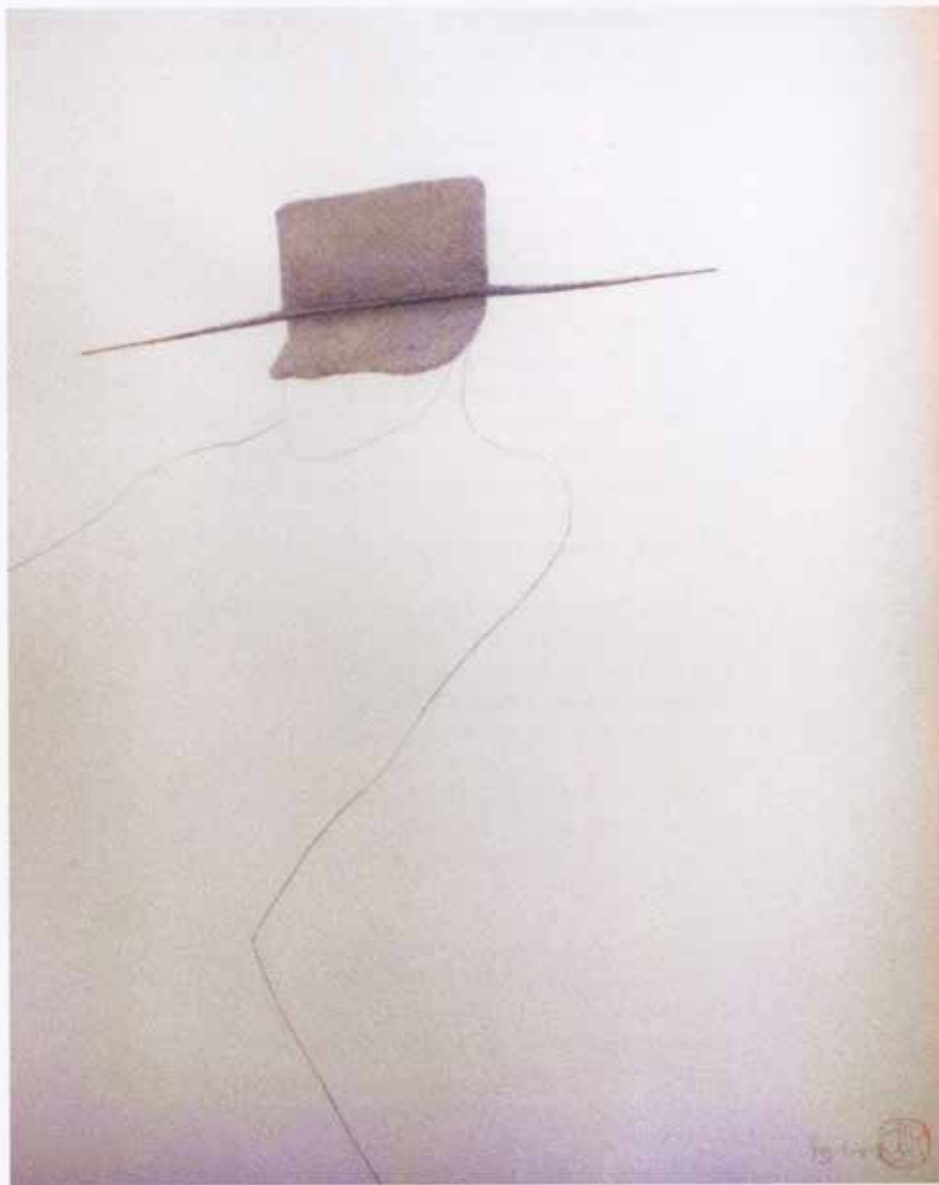
It is difficult to know and be the only one who knows
That often people speak to you without voice,
In ways only your essence can hear.
Necromancer's eyes flashing through electricity once said,
"Watch me as years go by. I will bring you magic."
I watched and waited, being schooled in obedience,
For more of the message,
But the tempter, like the raven, did not expound.

