



# *Shadow Princesses*

Deborah Forbes



# Shadow Princesses

Deborah Forbes



Deborah Forbes' installation *Shadow Princesses* is grounded in and celebrates interaction, collaboration and process. Integral to her work is the notion 'nothing is lost', and we trust that this publication, which is produced in conjunction with the exhibition, honors that principle in conveying some of the ideas, thoughts and conjecture both underlying and provoked by the work, as well as a sense of the exhibition's rich and subtle complexities.

Contributing to the ongoing dialogue of the exhibition are writer Jennifer Eiserman, whom we thank for her perceptive, intriguing and elegant exploration of *Shadow Princesses*, photographer Dan Engel and Michael Delorme of Hide Away Studios Inc., whose images beautifully communicate many aspects of the work, and Fishten Design, whom we thank for publication design which is finely attuned to the art it conveys and a delight to the eye and mind. We also thank Artcite Inc. for their contribution towards the publication.

Artist Deborah Forbes' practice is based in exploration and in research which is as far-reaching as it is inclusive, encompassing everything from Velázquez to tabloids, from new ideas in science and the arts to children's play. In *Shadow Princesses* she renews the lives of murdered child beauty queen JonBenet Ramsay and the tragic figure of the Infant Margarita, placing them in the company of contemporary girl-children, in the person of Hannah, as participants within its densely layered and engrossing visual and

aural experience. Deborah Forbes' unwavering and good-humoured dedication to all aspects of the project has been an inspiration.

Joanne Marion, *Curator of Art*  
Esplanade Art Gallery

Kim Houghtaling, *Director & Curator*  
Art Gallery of Swift Current

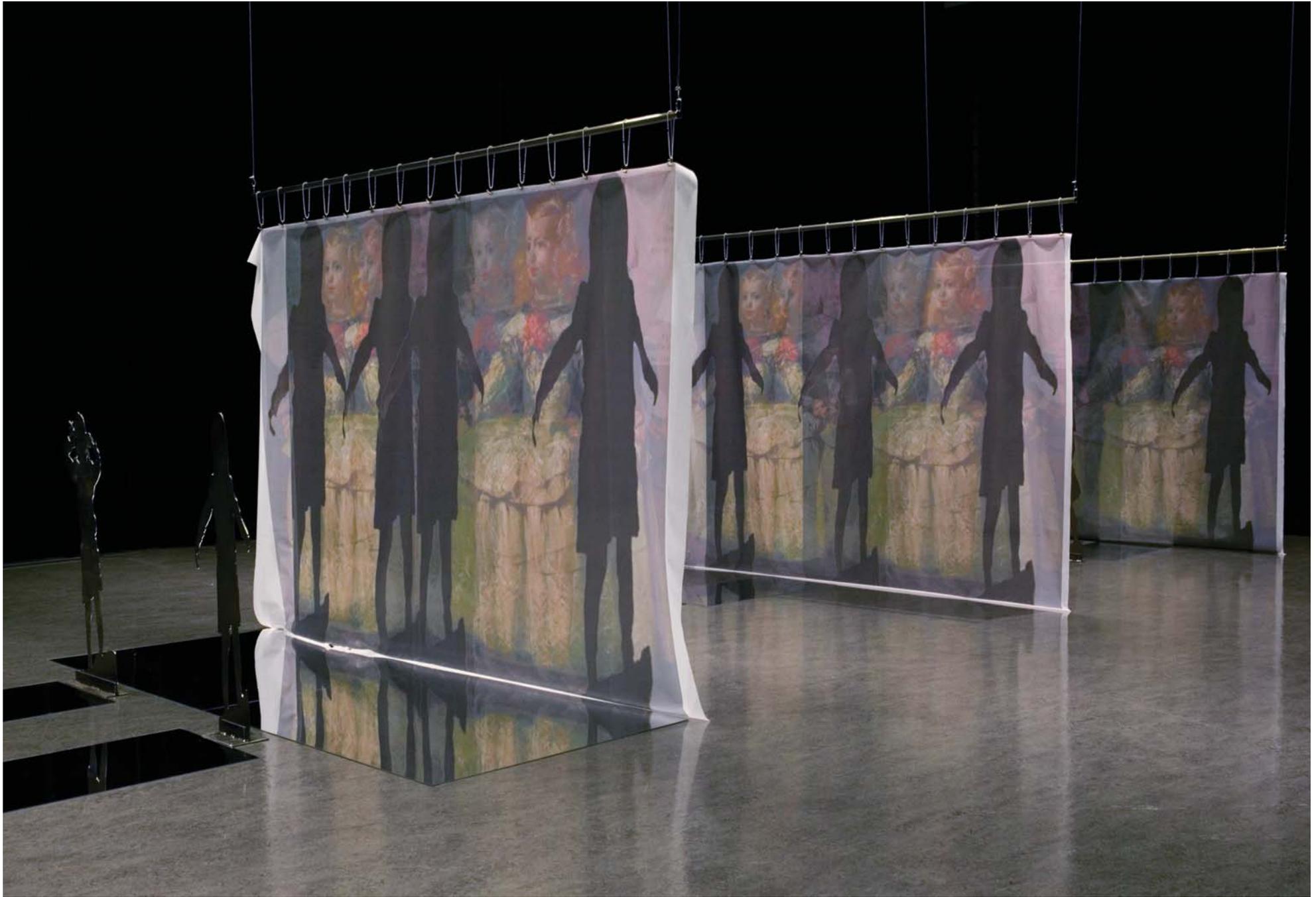
Carl Lavoy, *Curator*  
Thames Art Gallery

**Artist Acknowledgments**

Deborah Forbes would like to thank Jill Timushka for steel management, Rory Mahony for sound and video, Hannah for her shadows and the Alberta Foundation for the Arts for its generous support.

