

# CORKIN GALLERY

**Barbara Astman**

**Dancing with Che, 2003**

*Dancing with Che* evolved from Barbara Astman's first visit to Havana, where images of revolutionary leader Che Guevara appear in public art, on monuments, on souvenirs, so many decades after his death. Astman is interested in the proliferation of this image, and its meaning, both in terms of this historical figure viewed as a pop culture icon.

Astman explores the complexity of experiencing a foreign culture, while being only too acutely aware of existing outside of that culture, the rhythms and sounds of the street, the sensuousness and spirit of the people. It is in this sense of exploration that Astman has used her own body to animate the image of Che, to attempt to re-create what she experienced in Cuba.

There are thirty-one murals in the series, which create a rhythm of movement when viewed sequentially. These polaroid works, the sketches for the larger works, are the artist thinking out loud. They reference her earlier self-portrait work stemming from the late 1970s.