

401

Richmond

update

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'96



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inside

Tenant Profile



Sara Levinson

ORECON
CORPORATE
RESOURCE
CONSULTING
INC.
(Studio 385)

Welcome

- Mark Reid (Artist) — Studio B06
- The League of Holographers (holographic art production studio) — Studio B03
- Marian Wihak (artist) — Studio 266B
- Arts Foundation of Greater Toronto (arts administration) — Studio 365

401 at the Nutcracker

Every thirty years the Nutcracker Suite is remounted. The costumes and sets are redesigned, and, this time, the story has even been changed. Three of our tenants were lucky enough to be included in this year's transformation: **Susan Dicks (Studio 360)**, **Jeannie Thib (Studio 362)** and new tenant **Mark Reid (Studio B08)**. The best part is that these people had no idea each other was involved in the famous ballet.

Film costumer **Susan Dicks** tells us that years ago she worked with a woman who is now Wardrobe Director for National Ballet. Recently they remet, and when Susan expressed an interest in the new Nutcracker, she was given nine of the 160 costumes to make - still a sizeable commission. At the time of this interview, it had taken eight of Susan's workers two weeks, working full tilt, to complete five dresses. According to Susan: "All of the outfits are of couture quality and the fabrics shopped for in New York. Each dress has 7-8 trim types, 6 layers of material and 7-8 kinds of fabric, and, each weighs a ton. Imagine all that on a twelve year old." The commission was a real coup for Susan, because "costumers for film are not generally considered to have the know-how to make clothes for the ballet, but we did," she explains. "For example, a dancer's sleeve must have a gusset which allows for full extension of the arms when lifting and stretching." The job came at the perfect time for Susan as filming usually slows down due to bad weather between November and January.

Unbeknownst to Susan, her neighbour a few doors down, printmaker **Jeannie Thib**, was also working on the Nutcracker, painting sets at the National Ballet's shop in Scarborough. Jeannie says she got the job through word of mouth, having been

part of a recent Sound of Music production in Hamilton. "I found myself at the other end of a French brush (long stick with a brush attached) painting a fantastical city. It took three of us a week to finish one ground row which is a 10' high wooden stage backdrop. We also painted beds for the show, one of which had a faux stove on the back. They used to have that kind of thing to keep the beds warm in winter."

While working in Scarborough, Jeannie met fellow artist **Mark Reid**. He got the chance to paint the Nutcracker sets through the Head of Props who happened to be on his swim team. Jeannie mentioned to Mark that she had a studio in downtown Toronto, and he said he'd just signed a lease for his own studio at a great location: 401 Richmond. "But that where *my* studio is!," she exclaimed. "It's a vortex," said Head Painter John Borg, "401 Richmond is the Bermuda Triangle for artists. Eventually everyone gets sucked into it!"



Susan Dicks' costumes for the Nutcracker

Christmas Marketplace

What a success! Twenty tenants participated in the Third Annual Christmas Marketplace which took place December 6 - 10, 1995. The event brought hundreds of people through the building, many of whom said they'd never been here before. Signage this year was tremendous (thanks to **Laura Beazley** and **Anna Mulrooney of Studio 424**) and the addition of **Gokché Erkan's (Studio 240)** photography in the first floor hallway gave the marketplace real

distinction. Thanks also to **Anne McTaggart** and **Lesley Graham (Studio**

Making art at Christmas Marketplace Open House in Studio 266



266) for hosting open house arts activities during the marketplace (Comment from one of the public: "Just to let you know what it means to me to come to this studio... I decided

years ago that I'm no artist. But in this space I can make things and not listen to that voice. (It's a feast for the senses... a joy"). Congratulations to all.

Christmas Party



The Second Annual 401 Tenant Christmas Party was a huge hit. Some 200 guests joined in the celebration at 401 Café (thanks Brian!) and over \$500 was collected for **Safehaven**, a home for multiply handicapped children (tenant **Anya Wilson's (Studio 220)** son, Sean, is

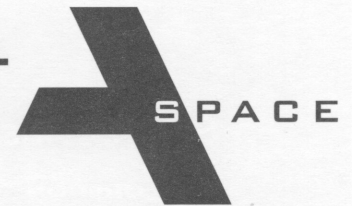
a resident of Safehaven). **Anthony Pedrette** of **Laserset (Studio 123)** sent us this note: "These parties are an excellent opportunity for us to network and stay in tune. No doubt it is a way for you to monitor and receive feedback. Once again thanks and we look forward to future events."

A meeting for all interested in the

First Annual Spring Marketplace

will take place on **Thursday, February 8, 1996** at noon in the **401 Café**. Please come!