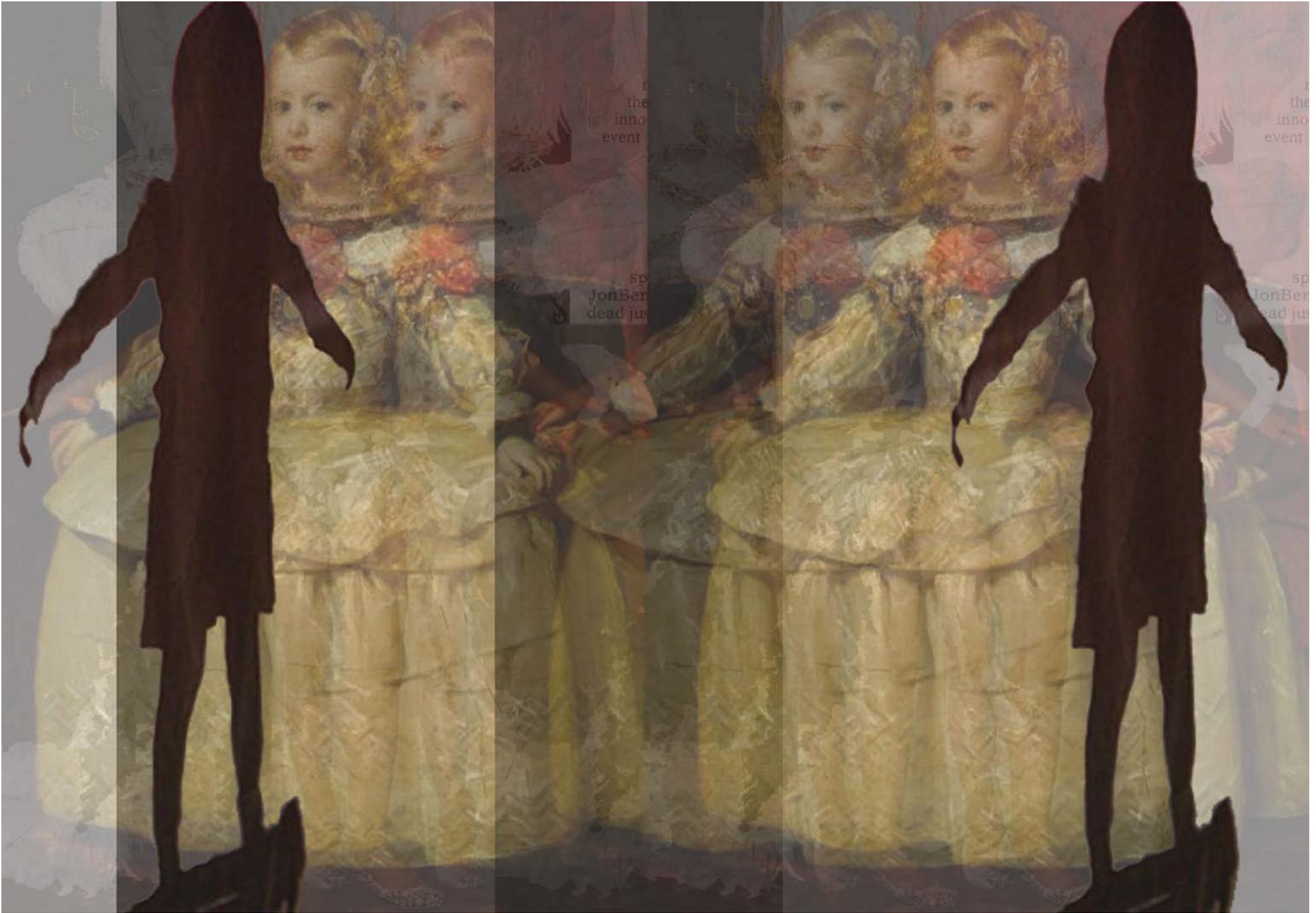
Shadow Princesses is an interactive video installation consisting of: three digital prints on polyester voile, each 7' x 10'; four 4' x 2' x 1/8" steel figures with stands; two 4' x 5' plexiglass floor mirrors; four 4' x 2' plexiglass floor mirrors; dvd looped projection (four minutes long); installation dimensions variable, 2007.

Images (next four pgs):  
Installation shot without  
projections | Image for  
digital print on voile:  
four shadows | Image  
for digital print on voile:  
three shadows | Image  
for digital print on voile:  
two shadows









# Shadow Princesses



*A correspondence  
between Joanne  
Marion, Curator of Art,  
Esplanade Art Gallery  
and Deborah Forbes,  
Artist*

Through and upon layers of ethereal, suspended veils, we catch a fleeting glimpse of pretty, childish faces, diminutive figures posed to please, a decorative display of petticoats, farthingales, frills and feathers.

The room is dark: as we move towards and between the draped hangings, our own shadows play with the frozen images of JonBenet Ramsay and Velázquez's Infanta Margarita, which sway and drift in currents of air. A girlish figure, laser cut from a thick steel sheet, casts a small but knife-edged shadow,

which grows softer, more amorphous and expansive as it appears on veil after veil.

A trill of childish laughter, followed by the gentle sounds of water, grass rustling and fire's light crackling insinuate themselves into the quiet space, while projected imagery of the serene natural elements flicker, looping endlessly over the tragic princesses.