It is difficult to know and be the only one who knows
Why dark warrior chose Dragon's Eye
It was to say, "You watched these years and
Lived dearly for the time. Drink now
It is magic promised when first I spoke to you."

It is difficult to know and be the only one who knows
I expected the draught to taste otherwise
More fruit, more nut, more anything but
My own blood.

It is difficult to know and be the only one who knows
That, whatever he thought he was doing when he said
Words that would summon my soul,
He was breaking chains that held me flat.

It is difficult to know and be the only one who knows
But we each have a price we must pay for the proffered chalice
What stands before you now on wavering, untried limbs
Has no objection to the burden of this awareness.



Fox VI
Fox Graphics
Watercolor, ink and
prismacolor on paper
17.5" x 14"
2005

The Real Robin Hood

Opening night I was drunk with you.

Moustache worn under slanted fedora,
I played your mask with slanted smile,
Sang eulogy in a theatre of myth,
Faked you for encore—in follow-spot shone,
I slipped friction of your killing fame.

Morning after,
In steam, distorted I stand
Naked before a naked light,
Inspecting traces, greasepaint wiped
From cornered eyes.

I release blade upon neck,
Scrape over contour,
Re-sculpt, wincing
Dream-shape the cartoon.

Wag boy, (the real Robin Hood)
Peers around sweating 'mirror mirror',
Twinkling, places finger beside nose
And leaps, (always the hero)
Through storm and mists
Into place behind my eyes,
To govern, to rehearse, weathering the day
Enthroned for other's fancies.

Gladiator

Blood maws raised, amphitheatre howls,
All armoured meat be-damned,
Final contest, red upon sand.

Alessandra sits her hero's knee,
Girlish sigh swells dangerous lap,
A natural shift occurs.

Vanquishing all child in her,
Seventeen years her filly's dance,
On a single, sweet breath, flown.
The champion breaks.

Tiny open kisses slip steely helm's resolve,
A willow's press to tempered thigh
Melts violent scar, ramparts slide.

Beneath stroke of virginal finger
Muscle strains, adrenalin steep,
Volcanic heart quakes,
Bracing sword, hero wills to rise.

For Pompeii's baying crowd outside,
Accusing fingers, damning thumbs,
Grown men splayed in bloody waves,
A lesser challenge than the maid.



Babel III with carved plinth
Helm Sculptures
Bronze
15" / 37" x 7" x 7"



Trepan I with carved plinth
Helm Sculptures
Bronze
16" / 37" x 7" x 7"



adjunct from the
course of genius
Cypher Oils
Oil on canvas on
board
22" x 18"

Fuller Circle

Eye blinks, waves crash Milky Way,
Poetry, Geometry cycle
With colour and music,
Drift into minds as one line.

Patterns settled upon night owl's wing
Refract in sunlight, abstract,
Stretch along tabby cat's back
Alike to python's blaze.

Coursing veins of one leaf
Are veins of rivers flowing,
Lemming herds flood seaward,
Tides of common will.

To a white lily, blows scent –
Blue sky, babies and death,
While Spring bursts under rows of ants,
Ploughing up old avalanche slide.

Nudged by imagination or breath
Come grains of sand to a cave wall,
Falling out as crystals, God drawings,
Fused to fossils by dragons' heat.

Thought and whisper join air
Known well from times indifferent,
Rising to heaven or Milky Way
Spirit is a Mote.

The Final Stroke

Before going,
She listened to summer wind-chimes, teacups
Stirring in the hall,
She wrapped herself with her friend, the coat,
Closed closet full of hangers without skins—
Names jostling in darkness.

Have I outlived everyone?

*My cupboard is bare,
Thoughts repeat themselves,
Like Nursery rhymes,
They are old company.*

*Each dawn, my walk in the woods reminds me—
I am not pretending
To be,
I can be there, from here.*

*Has confusion made a pattern?
Like my walk in the cemetery,
Where graves are scattered in order,*

Surely I can be here, from there.