Doug Buis and Joanne Bristol



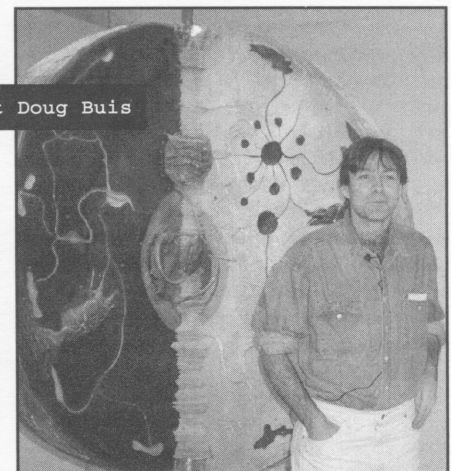
Joanne Bristol's Flower Theory

The exhibition which opened at **A Space (Studio 110)** on Friday, January 12, brings together the work of two Canadian artists whose work stems from the discourses of science. Their installations address issues of human needs and desires, demonstrating how science can shape our social world and belief systems.

Montreal based Doug Buis's *Home and Oasis* is presented as a science display, showing an "organic" structure of the earth's nervous system, veins and muscles. Saskatoon artist Joanne Bristol's *Flower Theory* explores the language of botany and its systems of classification through installations which she describes as "fictions" or "walk-in novels".

The exhibition runs to Saturday, February 24.

Artist Doug Buis



profile

Sara Levinson

Corecon (Studio 385)



Sara Levinson

"I'm a very determined person. When I hear 'you can't', that really gets me going." That's how **Sara Levinson** remembers her foray into the business world. "I was a student at Concordia in Montreal and had changed my degree from sociology to economics. I was used to getting A's and horrified when the professor gave me 50% in microeconomics. He suggested I go back to the arts when he found out I was memorizing graphs instead of finding the solutions through problem solving." Determined to succeed, Sara went out and hired a tutor and graduated 'With Distinction.' "What I really found out," she explains, "is that I like solving problems. You see, once I catch on, I usually understand things with a lot of depth."

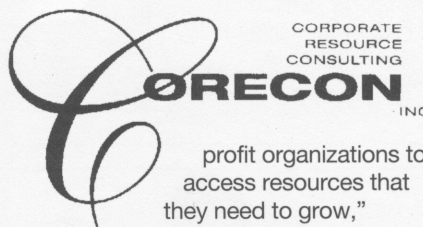
Now, that's an understatement. This dynamo of a woman, at 401 Richmond since November 1994, has left no stone unturned in her passion for learning. Born in Montreal, she studied pre-school education and psychology at Vanier College, sociology and anthropology at the University of Colorado, and then worked with emotionally disturbed children, at a teen drop-in centre, printer, daycare and hospital before

Sara's colleague at Corecon: Mary Lou Hill



turning to business in the 1980's (MBA, University of Western Ontario 1984). "After spending so much time with service givers, I realized they weren't fundraisers," she says. "I decided to get a commerce degree and use it in a socially productive way."

Back in Montreal Sara went to work for Consultech Canada, a start-up company specializing in obtaining project financing from various sources including government, venture capitalists and banks. In five years she went from being a consultant to Chief Operating Officer overseeing 70-80 projects, and, by 1990, she started her own company **Corecon Corporate Resource Consulting Inc.** "Our focus is business development. We assist profit and non-



profit organizations to access resources that they need to grow," explains Sara. "We act as the bridge between vision and practicality." The company's three areas of focus are: facilitating access to resources (money and expertise), strategic planning/implementation, and visionary linking. Examples of some of their work include: sourcing financing from various government programs (money), establishing management/ employee work teams to address internal training needs (expertise), preparing strategic business plans and assisting in the implementation, and helping non-profit organizations build ongoing strategic relationships with their funding partners (visionary linking). Their client list includes firms such as **Teknion Furniture Systems** and **Linda Lundstrom Ltd.**, and **Friends of the Earth.**

At a social gathering, Sara met **Sylvia Sweeney**, who was working as a television reporter at that time. The liaison proved to be powerful: they became business partners and in 1991 produced an award-winning documentary about Oscar Peterson: *In the Key of Oscar.*

Shortly after their success with *Oscar*, Sara and Sylvia were looking to move their companies (Elitha Peterson Productions Inc. and Corecon) to an office which would facilitate their synergistic working relationships. Two separate working spaces with shared areas (i.e. kitchen) would enable the companies to retain their independence while using each others' expertise. The idea was to create a *real* business network. As fate would have it, an acquaintance of Sylvia's had been to 401 and raved about the building. When Sara and Sylvia were walking by the building one evening, Sylvia remembered her friend's recommendation. She called the office using her cellular phone and was invited up to the First Annual Tenant Summer Party.