# The Quick and the Farthingale

**Joanne Marion:** In your installation, the two 'shadow princesses' depicted on the hanging veils are both tragic and famous children – one a murdered child beauty queen, the other a pawn of 17th century Spanish imperialism. Separated by 400 years, they are unknown to us as real children, yet their images have become archetypal. They are powerful in this regard, but simultaneously completely powerless – trapped by societal notions of the female, trapped by the pretty, pliant hoops of their farthingales. The figures of JonBenet Ramsay and Infanta Margarita are translucent, but the steel figures laser-cut of silhouettes of a living girl are decidedly solid: they cast large and strong shadows across the princesses. Yet they too are frozen and stationary. The viewer and her/his shadow are the only moving human presence in the work.

**Deborah Forbes:** There's a line from *On Beauty* by Zadie Smith, "They all look like princesses – but what steel must lurk within."<sup>1</sup> Steel may not seem a material with an easy affinity for the idea of princess or shadow but I can't see them in any other: raw steel is

scarred, crisp, strong, takes on the temperature of its surroundings and contacts, reflects the projections, and is man-made. The steel figures themselves are at times camouflaged by the projections and from some angles become invisible. From other angles, they come and go as the light in the projection changes. At times, they almost seem animate. Because the steel figures are created directly from live-girl shadows, they have a quality of animation that I intend to act as an invitation or provocation for the viewer to interact. The steel figures that cast the shadows are clipped from an instant in time, the instant in which the real-live-girl shadow model was moving. Real time involvement belongs to the viewer. I have seen children, as they get to know the work, position themselves so that their shadows look like they're holding hands with the shadows cast by the steel figures. One little girl, Bailey, lay on the floor so that her shadow was a landscape in which the princesses could exist. She also became a bear and made her shadow loom threateningly over the princess shadows. The piece comes alive as soon as the interactions start.

Images (next two pgs):  
Installation view: fire  
from front left | Child  
participant documentation:  
Bailey as 'the Bear'





# On Time and Nature

**JM:** In *Shadow Princesses* the elements of time stand out for me, with all the thoughts and emotions we have about time: interruptions such as death; iterations such as natural cycles of seasons or weather or ecology; and the idea that ‘nothing is lost’, while at the same time, everything is.

What also stands out for me is that, while nature is beautifully and soothingly evoked in the installation, the evocation is itself digital, unnatural, with unchanging loops rather than natural, evolving iterations.

**DF:** For me the concept “nothing is lost” is key. The first law of thermal dynamics is a statement of conservation of energy: In any process, the total energy of the universe remains constant. Energy cannot be created or destroyed, only changed from one form to another. Even in the dimming and then dulling of perception in the middle and last screens, the images are still there. In fact the cast shadows have become larger; the screens are simply existing in a place that is just at the edge of

human perception. Add a little light and more is revealed, except of course that the shadows are dependent on a single strong light source. Add some mirrors and as Buddhist Jan van der Wettering writes, “I see everything which happens reflected in everything else.”<sup>2</sup>

Extending this more broadly into life on earth and the cosmos, I agree with Rupert Sheldrake and his theory of morphic resonance; every bit of matter has within it every fragment of matter or energy that has ever contributed to its present state. Sheldrake’s assertion that this energy is also emanated in a morphic field makes sense to me.<sup>3</sup> The princesses Margarita and JonBenet Ramsay are dead; their images live on. In the screens their images are raggedly fused – JonBenet is visible through the Infanta Margarita, her legs visible through the folds of the Infanta’s opulent dress. The steel figures, whose shadows are cast onto the screens, are captured from the movements and poses of a “real live girl,” the shadow model, Hannah. Hannah created these poses in



response to projections of the princesses that were actually projected onto her, as well as her own shadow, which was cast as she blocked the projection light. I photographed these and produced the steel figures from these shadows. In her own words Hannah said, "When I had her dress reflected on me I felt like I was her. I also felt like I was in her country, and in her family. It's amazing what a reflection can do!" Although Hannah was actually referring to the projection, not reflection, her choice of that word led me with more certainty to add reflections into the mix. The mirrors on the floor add another way of seeing, another way of interacting with the piece, another layer of engagement. As Foucault wrote of *Las Meninas* and picture as mirror, it offers us "that enchantment of the double..."<sup>4</sup> Hannah's feelings with the princesses projected onto her were ones of connection to their lives and times, lost and found.

The digital evocation of time and transformation in the fire/water/wind DVD loop was initially silent.

The urge to add sound came not out of a desire to create a more "real" experience of nature, but to add another layer of signifiers. The repetition of the loop of picture and sound *is* unchanging. However, the repetition allows the viewer the opportunity to experience the piece from many vantage points and to interject moving shadows, and thereby to construct new meanings. The repetition also allows for an extended experience in time.

I have worked with natural transformations of fire, water and air, as well as evidence of time and transformation such as fossils or dead birds, on numerous occasions in the past. For instance, I subjected a series of giclée prints involving the Velázquez Infanta painting to burning, weathering, acid distressing and burying to extend the transformative processes. In *Shadow Princesses*, as everything was becoming more ephemeral, (translucent screens instead of solid objects), the distance from the actual created by the DVD loop seemed fitting. As the work becomes more

ephemeral, it allows more room for the viewer to move into the collage.

The little laugh was an afterthought brought into being by Jill Timushka, who produces the steel figures. As we were setting up the piece and running through the projections, she said, "I can almost hear a little girl laugh." We had been playing with our own shadows cast on the screens. A presence of life was felt, the princesses were present – it was too good an idea to ignore.