Past
Revenant
Oil on canvas
36" x 48"
2006



Painting V
Doppelganger
Oil and acrylic on canvas
48" x 60"
2011

Something to be cautious about

My old room

Stories enter with me louder than the past.

Five walls flood. Experience falling over itself

rushing to change into memory.

Palimpsest, leaping about with fury: sweet scary mortality.

There it sat grown to giant boy size

whistling visible lines through glass teeth.

Toe tap, finger tattoo on blue counterpane

"counting on you" wire dance wool speak

sgraffiato in low air.

I had opened childhood doors for it.

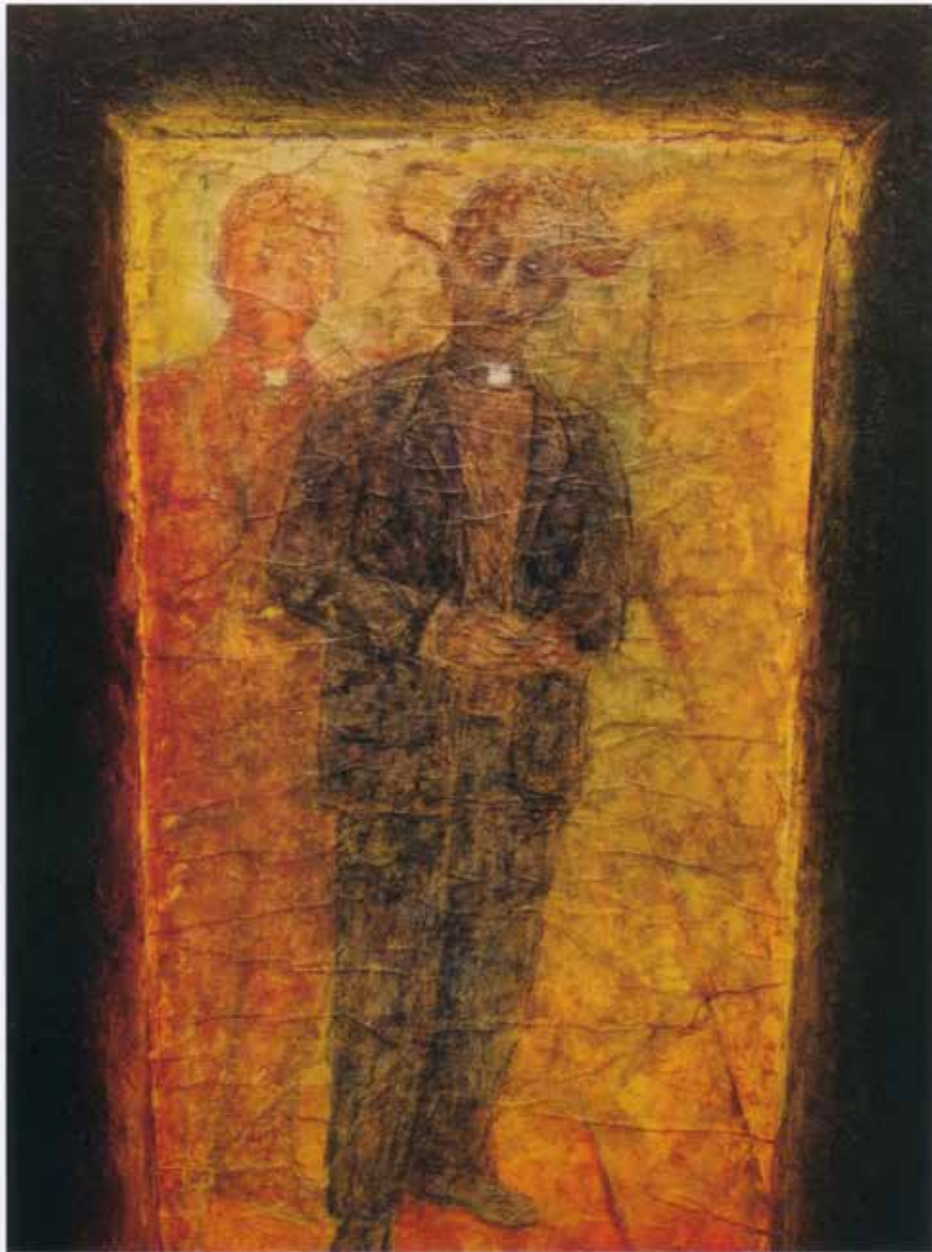
Shared plate chair knife

hands over my whisper invisible injury.