"The second we met you, we knew you were it," claims Sara. "I asked Margie Zeidler if she had ever thought about creating a business network in 401. She told me that was one of the reasons they bought the building. We realized immediately that this was the place to move." (Currently Elitha Peterson Productions and Corecon occupy 5000 square feet of contiguous office space on the third floor.)

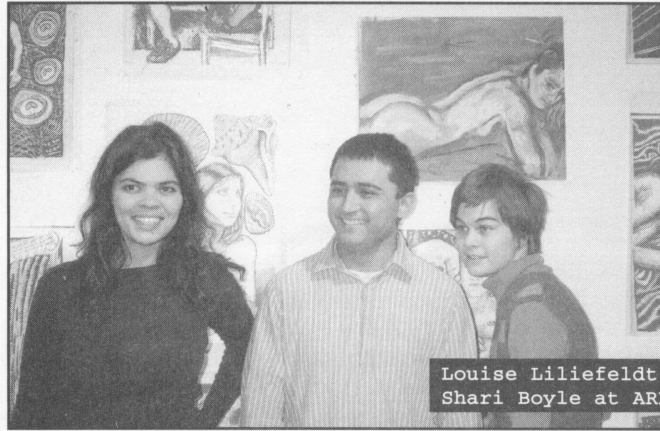
In keeping with her aim to create connections, Sara has also become involved with us at 401 in another capacity: as Coordinator of the **Tri-C Project** (commerce, culture, community). "Its aim is to identify and develop areas of mutual benefit to the 401 community so that there are pathways for us to grow and develop together," says Sara. "This is the right time and place. There are a lot of exciting opportunities percolating."

We Saw You!



Mix Magazine

Sandra Laronde of **Native Women in the Arts (Studio 363)** performed at the launch of a new publishing house, 7th Generation Books, at the Native Canadian Centre in Toronto recently. Laronde is a member of the Steering Committee for publishing house whose name, according to *Mix Magazine*, refers to an Aboriginal prophecy that the 7th generation after initial contact with Europeans will lead to a renaissance and revitalization in Aboriginal culture and world-view.



Louise Liliefeldt, Sean Dean and Shari Boyle at AREA opening

Louise Liliefeldt of **V-Tape (Studio 452)**, together with Shari Boyle and Sean Dean, had the opening of their art show on Friday, January 12 1996 in AREA on the 4th floor. The show runs until February 9th.

401 Artspace Available

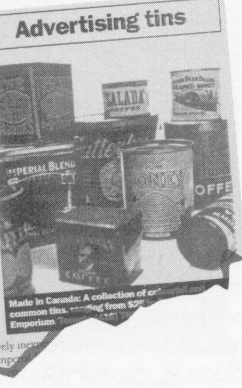
Are you looking for a part-time teaching job or a large studio space for a community project or organizational event? The **401 Artspace** is a 2000 square foot area located in Studio 266 which has 11 bright windows and several large tables with artmaking facilitation (if required). Give Lesley Graham a call at 652-0238.



Studio 266

Hot collectibles Advertising tins

The English began using metal containers in the late 1700s for packaged goods, but it was the use of lithography in the second half of the 19th century that caused an explosion in the production of printing tins. It became possible to print directly on tins by the 1870s, and by the 1890s chromolithography resulted in brightly coloured tobacco, coffee, tea and highly decorative tins on virtually every grocery shelf in England, Canada and the United States. Although some specialist collectors seek out the two-colour tins produced in the 1880s, most collectors want the highly decorative tins produced from 1900 to 1950. Advertising tins range in price from 50 cents to \$5,000, depending on the quality of the graphics, the age of the tin, the condition, and the collecting category. Whether displaying one product category, one company, or one region, you should be able to assemble an interesting and relatively inexpensive collection. The Imperial Tea tins can be found everywhere. The Imperial Tea tins can be found everywhere.



Made in Canada: A collection of common tins, ranging from 50¢ to \$5,000.

Collectible tins from the **Macdonald Manufacturing Company** (whose address was 401 Richmond in the first part of this century) appeared in the December 1995 issue of *Canadian House & Home* (pp. 24 & 26). We hope to exhibit some of these fabulous lithographed tins in an exhibit detailing the history of the building sometime next year.



Rex Smith and 401 Café's Brian McElwain

Stage actor extraordinaire **Rex Smith** was seen being interviewed for WTN in the **401 Café**. Apparently, the show's producer was looking for a unique and up-and-coming space for the interview and chose 401 Richmond!

Kelly Winsa of Tequilla

Mockingbird (Studio 426) received praise recently for her women's clothing design in the *Toronto Star* (December 28, 1995). Well done, Kelly.