The experiences of having Hannah and Jill work with me on the piece helped me to think more deeply about the role of the viewer as true participant; as a co-creator of meaning. Without participation and interaction of others, *Shadow Princesses* is a lonely piece, like a table set for a party to which no one will arrive.

Images (next two pgs):  
Installation view: fire  
from front right | Child  
participant documentation





# Interruptions and Juxtapositions

**JM:** The construction of the installation has strong affinities with collage, the surrealists' tool for conveying their disturbing messages of disruption of society, psyche and soul in the first half of the 20th century.

Pieces of tabloid coverage of JonBenet Ramsay's murder – texts and photographs – are juxtaposed rather than integrated with the extract from Velázquez's famous *Las Meninas* which features the Infanta. And *Las Meninas* is itself a painting whose elements, people, furniture and pets, have very formal connections with each other, like stars in a constellation chart, with the Infanta as the small, brief illumination at its heart.

Then, the interruptions and iterations of shadows playing on the veils – those of the steel girl-figures and those of the viewer exploring the work – create more interruptions and iterations, which never resolve, never integrate, only form, transform, dissipate, and re-form.

The interruption of the viewer into and upon the work, and the collaging of

elements seem to have the same effect or purpose as Brecht's distancing narrative interruptions in his plays, such as *Five Penny Opera*. Which is to say, that in not creating a single final version, the work provides the opportunity and responsibility for the viewer to process ideas, and images, to make connections, or not.

**DF:** I have been working with collage, translucency, seeing one thing through another, since the early 1980s. I wanted to see disparate materials and shapes fused onto single planes – to see things exist together in such a way that was not about discrete objects placed in relationship to one another, but to see images as part of one another. Technology has allowed me to more effectively explore and create the kinds of images and experiences that I have desired for more than 20 years.

When I started to work with the figure of the Infanta, it was with an iconic image of 'princess' that has endured and influenced much of the world for 350 years. The image continues into the present in Disney

movies and even the disquieting world of child beauty pageants. Early in my work with the Infanta, I would see, in my mind's eye, JonBenet Ramsay's face projected onto the face of the Infanta and I knew that eventually they would have to merge in some way. I felt their consanguinity. Now I have merged them in the translucent hangings. Unlike an earlier work, *Princess Mysteries*, in which the Infanta and JonBenet Ramsay themselves were the projections, they now have conditions projected onto them. The work is still about exploring, as Azar Nafisi wrote in *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, "figments of someone else's imagination."<sup>5</sup> I like to think that in some way even though they have now become projections of my own and viewers' imaginations, I am giving the princesses other chances at life. Necessarily, *Shadow Princesses* has no single final version.

*Deborah Forbes' Shadow Princesses tours to Windsor Ontario, Brandon Manitoba, Swift Current Saskatchewan, Medicine Hat Alberta and Chatham Ontario in 2007 – 2009.*

Images (next two pgs):  
Installation view: grass  
from front left | Installa-  
tion view: grass from rear  
left, front screen

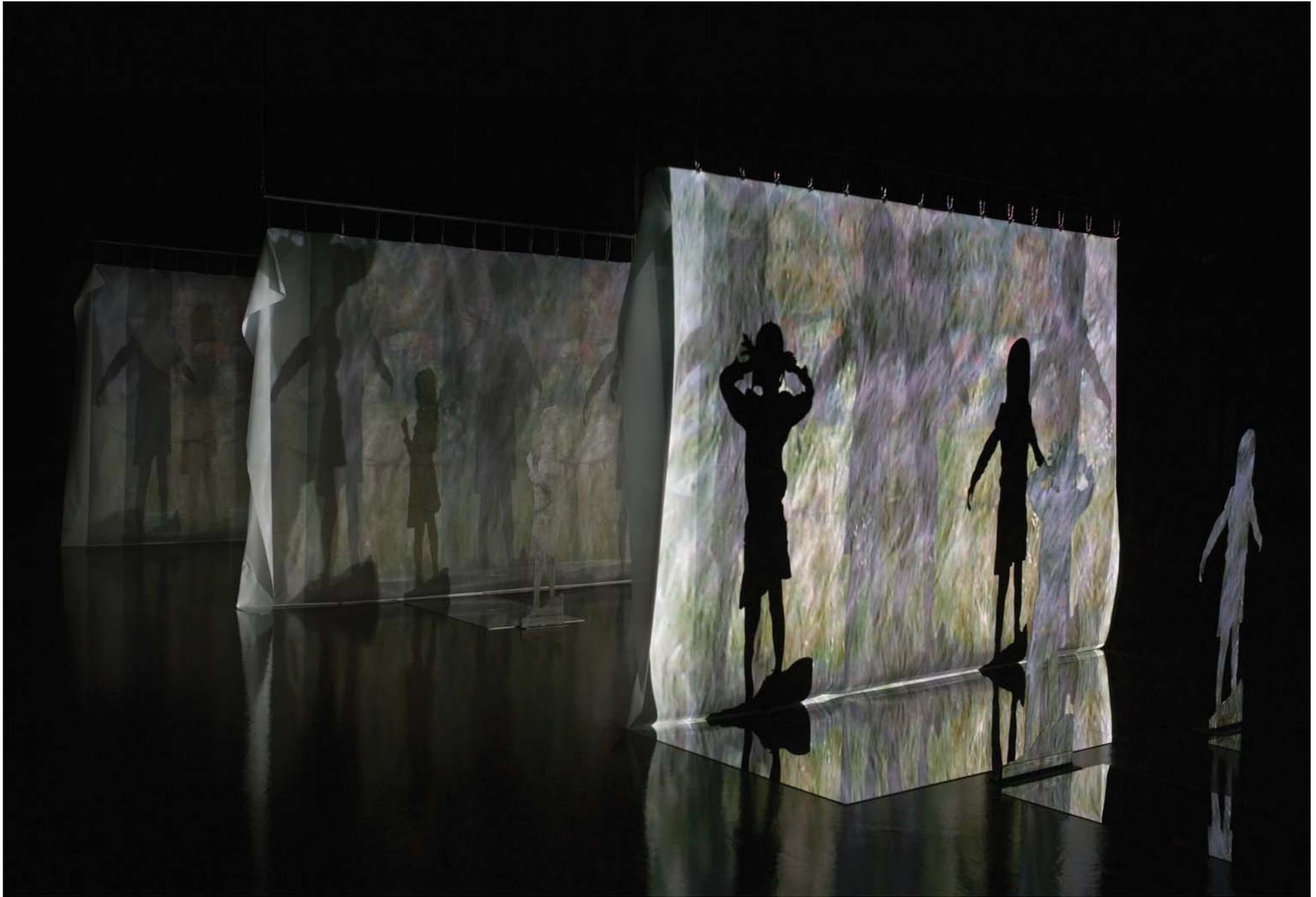
<sup>1</sup>Smith, Zadie. *On Beauty*. Penguin Canada (APB), 2006 p. 341.

