



OPALKA GALLERY

PRESS RELEASE

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EXHIBITION: Conrad Atkinson: *Constantly Contesting*

CURATOR: Miranda McClintic

DATES: January 26 through February 29, 2004

RECEPTION: Friday, February 6, 4:30 to 7p.m.

EXHIBITION HOURS: Monday-Friday 10a.m. to 4:30p.m.
Monday-Thursday evenings 6 to 8p.m.
Sundays, noon to 4p.m.

LOCATION: Opalka Gallery
The Sage Colleges
140 New Scotland Avenue
Albany, NY 12208

CONTACT: Jim Richard Wilson, Director
VOICE: 518/292-7742
WEB: www.sage.edu/SCA/opalka
EMAIL: opalka@sage.edu
FAX: 518/292-1903

Art and politics mix in recent work by internationally renowned British artist **Conrad Atkinson**. Through paintings, drawings, ceramics, textiles, and prints, Atkinson transforms his strongly held beliefs into art with humor and skill. He creates visually compelling interpretations of 9/11, violence, AIDS, West Nile virus, immigration, art world politics, control and manipulation of information, third world labor, ENRON, the proliferation of landmines, and beauty.

Many works in this exhibition come directly from London's Courtauld Institute of Art Gallery where Atkinson was the first contemporary artist to respond to the collection and install his own art among the masterpieces that inspired them. His depictions wounds and scars from Renaissance crucifixion paintings created "a disconcerting dialogue between present and past," according to the *Times* of London, which cited the show as one of the three best of the year nationwide.

In addition to newspaper works from the 1980s, and clothing embroidered with images of viruses and epigrams, there will be two series of paintings about the events of 9/11. Also included is a new wall installation based on wounds depicted in paintings from the Metropolitan Museum of

Art's collection. Ceramic sculptures of landmines are another prominent aspect of this exhibition, reflecting Atkinson's role as the Official Artist of the U.S. Landmines Campaign from 1997 to 1998. Personalizing the political, Atkinson extends the conceptual premises of his art into action.

Re-presenting emblems, headlines, advertisements, popular music, stereotypes, and cultural icons, Atkinson's pieces demonstrate that our understanding of the world is determined by conflicting information differing in source, format and content.

About the Artist

Conrad Atkinson was born in Cumbria in the north of England in 1940, from a family of coal miners. He earned degrees from Carlisle College of Art, Liverpool College of Art and the Royal Academy Schools and in 2002, became the first practicing artist to be appointed Distinguished Visiting Professor to the Courtauld Institute of Art.

Atkinson's films from 1970, "Industrial Relations Bill" and "X Film" have recently been acquired for the permanent collection of Britain's Tate Gallery. An acknowledged influence on younger generations of artists in Britain and the United States, Atkinson has exhibited internationally since the 1970's and his works are in the permanent collections at the Tate Gallery, the Victoria and Albert Museum, The British Museum, the Australian National Gallery, the Pushkin Museum in Moscow, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Conrad Atkinson: *Constantly Contesting* was curated by Miranda McClintic and organized by White Box, NYC. Conrad Atkinson shows courtesy of Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, NYC.

Additional information and photos available on request

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