Something to be cautious about.

It could annihilate you if it so desired.

If it saw you not noticing.



Gateway VI
Doppelganger
Oil and acrylic on canvas
40" x 30"
2011



Untitled I

Omniscience

Oil and mixed media on canvas

48" x 72"

2010

One light

Our energy extending into plumes
Long beyond our heads,
So pliant yet complete,

Each of us a candle turning,
Flourishing with purest heat confined,
We flicker aware in stillness

And left to spiral, will burgeon,
Stirring air we know well from always
To thickness greater than boundary,

And then to blossom longer blooms,
Until all flows, as time in time conjoins
Our soul, the single tide of glow.

*Citation read on the occasion of the
Granting of the degree of
Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts to
Dr. Duncan Peter Regehr
By the Senate of the University of Victoria
November 10, 2008*



Mr. Chancellor, it is both an honour and pleasure to present Duncan Regehr who is perhaps best described as a true "man for all seasons"; actor, painter, sculptor, poet, writer, athlete, traveler, collector of art and artifacts, a Canadian who has achieved acclaim in this country and abroad. He is a man possessed with a quiet dignity and modesty, a passionate intellect and, above all, an enormous talent. In all he undertakes he has distinguished himself as an individual sure of himself, principled, and one who is unlikely to simply "go with the current fashion".

Growing up in an environment where creativity flourished, he was and still is greatly influenced and inspired by his artist father, Peter Regehr. Not all of his time, however, was occupied with sketching and painting; he was encouraged to train as a figure skater and learn equestrian skills among other athletic endeavors. In his teens Duncan began training at the Bastion Theatre School here in Victoria and then, in 1969, joined Victoria Fair, a professional repertory company produced by UVic's Department of Theatre. He later performed with the Phoenix Summer Theatre, Bastion Theatre and the Victoria Theatre Guild before setting off across the country, performing professionally with a number of regional theatres. Finally arriving in Ontario, he became a member of the Stratford Festival where he continued to further develop his athletic skills with training in swordplay under the guidance of the festival's Fight Masters. He also began to pursue the "art" of boxing, a sport in which he excelled! Had he seriously followed a career as a boxer, there's little question, he "...coulda been a contender." But other opportunities arose. Mr. Regehr's talent was quickly recognized by producers and casting directors and his career in television was launched. He appeared in numerous productions, winning the title in a popular series called "Matt and Jenny" which ran on CBC for 26 episodes in the 1979 - 1980 season.

Not surprisingly, Hollywood beckoned and he made the transition to Los Angeles where he soon found himself cast in a variety of film and television presentations such as "The Blue and The Grey", "The Last Days of Pompeii", "StarTrek: Deep Space Nine", the highly acclaimed "My Wicked, Wicked Ways" in which he played Errol Flynn, and, of course, the wonderful television series in which he played the title role, "Zorro", that ran from 1989 to 1993.

Throughout this very active period, Mr. Regehr never neglected his love and passion for painting. He worked tirelessly and intensely. In his journal where he records a visit to Stonehenge in England, he recalls a delightful elderly tour guide commenting to him that "People never look for the magic, so they never see it, let alone believe in it." Later, upon departing the ancient site, Duncan "...was reminded, once again, that everything is a part of everything else, and I made myself a promise – always to look for the magic." That "magic" manifests itself in all his work. Through colour, form and complex imagery there is an enchanting and alluring theatricality to his art – due in no small part to his love of the theatre.