<sup>2</sup>Van der Wettering, Jan. *The Empty Mirror*. New York: St Martin's Griffin Press, 1973 p. 124.

<sup>3</sup>Sheldrake, Rupert. *A New Science of Life: The Hypothesis of Morphic Resonance*. Putnam Publishing Group, 1988.

<sup>4</sup>Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things*. London and New York: Routledge Classics, 1989 p. 7.

<sup>5</sup>Nafisi, Azar. *Reading Lolita in Tehran, A Memoir in Books*. New York: Random House, 2003 p. 25.





# *Shadow Princesses*

## Living and Knowing

Jennifer Eisman, PhD



*Inquiry: A community of matter/evidence collides in a piece of visual work. How do the original constituents speak of their origins and their transformations as matter? How do the relationships amongst the evidence create new discussions of time and space? How does the means of production... affect the evidence?*

(Forbes' Workbook, 2006).

Let me place three stories in the mind of the reader to rest there for the remainder of the essay. I ask the reader to contemplate the relationships between these three young girls separated by centuries and thousands of kilometres. I ask that the reader consider how these relationships might be manifested and experienced by others. I will return to them at the close.



# Three Little Stories

## *The Infanta Margarita*

The Infanta Margarita, the daughter of Mariana and Phillip IV of Spain, stands for her portrait to be painted by the court painter, Velázquez. Her energy is stored in the oil and pigment of his canvases. Married to a European noble, Margarita dies while still a young woman, possibly in childbirth as so many women did. She is brought to life again in countless reproductions of Velázquez's painting – and in the work of Deborah Forbes.

## *JonBenet Ramsay*

JonBenet Ramsay, a small child dressed, coiffed and made-up to appear to be the perfect miniature beauty queen. She was a 'princess' who was photographed incessantly while alive. Her energy is stored in the emulsions of the negative, in the code of computers across the United States. JonBenet dies – she is murdered. Her life is also taken abruptly, through an act of violence. She is brought to life again and again in the images published by the tabloids.

## *Hannah*

Hannah, a child friend of Forbes, dances, poses and plays in the light, casting her shadow for Forbes to capture on film. This story is different. Forbes captures evidence of Hannah's presence, but not her actual energy, not her self. Further, Forbes renders this form into a steel silhouette that can then cast its shadow in her work. Hannah is still alive. She grows and changes, becoming something other than the image Forbes captured in *Shadow Princesses*.

As the viewer moves through the space of Forbes' video installation, *Shadow Princesses*, she participates in the transformation of matter into images. I will explore here how *Shadow Princesses* takes the viewer from the chaotic realm of relationships to the world of physical manifestations.

Images (next two pgs):  
Installation view: water  
from front left | Installa-  
tion view: water from  
rear left, middle and  
front screens





# Bringing to Life

Forbes' *Workbook*

begins with the following quote:

*My purpose is to tell of bodies which have been transformed into shapes of a different kind.* Ovid

Two thousand years later, neuro-physiologists Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela began to examine the ways that bodies think – not minds, but bodies. Beginning in the 1950s, cognitive science was dominated by computational models of thinking that situated understanding and knowledge in the brain. Realizing the limitations of this model through their work in systems theory in biology, Maturana and Varela began to explore how thinking and knowing are not simply activities of the brain, but are instead, related to an organism's form and its relationship to its environment (Whitaker, 1995). They explore the notion of embodied cognition and the notion of mind as situated not just in the brain, but as a function of the entire organism. They write (1992) that, "[a]ll doing is knowing, and all knowing is doing." Hence, to know, to understand is to live.

Maturana and Varela define three key criteria of a living system:

*The pattern of organization of any system, living or nonliving, is the configuration of relation-*

*ships among the system's components that determines the system's essential characteristics. In other words, certain relationships must be present for something to be recognized as [a body]. That configuration of relationships that gives a system its essential characteristics is what we mean by its pattern of organization.* (Capra, 1996, p.158)

Although separated by millennia, Ovid and Maturana and Varela observed that apparently physical objects are not absolute. Instead, patterns of organization provide context within which the nature of a "body" can be understood. When these relationships change, the nature of the body will change accordingly.

