

CORKIN GALLERY

Barbara Astman Dreaming Impressionism, 1999

Barbara Astman is a photo-based artist and educator. She teaches experimental concepts and techniques in photography at Ontario College of Art and Design. In Dreaming Impressionism she has created striking, innovative large-scale canvases.

Appropriating familiar images from old masterworks, Barbara Astman reinterprets conventional concept of female portraiture. This series re-examines Impressionism –images that had profoundly influenced the artist in her formative years – by recontextualizing the subject and the thematic focus of traditional paintings. Barbara Astman's Dreaming Impressionism centers on hands, bodies and faces of the subjects, shifting the viewer's gaze and eliciting a different response in its viewing.

These works, rich and saturated with colour, defy classification: Are they paintings? But the texture of the surface is "double faced", according to Barbara Astman. The works incorporate photographs, polaroids, ink and computer graphics – a process that results in a seamless layering of images.