His work has been exhibited throughout Canada, the United States and in Europe and is included in such public art collections such as the Smithsonian Institute Southern California Archives, the Contemporary Museum in Baltimore, the J Paul Getty Museum, and the Kunsthallen in Copenhagen. Mr. Regehr received the American Vision Award of Distinction in the Arts in 1996. He was granted the lifetime appellation, "Royal Canadian Artist" when he was honoured by the Royal Canadian Academy of Art in 2000 for his outstanding artistic achievements. He is also the author of several books that feature both his poetry and prose and page after page of his art work, which afford the reader an opportunity to share and enjoy a serious and often delightful glimpse into his personal world.

With extraordinary creativity and imagination, with quiet modesty and strength, with visual and verbal grace and beauty, he passionately continues to explore new and exciting worlds of imagery. In his own words:

"I am the sum of my art
Therein lies my life."

Mr. Chancellor, I present Duncan Regehr for the degree of Doctor of Fine Arts, *honoris causa*.

Written and presented by
Prof. John Krich
Professor Emeritus
Department of Theatre
University of Victoria

Corvus Rex series:*Scarecrow oil paintings***Corbie Twins**

Duncan Regehr

40" x 50"

2002

Oil on canvas on board

*Courtesy of Judge Robert Metzger and Dr. Susan Metzger***Nocturne**

Duncan Regehr

45" x 35"

2000

Oil on canvas on board

Sunrise

Duncan Regehr

n.d.

Poem

*Raven oil paintings***Corvus Rex II**

Duncan Regehr

30" x 40"

2008

Oil and mixed media on canvas

*Courtesy of Judge Robert Metzger and Dr. Susan Metzger***Raven Eyes**

Duncan Regehr

n.d.

Poem

*Quill drawings***Quill VII**

Duncan Regehr

24" x 18"

n.d.

Ink on paper

Quill III

Duncan Regehr

24" x 18"

n.d.

Ink on paper

Feathers

Duncan Regehr

n.d.

Poem

Chrysalid series:*Chrysalid oil paintings***Similitude**

Duncan Regehr

48" x 36"

2004

Oil on canvas on panel

Abidance

Duncan Regehr

36" x 24"

2005

Oil on canvas on panel

Benevolence

Duncan Regehr

48" x 52"

2005

Oil on canvas

*Chrysalid silk paintings***Prevenance**

Duncan Regehr

44" x 20"

2005

Ink and wax pigment on raw silk

Forebearance

Duncan Regehr

40" x 20"

2005

Ink and wax pigment on silk

Silk Dream

Duncan Regehr

n.d.

Poem

Coelacanth

Transition V – Endurance

Duncan Regehr
18" x 24"
n.d.
Ink and prisma-color on paper

Transition IV – Flight

Duncan Regehr
24" x 18"
n.d.
Ink and prisma-color on paper

Coloured Rain

Duncan Regehr
n.d.
Poem

Mummies

Ledi

Duncan Regehr
35" x 14"
n.d.
Ink and prisma-color on paper

Frae

Duncan Regehr
35" x 15.5"
n.d.
Ink and prisma-color on paper

Ukok

Duncan Regehr
n.d.
Poem

Magic series:

Magic oil paintings

Circe: The Enchantment

Duncan Regehr
24" x 30"
n.d.
Oil on canvas on panel

Pandora's Box

Duncan Regehr
30" x 24"
2007
Oil on canvas on panel

The Frog Prince

Duncan Regehr
32.5" x 24"
n.d.
Oil on canvas on panel

Gepetto

Duncan Regehr
30" x 24"
2007
Oil on canvas

Some Magic

Duncan Regehr
n.d.
Poem

Fox Graphics series:

Fox VI

Duncan Regehr
17.5" x 14"
2005
Watercolor, ink and prisma-color on paper

Fox VXi

Duncan Regehr
17.5" x 14"
2005
Watercolor, ink and prisma-color on paper

The Real Robin Hood

Duncan Regehr
n.d.
Poem

Helm Sculpture series:**Gaul w/ Carved Plinth**

Duncan Regehr
17" / 37" x 7" x 7"
n.d.
Bronze sculpture

Trepan I w/ Carved Plinth

Duncan Regehr
16" / 37" x 7" x 7"
n.d.
Bronze sculpture

Babel III w/ Carved Plinth

Duncan Regehr
15" / 37" x 7" x 7"
n.d.
Bronze sculpture

Primus w/ Carved Plinth

Duncan Regehr
15" / 37" x 7" x 7"
n.d.
Bronze sculpture

Goth I w/ Carved Plinth

Duncan Regehr
15" / 37" x 7" x 7"
n.d.
Bronze sculpture

Goth III w/ Carved Plinth

Duncan Regehr
15" / 37" x 7" x 7"
n.d.
Bronze sculpture

Gladiator

Duncan Regehr
n.d.
Poem

Cypher series:

Cypher oil paintings

presently on her current of genesis II

Duncan Regehr
30" x 24"
2010
Oil on canvas on board
Courtesy of Ms. Trudi L. Brown, QC

nearly prepared for his calling

Duncan Regehr
22" x 18"
2008
Oil on canvas on board

adjunct from the course of genius

Duncan Regehr
22" x 18"
n.d.
Oil on canvas on board

Fuller Circle

Duncan Regehr
n.d.
Poem

Revenant series :

Revenant oil paintings

Past

Duncan Regehr
36" x 48"
2006
Oil on canvas

Ring

Duncan Regehr
48" x 60"
2008
Oil on canvas

The Final Stroke

Duncan Regehr
n.d.
Poem

Doppelganger series:

Doppelganger oil paintings

Painting IV

Duncan Regehr
48" x 72"
2011
Oil on canvas

Painting V

Duncan Regehr
48" x 60"
2011
Oil on canvas

Painting VI

Duncan Regehr
48" x 36"
2010
Oil and acrylic on canvas

Something to be Cautious About

Duncan Regehr
Poem

Gateway paintings

Gateway IV

Duncan Regehr
48" x 36"
2011
Oil and mixed media on canvas

Gateway VI

Duncan Regehr
40" x 30"
2011
Oil and mixed media on canvas

Possession

Duncan Regehr
n.d.
Poem

Omniscience series:

Untitled I

Duncan Regehr
48" x 72"
2010
Oil and mixed media on canvas

Untitled II

Duncan Regehr
48" x 72"
2010
Oil and mixed media on canvas

Untitled IV

Duncan Regehr
60" x 48"
2011
Oil and mixed media on canvas

Untitled V

Duncan Regehr
48" x 60"
2011
Oil and mixed media on canvas

Untitled VII

Duncan Regehr
72" x 96"
2011
Oil and mixed media on canvas

Untitled IX

Duncan Regehr
72" x 96"
2011
Oil and mixed media on canvas

One Light

Duncan Regehr
n.d.
Poem



**Coelacanth: Transition IV
Flight**

Chrysalid Drawings
Ink and prismacolor on
paper
24" x 18"

Exhibition Curators:

Caroline Riedel, Curator of Collections
 Cindy Vance, Collections Coordinator
 Nicholas Tuele, Guest Curator

Interim Director, University of Victoria Art Collections:

Joy Davis

Curatorial Team, University of Victoria Art Collections:

Alex King, Curatorial Assistant (Humanities)
 Elyse Portal, Curatorial Assistant (Fine Arts, Co-op)
 Meg Sugrue, Curatorial Assistant (History in Art)

University of Victoria Farquhar Auditorium Technical Staff:

Mike Figursky, Cam Northover, Mark Hovey, Darcy Douglas

Catalogue Design and Photographic Documentation:

Elyse Portal

Photographic Editing:

Elyse Portal
 Meg Sugrue

Printing:

Digital Direct

Special thanks to:

Prof. John Krich and Dr. Elena Pnevmonidou