Maturana and Varela identify a second criterion of living systems, related to the pattern of organization, the *structure of a system*:

*The structure of a system is the physical embodiment of its pattern of organization. Whereas the description of the pattern*



*of organization involves an abstract mapping of relationships, the description of the structure involves describing the system's actual physical components – their shapes, chemical compositions, and so forth. (Capra, 1996, p.159)*

In order for a system to be alive, a final criterion must be satisfied. Maturana and Varela propose the notion of *process*:

*In a living system... the components change continually. There is a ceaseless flux of matter through a living organism...*

*This striking property of living systems suggests process as a third criterion for a comprehensive description of the nature of life. The process of life is the activity involved in the continual embodiment of the system's pattern of organization. Thus the process criteria is the link between pattern and structure... the pattern of organization is always embodied in the*

*organism's structure, and the link between pattern and structure lies in the process of continual embodiment. (Capra, 1996, p.160).*

Forbes captures this same understanding in *Shadow Princesses*. Forbes presents the viewer with a series of elements both visual and aural: the sounds of air, fire and water and a child's giggle; projected light, illuminating images and casting shadows. These are the elements that become a child through the pattern of organization represented by steel silhouettes and the images of the princesses. The child begins as a giggle that is drawn from the randomness of the elements and the ephemeral light images of water, air and fire. The steel silhouette that captures the light organizes it into the pattern of "child."

The child is present in silhouette form. A corporeal body is not present, instead the shadow provides evidence of a being. This being casts a shadow on the first curtain with its merged images of JonBenet/



Infanta Margarita. The screen provides the structure that allows the viewer to recognize the being as a child.

*Shadow Princesses* is made up of a series of these interactions, in four layers of light, shadow, sound and image. This layering of experience, this changing of the play of the elements from layer to layer has a useful corollary in the Maturana and Varela's third criteria: *process*. In the first layer, the child's shadow is smaller than the images of the princesses. As the shadows are cast through the layers, into the distance, across time, they grow in size, matching, and then dwarfing the images of the princesses. The child-being is "continually changing" (Capra, 1996, p.159) as does any living system, re-interpreting the pattern of organization into structures that adapt to the environment within which she finds herself.

Through its form as an installation, *Shadow Princesses* takes the viewer through this experience of "coming to be". One enters the

space unaware, unmindful of one's being. One approaches the first mirror. One tries to look into it. It is impossible to see oneself without falling into it. It reflects the child silhouette and the ceiling – there is no image of oneself, only an image of the silhouette, *the pattern of organization*.

But as one interacts with the space, its sounds, its images, its sensations of vertigo, enclosure, disorientation even, one becomes acutely aware of oneself as a presence within the space. One's *relation* to the visual and kinesthetic text as subject of the experience and as object of another's experience *structures* one's identity within the world of the piece. One becomes aware of one's being becoming manifest in the shadows one casts on the screens, along side those of the child silhouette. One notices how one's shadow is similar to or different from that of the child. One might even mimic her poses, experiencing how this feels, experiencing this pattern of being, feeling its affect on one's own structure. One also

becomes aware of how the sounds produced by one's own feet on the floor, one's clothing, one's own voice perhaps talking with a companion, relates to the sounds of water, of fire, of air, of child's giggle. One can hear the sounds of other viewers hidden by intervening screens.

*Shadow Princesses* can be understood as an immersion into the *process* that takes the patterns of organization and the structures through which they are manifest and allows these to live, *to be*.

Through the successive layering of the space, light, shadow and sound, Forbes takes the viewer through the experience of being. The initial point of contact between the viewer and the work is immaterial sound: wind; fire; water; and the giggle. These elemental energies materialize in the space as light and shadow projected onto a series of screens. The light materializes on the first screen as images of wind in grass, rain, fire, two princesses and the shadows of a child. The viewer's shadow becomes a part of the



process of embodiment as she moves into the space. What is there, what is not, what is revealed and what is present only by the evidence of its absence through its shadow become the dynamic of the forces that will bring forth a meaning, an understanding for the viewer. The sound, light and shadow move further into the space, through the successive layers of fabric (material) and re-materialize, re-iterate the process. However, now the “natural” images of grass, water and fire are left behind, only their essence as light and sound remain to illuminate the princesses and cast the child shadows more emphatically.

Viewers in the space become involved in the phenomenon as their shadows are cast from screen to screen also growing in scale further into the process. Mirrors reflect only the context, the environment. The viewer is never able to confirm his presence in this space as a fact. One knows one is only through the effect of one’s presence in the space, through the process of viewing. One can cast a shadow, create a sound

or a slight movement of air that may cause the screens to shiver slightly. One’s material being, one’s physical presence is confirmed only by its affect, by its relationship with the other elements in the system. One’s physical being is manifest by the *process of being* in the space, changing it, causing it to evolve.

*Shadow Princesses* offers the viewer the opportunity to contemplate existence as the interplay of dynamic forces. We come to understand that being is the result of relationships between elements that adopt a structure, manifesting a pattern of organization, that change and evolve. *Shadow Princesses* “tell[s] of bodies which have been transformed into shapes of a different kind”.

Images (next two pgs):  
Detail: Floor mirrors and  
steel figures with grass |  
Detail: Floor mirrors and  
steel figures with fire





# Shadow Princesses

Forbes wrote, *Shadow: In Jungian terms, the side of our personality which we do not consciously display in public. May have positive or negative qualities. If it remains unconscious, the shadow is often projected onto other individuals or groups.* (Workbook, 2006).