Winsa's no-frills separates

With two open houses a year, regular store hours twice a week, her craft show appearances and a mailing list of 750 names ("everyone on the list has bought," she says) Winsa says her business is growing. "I've noticed a lot of people interested in picking up (seasonal) cards," she says. "They are looking for beautiful suits." "The first year I made [separates], I admit, I just likes making clothes."



NOT OBSESSED: Kelly Winsa just likes making clothes.

Winter Open House

On Sunday, January 14, 65 people (ages 3 - 78) gathered to celebrate the unfolding of 1996 through free art-making with **Anne McTaggart** and **Lesley Graham (Studio 266)**. Together they discovered what "wish sticks" are. Each person decorated his or her wooden piece with beeswax, japanese

papers, golds, watercolours, copper-wire, beads and more. New and old visitors to 401 were inspired by the abundant space, materials and the group creativity and momentum.

Stay tuned! March 1 - 10 will be the 8th Painted Floorcloth Extravaganza.

Advice from the TEA Room

Are you looking for a way to save money and help to reduce solid waste in Toronto? Look no further. Here is a guide that can help you. *Use it Reuse it: The Toronto reuse repair and rental guide* is Toronto's first reuse guide. From clothes to computers, stereos and sporting goods, this guide is a wealth of information. Copies are available at the **Toronto Environmental Alliance (Studio 103)** for \$5 (\$4 for tenants of 401 Richmond).



Wildlands League

If you were in the parking lot on Tuesday, January 31, 1996, you would have been shocked to see pieces of a huge tree, 3' in diameter, lying around. It's just part of an exciting show that **Wildlands League (Studio 380)** is involved with called *Myth and Reality: A Canadian Landscape*. The special four-day multimedia event is a collaborative venture to be held at the DeLeon White Gallery, 455 King Street West beginning February



15, 1996 at 7 pm. The exhibit coincides with the AGO's *Oh Canada Project* celebrating the **Group of Seven's 75th** anniversary. It will demonstrate to the public that the highly celebrated Group of Seven landscapes are quickly diminishing. The show will also offer tree-free sustainable solutions to living and is a pay-what-you-can event, including free drink, food, live music and a raffle ticket for an original art piece.

Special Thanks

to Murat Samancioglu of **Saman Design (Studio 208)** for producing the building's new directional signs. They make getting around a lot easier.

Hats Off!

We've just heard that **P. Elaine Sharpe** of **Visual Narrative (Studio 357)**, **Simon Glass (Studio 359)** and **Jeannie Thib (Studio 362)** received grants from the Toronto Arts Council. Congratulations!

Steel to Steal


Miscellaneous construction material (including pieces of metal) is free for the taking in the east end basement until February 15th. Grab it while you can!

401 Richmond Ltd. has been nominated for a **Financial Post Business in the Arts Award** in the Innovative Support category. In their letter to the jury, nominators **A Space Gallery (Studio 110)** said: "The 401 Richmond Street Ltd. organization has not only made it possible for arts organizations to achieve current goals but it has made a clear investment in the future of Toronto's art scene. Through innovative community building initiatives, a commitment to affordable downtown space for the arts and a long-term vision, 401 Richmond Street has made a significant and profound contribution to our cultural community."

bulletin board

A regular feature of 401 UPDATE, the Bulletin Board is your opportunity to communicate with other tenants and keep them in touch with what is happening in your organization. If you are having a sale or exhibition, or just want to tell others about your product/service, simply supply Lesley Soden in the management office with the written information and we will print it here.

Tequilla Mockingbird
SALE





Feb 1-10
 tues/wed/thur/fri 11-7
 sat 11-4
 suite #426

**Found Missing:
 Archival Photographs and the New Historicity**
 Curated for Gallery 44 by Cheryl Sourkes

Sorel Cohen
 Moira Egan
 Nina Levitt
 Cheryl Simon

February 8 - March 9, 1996
 Opening reception: Thursday February 8 from 5 pm to 8 pm

I've got a message!

401 Café
 Smoking hours are between
 9:30-11:00 am and 1:30 - 3:00 pm
Happy Smoking Hours

ART SLAVES
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Donald Quan in Concert
 Multi-instrumentalist
 Donald Quan of **Q Music (Studio B106)**
 and his ensemble will
 be performing a concert of his original
 compositions at the Water's Edge Cafe at
 Harbourfront Centre in Toronto on
 February 18, 1996 at 2 pm. The concert
 is in celebration of the Chinese New Year.

Jeannie Thib (Studio 362)
 is part of a group show at
 the Main Gallery of
 The Burlington Art Centre
 (January 7 - February 11, 1996).



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