*Shadow Princesses* creates a world that immerses the viewer in shadow: one's own; those of other viewers; those of the three absent children, Margarita, JonBenet and Hannah. However, unlike Jungian shadows, these are manifested in public; the shadows no longer remain unconscious and hidden. Instead, they become part of a public act. Viewers project their shadows into the installation and onto each other. The child silhouette casts its shadow onto the viewers. The ghostly figures of JonBenet and the Infanta are "shadows" that provide a backdrop for the interaction that occurs before them. It is through the public performance of the relationship between these shadows, the ways they magnify and modify each other within *Shadow Princesses*, that a viewer may come to know just a little bit more about herself and her being.



# Reprise of Three Stories

## *The Infanta Margarita*

Margarita will always be the child princess pictured in Velázquez's paintings. Over the centuries, the childhood image has become, as Forbes asserts, the archetype of the princess that little girls draw and aspire to emulate. Do little girls project an unconscious side of their personalities through these drawings? Is the Infanta Margarita a shadow being that haunts all females in our culture? Does this archetype represent a pattern of organization that determines some essential characteristics of femininity in western society?

## *JonBenet Ramsay*

JonBenet Ramsay is a contemporary "princess." Her shadow is cast long, as her image still haunts the tabloids. In Forbes' piece the contemporary princess, JonBenet, merges with the historical princess, the Infanta Margarita. JonBenet's image so remarkably conforms to the pattern of organization established by the Infanta that her photographed face merges almost perfectly with that of the princess in the Spanish baroque

painting. The individual child, JonBenet, has no unique identity beyond the Princess. Her murder, and now public curiosity, will not allow this being to evolve and become.

## *Hannah*

Hannah is a child who is alive, growing and changing. In rendering her form in the steel silhouettes of the *Shadow Princesses*, Forbes has asserted the value of this child's unique way of being in the world. She has given us a metaphor for being alive. Hannah's shadow and the viewers' block the Princess images on the screens. They interrupt the pattern of organization, inserting a new element into the structure. The system changes, grows and evolves. It is alive, vital, and fertile with possibility. Just as Hannah is no longer the girl who posed for the silhouettes, so too it must be remembered that life requires change, adaptation and evolution to exist.

The spirits of these three little girls drew Forbes to engage in this work. Two have 'died'; they are trapped in

the patterns of organization that held them in life. One lives, and through living, forces the patterns to evolve as she grows. Borrowing from Maturana and Varela (1995), she lives, and thereby, she knows. The viewer participating in *Shadow Princesses* may ask herself, "How will I live? With what new experience will I engage? How will my be-ing evolve and grow? What will I know?"

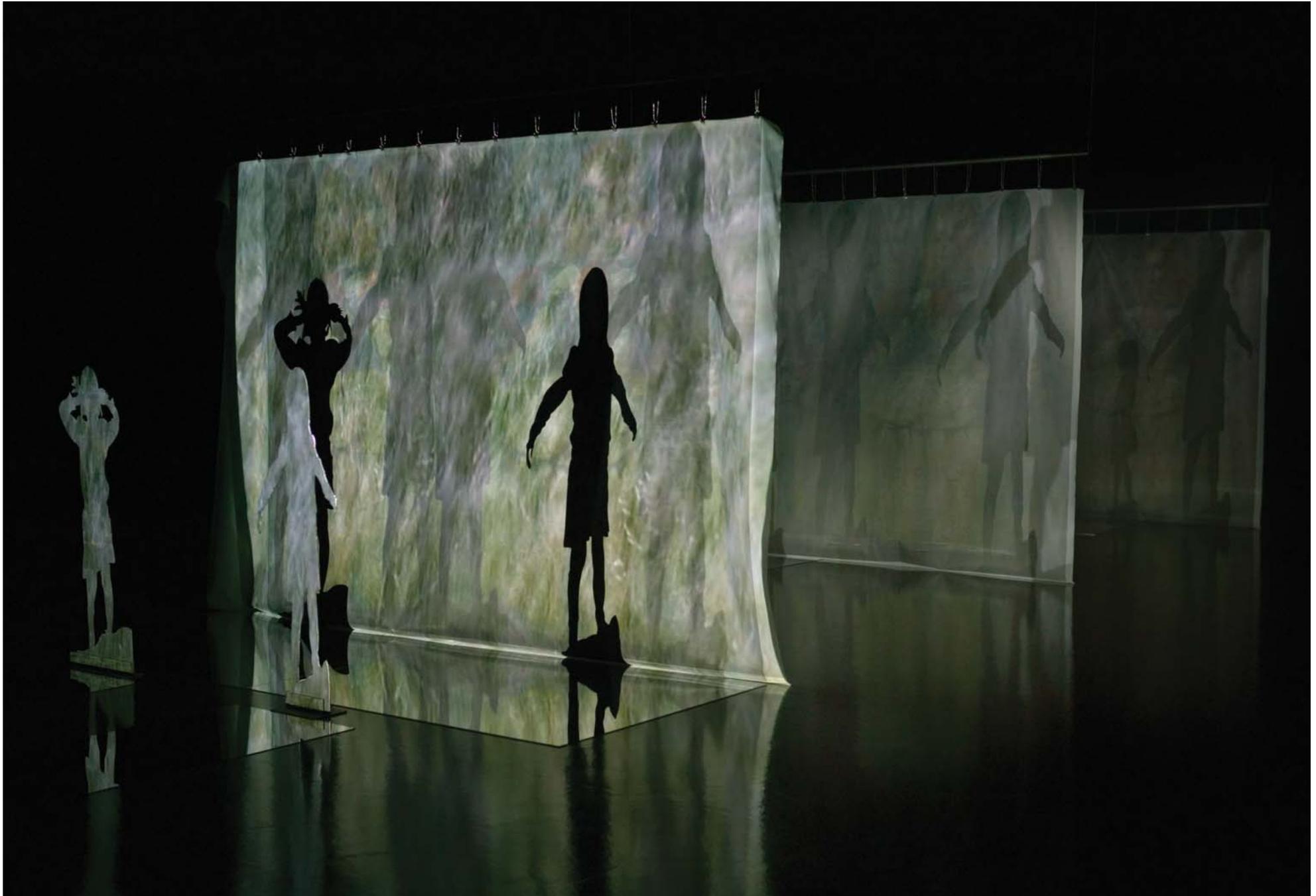
Jennifer Eiserman, PhD  
Department of Art,  
University of Calgary

Images (next two pgs):  
Installation view: grass  
from front right | Install-  
ation view: water from  
front right

Jennifer Eiserman has studied extensively in the visual arts and in art education, and has received a BA (Art History) from McGill University, a BFA (Visual Art) from the University of Regina, a MA (Art Education) also from McGill University, and a PhD (Curriculum and Instruction) from the University of Calgary. From 1987-1993, she worked as Art Gallery Educator and performed curatorial work at the MacKenzie Art Gallery in Regina and the Moose Jaw Art Museum. Her research interests include aesthetics, cultural diversity in the arts, and the role of the artist in society. Her current research project, "Bringing Chinese Canadian Art to Calgary Schools," explores the nature of Chinese Canadian art, and how to embrace non-western aesthetic values in Canadian Art Curricula.

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- Maturana, H. and Varela, F. *The Tree of Knowledge: The Biological Roots of Human Understanding* [2nd Edition]. Boston, MA: Shambala, 1992.
- Whitaker, R. *Autopoesis*, 1995. HYPERLINK <http://www.acm.org/sigs/sigois/auto/ATReview.html> accessed February 19, 2007.





# Biography

## Deborah Forbes

### Selected Solo Exhibitions

2007 – 2009 *Shadow Princesses*  
ARTCITE, Windsor ON; Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba, Brandon MB; Thames Gallery, Chatham ON; Swift Current Art Gallery, Swift Current SK; Esplanade Arts and Heritage Centre, Medicine Hat AB

2003 - 2004 *Princess Mysteries*  
Medicine Hat Museum and Art Gallery, Medicine Hat AB

2002 *Infanta Project: Series II*  
Medalta Historical Site,  
Medicine Hat AB

2000 *Degrees of Extinction*  
Medicine Hat Museum and Art Gallery, Medicine Hat AB; Bowman Arts Centre, Yates Memorial Centre, Lethbridge AB

1998 *Uncommon Prayer*  
Moose Jaw Art Museum, Moose Jaw SK; Dynes Gallery, Medicine Hat AB; Yates Memorial Centre, Lethbridge AB

### Selected Group Exhibitions

2004 *Hand Read*  
Medicine Hat Museum and Art Gallery and Medicine Hat Public Library (with Amy Gogarty, Dana Shukster and Nick Wade)

2001 – 2002 *Time and Distance Cannot Erase...*  
Thames Gallery, Chatham ON; Medicine Hat Museum & Art Gallery

1998 – 2000 *Angels to Icons*  
Alberta Foundation for the Arts Traveling Exhibition Program, various AB locations

1990 – 1992 *Network 1*  
Anchorage Museum of Art, Anchorage AK, traveled to 10 cities in the United States (with 17 tapestry weavers from eleven countries)

1988 *10th Anniversary Exchange*  
Medicine Hat Museum and Art Gallery, Medicine Hat AB; Muttart Gallery, Calgary AB; Prairie Gallery, Grande Prairie AB; Southern Alberta Art Gallery Lethbridge, AB

1986 *Convergence Instructors' Exhibition*  
Hart House Gallery, University of Toronto, Toronto ON

1985 *Showcase for Alberta Women Artists*  
Hett Gallery, Edmonton AB; Muttart Gallery, Calgary AB; Red Deer and District Museum, Red Deer, AB; Southern Alberta Art Gallery, Lethbridge AB; Medicine Museum and Art Gallery, Medicine Hat AB; Prairie Gallery, Grande Prairie AB

### Grants/Awards

2006 Alberta Foundation for the Arts Project Grant, *Shadow Princesses*

2004 Alberta Foundation for the Arts Project Grant, *Princess Mysteries*

2000 Alberta Foundation for the Arts Project Grant, *Degrees of Extinction*

1994 Alberta Foundation for the Arts Project Grant for travel to Czech Republik and Slovakia to research Early Christian Icons

1992 Canada 125 Award, Outstanding Volunteer Contribution, Governor General of Canada

1989 Alberta Culture Arts Award, to complete work for Network 1 Exhibition



# Exhibition Dates

Apr 21 – May 19, 2007

**Arcite**

Windsor ON

June 28 – Aug 11, 2007

**Art Gallery of**

**Southwestern Manitoba**

Brandon MB

Sept 1 – Oct 7, 2007

**Art Gallery of Swift Current**

Swift Current SK

Nov 24, 2007 – Jan 20, 2008

**Esplanade Art Gallery**

Medicine Hat AB

Jan 16 – Mar 1, 2009

**Thames Art Gallery**

Chatham ON



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**Esplanade Art Gallery**

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